

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7.00pm.

**Present:** Cllrs Mike Shepherd (Chairman) Coral Shepherd, Brett Thomas, and Sarah Whitehead.

**In attendance:** Jo MacCallum Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)  
Geraldine Scanlon (Assistant Business Manager (ABM) & Minute Taker).

- 1 **Apologies for absence** – Karen Orgill
- 2 **Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item** – None received
- 3 **Public participation** – None Present
- 4 **Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025**
  - a) **To approve the Minutes**  
The minutes were approved as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

**b) To review action list**

The action list was reviewed with those completed removed.

**c) To consider matters arising**

The RFO said the task to consider new savings accounts still needed to be completed. After discussion, it was agreed that it would be considered after the Internal Audit/AGAR process has been completed and we have a clearer idea of committee's additional short-term project proposals. Cllr C Shepherd said she had written again to the Borough Council (BC) regarding the price increase for the emptying of the dog bins in the village. Cllr M Shepherd said a dog bin had recently been removed and asked if the inventory had been updated and if the BC had been informed so they can remove it from their list for emptying. Cllr C Shepherd advised dog bins will be on the agenda for the next Environment meeting as complaints had been received about its removal.

Cllr M Shepherd said, as per minute 6, the outstanding invoices have now been paid.

Cllr M Shepherd advised, as per minute 7, the invoice for the CCTV internal camera remains unpaid as the camera has still not been adjusted.

**5 Current Financial Position**

**a) IAC monthly report**

Cllr M Shepherd reported that his monthly IAC report had been shared via SharePoint prior to the meeting. He had confirmed that the bank reconciliations from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> April were all in order and the financial reports were numerically consistent. All payments had been processed and authorised in accordance with the financial regulations.

The change of financial year consistency checks had been completed with no issues found. Half of the 2025-26 financial year precept has been received from the BC and allocated correctly to the relevant codes. The remainder of the precept is expected in September. The 2025-26 Financial Budget Comparison is correct and includes the carry forwards agreed by Councillors in January.

**b) Whole council budgets**

Cllr M Shepherd said all financial reports for January had been placed on SharePoint prior to the meeting and invited questions. Cllr C Shepherd asked what the payment under 1025

Subscriptions was for. The RFO said the subscription for Norfolk PTS had been paid the beginning of April as previously agreed.

### **c) Aged debtors**

The ABM said two of the four aged debtors have now paid their invoices.

The ABM advised she had chased both outstanding invoices on numerous occasions.

Invoice 2350: The business manager had been contacted via email and phone he had confirmed receipt of the invoice, yet payment remains outstanding.

Invoice 2358: The company have been contacted and have requested to pay via card link.

The ABM explained that the Parish Council is unable to process card payments and a BACS transfer would have to be made. A response was then received to request that they BACS transfer the payment next month. It was agreed the ABM would contact the company and request payment as soon as possible.

### **d) Reserves**

Cllr M Shepherd said the reserves reports have been circulated via SharePoint and advised there were no issues regarding the Reserves. There were no questions raised.

## **6 IT Update.**

Cllr M Shepherd reported that there has been an application from a parishioner to become a Parish Councillor, their co-option is an agenda item at the next Full Council meeting.

Should the individual be co-opted another Microsoft Licence will be required at a cost of £4.95 per month, this will be added to the existing agreement with System 3 and the direct debit amended. Cllr M Shepherd proposed an additional Microsoft Licence be purchased for £4.95 per month. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

It was agreed that Cllr M Shepherd would contact System 3 by email, copying the RFO into it, to have an additional licence added to the existing agreement.

Cllr M Shepherd said he would need access to the staff laptops to enable him to upgrade them to Windows 11. He asked if the ABM would discuss with the BM suitable dates.

## **7 2024/25 Internal Audit.**

The RFO said the internal audit was almost complete. The auditors had implied they would not need to the speak with the BM tomorrow and a finalised report should be ready in June.

## **8 Committee Spending Plans 2025-26**

Cllr C Shepherd reported the following:

Communications Committee had discussed purchasing a noticeboard to be located outside the village centre. Committee had agreed £1000.00 would be sufficient to cover the cost and installation of the noticeboard.

Environment Committee had discussed replacing some streetlights, both steel and concrete columns, at an estimated cost of £20,000.00. This could be reduced by 50% if a CIL grant can be obtained from the BC. As the grant is an uncertainty £20,000.00 would be requested from project reserves to ensure the project can be completed.

Cllr M Shepherd asked if the work due to be carried out at the War Memorial would need funds from the project reserves. Cllr C Shepherd replied yes.

Cllr C Shepherd said the Planning Committee would like to put in place a Neighbourhood Plan. Quotes were being obtained. The cost could be approximately £18,000 but grants were available. Cllr M Shepherd asked if anyone had volunteered to steer the project. Cllr C Shepherd said 99% of the work would be carried out by the selected company.

Cllr M Shepherd asked if there were any suggestions for the F & A spending plans.

Equipment for hybrid meetings were discussed but was not considered a priority until the legislation changes. A pull-down screen had previously been suggested for the Garden Room and possibly one for the Loft. Committee discussed this and agreed that screens for the Garden Room and Loft would be beneficial and that the Garden Room should be a priority.

Cllr M Shepherd suggested a replacement rechargeable portable sound system could be considered. This would aid with both meetings where Councillors have found it difficult to hear and events such as the recent VE day celebrations. It was agreed that this should be pursued.

Cllr C Shepherd suggested the order of importance for the three projects were: a pull-down screen, portable sound system and remote meeting equipment. This was agreed.

## **9 Dersingham Parish Council's Insurance**

Cllr M Shepherd reported the current insurance policy is due to expire 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. A one-year policy had been agreed last year as it was not possible to obtain three quotations due to the Asset Register not being updated, this has now been done. From past experience, properly assessing competitive insurance quotations can be complex as the companies tend to use standardised policies that are often not directly comparable. We need to have at least three fully analysed quotes for our July committee meeting, so the procurement process needs to begin without delay.. Cllr M Shepherd asked the ABM to speak with the BM regarding contacting brokers.

## **10 Age UK Norfolk Grant Request.**

Cllr C Shepherd advised a general request had been received from Age UK for a grant, there had been no specific amount applied for. Cllr Thomas asked if it was a grant that would be specifically beneficial to Dersingham. Committee discussed the application and agreed the BM would contact Age UK to ask if they could give examples specific to Dersingham.

## **11 Business Managers Update**

### **11.1 Defibrillator Checks**

The ABM reported the BM had carried out her monthly checks and Circuit and SharePoint had been updated.

### **11.2 New Costings for DVCA photocopying**

Cllr M Shepherd suggested the item be discussed at the next F&A committee meeting and it was agreed that the information supplied needed further explanation.

## **12 Correspondence**

Cllr C Shepherd advised a thank you letter had been received from Heacham & District Community Car Scheme for the grant given to them by the Parish Council.

## **13 Items for inclusion on the next agenda**

Audit Report

Committee Spending

AGAR

Costings DVCA Photocopying

## **14 Date of next meeting – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7pm in the Loft**

The meeting was placed in closed session at 8.20pm

## **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

### **15 Leases Update**

a) Sportsground

Cllr C Shepherd advised that sign-off from the Football Foundation is still awaited.

(b) Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hall

Cllr C Shepherd advised there was no update.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.25pm

### **Action Points**

#### **Cllr M Shepherd**

- Contact System 3 to purchase another Microsoft Licence.

#### **Cllr C Shepherd**

- To contact a specialist roofing/safety company for advice and quotation for installation of safety roof anchorage points.

#### **RFO**

- To review auditors and accountants for future Internal Audits.

#### **Business Manager**

- Contact Age UK regarding their grant application to ascertain if they have examples of assistance specific to Dersingham

#### **Assistant Business Manager**

- To contact ARK regarding the voicemail on the VOIP telephone system.
- To speak to the BM regarding contacting insurance brokers.