



MINUTES OF RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 23 JANUARY 2024 AT 7.00PM
IN RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH, GEORGE STREET

Members Present: Cllr Simon Cooke, Cllr Jess Higgins, Cllr Richard May, Cllr Georgie Carter (Chair), Cllr Malcolm Ross, Cllr Karen Lucioni and Cllr Michael Lilley.

Also in Attendance: Tara Bloomfield (Responsible Financial Officer), Robert Clark (Finance Assistant), Lisa Dyer (Clerk) and Cllr Diana Conyers

Members of the Public - 6

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of The Ryde Society asked why the £800 grant request from Ryde Rowing Club had not been awarded, especially as the club supports young people. The RFO explained that this grant had been awarded from the compensation money received from Southern Water which was given due to the disruption caused in the Appley area during sewage works.

A question was asked about the potential purchase of the former NatWest Building. The member of the public asked why the council were paying over the asking price (£375,000) for the property and why the renovation costs were not included in the public consultation questionnaire. It was explained that the property had been marketing at offers over £375,000 (this was not the asking price) and that a sealed bid method had been used by the agent. Regarding the renovation costs, these were not included in the consultation as grant funding for works was being sought.

Regarding item 8 on the agenda, purchase of a replacement server, it was asked if assurances could be given that the recommended Fujitsu server will have no impact in relation to the post office scandal. Cllr Cooke explained that the software relating to the scandal is a separate part of Fujitsu and is therefore no risk to the purchase of the server.

Another member of the public asked if consideration of the negative budget consultation result for the cost of repairs at Vectis Hall (£50,000) have been taken into consideration. In reply, it was shared with the public that the council have a duty to protect the building as it is grade 2 listed and these costs were to make the building watertight and prevent further deterioration.

Within the payments list there is a payment of £900 for planting, a member of the public asked what this related to. The RFO stated that this was for the plating of spring bulbs in the fountain on Eastern Gardens.

Lastly, a member of the public questioned the continuing increase in cost of running the council and asked if this trend was going to continue in the future. Cllr Jordan stated that the council has changed significantly over the past few years, taking on additional services which all come at a cost.

99/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllr Elliott who substituted Cllr Lilley in her place.

100/23 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTEREST

None declared.

101/23 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

102/23 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

None asked.

103/23 MINUTES

The minutes to the previous meetings held on 17 October 2023 were reviewed.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the minutes to the meetings held on 17 October 2023 were approved and were signed off by the Chair.

104/23 LIST OF PAYMENTS

The list of payments for 01/10/2023 – 31/12/2023 were presented and approved.

105/23 BANK RECONCILIATION

The bank reconciliations for the period ending 31 October 2023, 30 November 2023 and 31 December 2023 were presented and approved.

106/23 SERVER REPLACEMENT

The committee were asked to approve the purchase of a replacement server due to the aging of the current provision. There were 6 options presented:

OPTIONS

1. Fujitsu Primergy – One off payment of £9,014 + VAT
2. Fujitsu Primergy – 2 Year Finance at a cost of £455.84 + VAT per month (total repayment of £10,940.16+ VAT)
3. Fujitsu Primergy – 3 Year Finance at a cost of £316.55+VAT per month (total repayments of £11,395.80+VAT)
4. Dell PowerEdge – One off payment of £8,036+VAT
5. Dell PowerEdge - 2 Year Finance at a cost of £406.39 + VAT per month (total repayment of £9,753.36+ VAT)
6. Dell PowerEdge - 3 Year Finance at a cost of £282.21 + VAT per month (total repayment of £10,159.56+ VAT)

RESOLVED:

THAT, option 3 – to purchase a Fujitsu Primergy on 3 Year Finance deal at a cost of £316.55+VAT per month (total repayments of £11,395.80+VAT).

107/23 RESERVES POLICY

Members were asked to review and approve the proposed reserves policy that would then be presented to Full Council.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the Reserves Policy was approved.

108/23 INVESTMENT POLICY

Members were asked to review and approve the proposed investment policy which aims to maximise interest returns on funds.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the Investment Policy was approved.

109/23 RYDE MARINA SAND

The committee were asked to approve spend of up to £15,000 for emergency sand clearance works at Ryde Marina which is facing reduced access in the marina mouth. The works will be undertaken by K Coghlan.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the spend was approved and K Coghlan will be instructed to commence works on 1st February 2024.

110/23 BUDGET MONITOR & YEAR END FORECAST

Members were presented with a budget monitor as of 31/12/2023 and a yearend forecast position for noting.

111/23 ARMED FORCES DAY FUNDS

The committee were asked to ratify a decision to receive a balance of funds from the current Armed Forces Day account so that it can be closed, and hold these funds until a new account is opened.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the decision was ratified.

112/23 RECCOMENTATIONS FROM THE GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Members were presented with a list of proposed grants for noting from the grants sub-committee meeting held in November 2023. Cllr Lilley, who is chair of the sub-committee, explained the process of scrutinising the record number of applications received this year.

The recommendations are included in the proposed budget.

113/23 BUDGET CONSULATION RESULTS

Members were presented with the results of the budget consultation for noting.

114/23 2024/25 BUDGET REPORT

Ahead of the budget being presented, members were reminded that it was the committee's job to recommend approval to all members of Full Council at its meeting on 5 February 2024.

On receiving the report, members thanked the RFO, for the levels of detail provided in the paper as well as all other financial reports the committee had received.

After a proposal, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the following be recommended to Full Council for approval:

Option 2 which provides for General Reserves of £240,747 as at the 31st March 2025 and a Band C Council Tax of £158.59.

115/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

THAT the proposed next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday 20 February 2024 in the Ryde Baptist Church, George Street, at 7pm.