

Minutes of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held on **WEDNESDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2025** at **6.00pm** at **Ferryhill Town Hall, Chapel Terrace, Ferryhill.**

PRESENT: Councillors: Councillors L Fellows (Chair)
C Bihari, K Conroy P Atkinson,
V Collins, J Donald

Officials: L Owens, Town Clerk
K Younghusband,

R.26.24-25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor D Farry.

R.27.24-25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

R.28.24-25 MEMBERS DISPENSATION

There were no members dispensations in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

R.29.24-25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

R.30.24-25 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS & INCOME

Members considered the Statement of Accounts & Income that had been previously circulated.

Councillor J Makepeace noted that he is pleased that the water usage at East End Allotments seems to have reduced. The Town Clerk advised that her thoughts were that the high usage that was reflected previously was based on estimated meter readings.

Councillor L Fellows queried the statement of accounts for January 2025 on page 7 in relation to the electricity at Mainsforth Bowls and commented that this seems extremely high. The Town Clerk advised the reason behind this and advised that in the first instance she would ensure the electricity meter is read and the usage is accurately recorded and then liaise with the current tenant about the costs going forward. Councillor L Fellows also queried the costs associated with the scaffolding for the Christmas decorations and said this needs to be put into the Christmas budget. The Town Clerk explained that this was already happening.

Councillor C Bihari queried the amount of £70.60 shown on page 3 of the statement of accounts for December 2024 that is spent on crisps and juice for the children who attend the carol singing service and suggested that if

we are going to spend this amount of money could we at least explore a healthier option for the children.

RESOLVED

That

- a) That the Statement of Accounts and Income be accepted.
- b) That the Town Clerk investigates the electricity usage at Mainsforth Bowls Pavilion and then liaise with the current tenant to discuss costs going forward.
- c) That a healthier option be explored for the children attending the Carol Singing service later this year.

R.31.24-25 REVIEW OF MEMBERS INITIATIVE FUND

Members considered a report from the Events and Projects Officer in relation to the Members Initiative Fund Policy which had previously been circulated.

The Events and Projects Officer wished to raise some issues that she has in relation to the MIF Fund. One concern is that the Events and Projects Officer is having to continually chase Councillors about their MIF allocation and was therefore open to a discussion from Members on how best to manage this process going forward. Members were presented with a recommendation from the Events and Projects Officer and they agreed with this recommendation which is detailed below.

The Events and Projects Officer also talked about the difficulties she is having with one individual on two different groups and their failure to provide monitoring despite trying to liaise with the contact name on the application form. Councillor L Fellows gave some suggestions which members of the committee agreed to and the recommendation is detailed below.

The report presented detailed the deadline for all MIF applications, however The Events and Projects Officer advised that she could possibly extend this to the first week in March but no later, due to Purdah. In addition to former Councillor Kim Jones who did not spend her MIF allocation at the time of the meeting it was noted that two other Councillors have not spent their allocation. Councillor L Fellows asked if there are any other organisations who have contacted us for MIF funding but haven't been able to access it. It was discussed that there is one organisation who potentially wants some MIF funding but they need to return their

monitoring for a previous project before we would be able to release any further funding. It was noted that the Town Clerk has a report to go to full Council in relation to this.

Discussions took place about using MIF funding to assist with running costs. The Events and Projects Officer explained that she has discussed this with the Internal Auditor who suggested we could allow this as a one off. A lengthy debate ensued on this matter with various opinions raised. To move this item, forward a named vote was requested as follows:

'Where Funding applications are submitted in respect of ongoing running costs such as rent, energy or salaries then such costs will only be funded once in a four year period.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
C Atkinson	J Makepeace		D Farry
P Atkinson	L Fellows		
CBihari	V Collins		
K Conroy			
J Donald			
5	3	0	1

Further discussions took place in relation to any MIF monies that are left with the potential of these being used to fund anything on the estate. The Events and Projects Officer advised that the only issue she would have would be is that there has to be an applicant. Councillor L Fellows explained to Members of the Committee the process of how a Neighbourhood Budget works and explained that there would be no misuse of money it would just be the Councillors using their money in a different way.

Following a lengthy debate The Events and Projects Officer advised that she would speak with the Internal Auditor.

Discussions took place around the £450 that is left from former Councillor Kim Jones and Members questioned whether or not this could be used to assist with project 29 on the Priority Projects List which currently can't go ahead due to there being no applicant. Members were keen for this money to be used for this project.

RESOLVED

That

- a) The report from the Events and Projects Officer be noted.
- b) Any potential applicants are provided with a list of Councillors contact details so that they can contact them directly about any potential MIF applications.
- c) Where there are problems with monitoring, the Events and Projects Officer is to address any concerns with the organisation and give them a cutoff point in which to return the monitoring. Once monitoring has been returned if the organisation wishes to apply for any further MIF funding then they would need to provide a new contact name on the MIF application form.
- d) Remaining MIF applications for the 2024-2025 round of funding only be accepted if they are received by the Events and Projects Officer by no later than the first week in March 2025.
- e) MIF monies awarded to former Councillor, Kim Tinkler, will be spent on progressing the 'Tommy' Interpretation Panel at Duncombe Cemetery.
- f) That section 4.9 of the MIF Policy reads:

Where Funding Applications are submitted in respect of on-going running costs such as rent, energy/utilities or salaries then such costs will only be funded on occasion, i.e. no more than once every four years, to avoid groups becoming reliant upon the MIF.
- g) That section 4.11 of the MIF policy reads:

In exceptional circumstances, where Members have not spent their individual MIF allocations by 31st January, monies will be permitted to be spent, at Officers discretion, on improving/replacing a Council Asset (i.e. work on the Council's own land). Where this occurs, the MIF application will be submitted by Ferryhill Town Council's Works Department (Works Manager).

R.32.24-25 AGREE A LIST OF PRIORITY PROJETS

Members discussed the current project list that was provided by the Events and Projects Officer.

The Events and Projects Officer gave updates on the progress of projects that were identified as a priority and advised that the comments will be sent to Members again along with the list of priority projects.

In terms of the Miners Lamp Sculpture, it was confirmed that once the project is complete there will be some money left over to have a celebration event, celebrating the success of the project.

Other potential projects that were discussed to be added to the list were a potential dog walking area at King George V which was suggested by Councillor P Atkinson. Discussions took place around this with the Events and Projects Officer noting that as land owners Fields in Trust would have to agree this and there is also the decision of whether or not the skate park is still wanted as this has been put as a long term project.

Councillor C Atkinson also talked about an idea she has for a childrens road area in the park which would learn children about road safety. Councillor C Atkinson advised that Coxhoe have an area like this in one of their parks. It was noted that for this to be explored further public consultation would need to reflect that this was something the public wanted.

Following further discussions, it was:

RESOLVED

That

- a) A comparison be looked at comparing the electricity usage at both the Town Hall and Dean Bank Sports Facility now against what it looked like a year prior to the solar panels being installed.
- b) The Town Clerk liaises with Members of the History Society as a priority to ensure the lease is signed for the use of the Heritage Centre to enable the agreed decorating works to be undertaken.
- c) If problems persist with the lease not being signed for use of the Heritage Centre that the Town Clerk seeks legal advice and reports this back to Members within a reasonable timescale.
- d) The idea of creating a Dog Walking area instead of the Skatepark be explored with Fields in Trust (as owners of King George V and once the possibility is known a Report to be brought to Council as soon as possible to allow the Council to carry out some community consultation.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7:10pm.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR.....

DATE.....