



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OF  
FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
which was held in the Dorothy Pluck Room, St Mary's Church, Fowlmere  
on **TUESDAY 3rd December 2024 at 19:30**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Baker-Oxley, Cllr Hobro, Cllr Mulholland, Cllr Sargeant (Chair).  
Cllr Roberts arrived @ 19:45

**IN ATTENDANCE:** The Clerk and 0 members of the public

**BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED**

*In accordance with LGA 1972 schedule 12 10(2) (b) which states that business must be specified.*

**24/F41 Apologies for absence** (LGA 1972 s 85(1))

Cllr Lennon (Personal Commitments)

**24/F42 Declarations of interest & requests for dispensations in agenda items** (Localism Act 2011 s 31 s33)

There were none

**24/F43 Minutes of Previous Meeting** ([click here](#)) (in accordance with standing order 12a)

**Proposal:** The Finance Committee of Fowlmere Parish Council herewith agree the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2024.

**Proposed:** Cllr Baker Oxley      **Seconded:** Cllr Mulholland      **motion passed.**

**24/F44 Public Participation Session**

There were no members of the public.

**24/F45 Review of expenditure 24/25 to date (28th November)** ([click here](#))

Discussed expenditure, still on track for the end of the financial year.

**24/F46 Review of reserves to date (28th November)** ([click here](#))

Reserves were reviewed, nothing changed since last meeting.

**24/F47 Asset management Software** [circulated with agenda]

Discussion points included:

- About the importance of keeping records of assets regarding financial regulations
- Keeping a track of the assets, mapping them, costs, maintenance.
- Using the software enabling Cllrs to report defects, monitor maintenance.
- Future use regarding areas of land, useful for maintenance, grass cutting, contracts, tree work
- Front facing reports.
- Handing over information not just to new employees but to Councillors in the 4 yearly election cycle.

**Proposal:** To approve the use of asset management software

**Proposed:** Cllr Baker Oxley      **Seconded:** Cllr Sargeant      **motion passed.**

Cllr Roberts arrived 19:45

**24/F48 Outsourcing HR** [circulated with agenda]

Discussion points included:

- Recommendations were received from other Clerks about the systems they have used or inherited.
- Range of costs for services available to assist with setting up HR policies, contracts, day to day support and support if things go wrong.
- Cheaper use of an app based system to monitor and log items such as annual leave, sickness, annual appraisals, all kept in one place.
- Would provide central and digital records to keep to make handovers easier when there is a change in Cllrs, or a change in the Clerk.

**Proposal:** To approve a potential budget line for spend for outsourcing HR should Full Council approve.

**Proposed:** Cllr Sargeant      **Seconded:** Cllr Baker Oxley      **motion passed.**

**24/F49 Maintenance of Skatepark** ([click here](#))

Discussion points included:

- Wear and tear on a well used piece of equipment was to be expected.
- Photos sent to the company who stated that the structure is in good condition but basic regular maintenance will be needed to make sure it does not deteriorate.
- Skatepark had cost about £25,000 to install (grant funded), if equipment is regularly maintained to a good standard will continue being available for use for many more years.
- Cost of regular maintenance to be between £800 and £1300 each year.
- Company suggested that from photos a visit now would be no more that £1000.

**a)Proposal:** To approve new budget line for annual skatepark annual maintenance assessment and any tasks necessary.

**Proposed:** Cllr Roberts      **Seconded:** Cllr Baker-Oxley      **motion passed.**

**b)Proposal:** To approve the quote for the skatepark company to undertake maintenance assessment and works needed money to be taken from reserves 24/25 financial year.

**Proposed:** Cllr Hobro      **Seconded:** Cllr Sargeant      **motion passed.**

#### **24/F50 Review and setting of 25/26 budget and precept [draft budget circulated with agenda]**

Discussion points included:

- New ear-marked reserve budge lines, to support future costs or works that cross multiple financial years.
- Salary & NI Budget line. Potential increase of hours of the Clerk, and the increase in employers NI from April 25 and the change in the threshold of when NI will be paid created a significant jump. Proposal to use reserves to mitigate the effect of this increase over the next three budgets.
- During the high inflation of the last 2 years the budget has been kept under the rate of inflation to not increase the burden of the cost of living crisis. Now inflation is lower and under control it is a better time to have an above inflation raise to catch up and prevent service shortfalls.
- A 9.99% increase of the precept was proposed. This would represent a £9.63 increase for the year of a Band D property.

**Proposal:** To agree the 2025/26 precept to put forward to Full Council in January

**Proposed:** Cllr Sargeant      **Seconded:** Cllr Baker-Oxley      **motion passed.**

#### **24/F51 Grants and Donations ([click here](#))**

**a)** Grant application for the RCDT

Discussion points included:

- Journeys from Fowlmere seemed low this year.
- The numbers seem to go up and down depending upon need.
- Previous donations have been £300
- It was suggested this years donation should be £200

**Proposal:** To donate £200 to RCDT from contingency budget (Local Govt & Rating Act97 s.26)

**Proposed:** Cllr Sargeant      **Seconded:** Cllr Roberts      **motion passed.**

#### **24/F52 To agree the expenses below [circulated with agenda]**

**Proposal:** To agree the Clerk's travel expenses

**Proposed:** Cllr Sargeant      **Seconded:** Cllr Baker-Oxley      **motion passed.**

#### **24/F53 To agree the virements below:**

**Proposal:** To agree a virement of £3500.00 from General Reserves to 2024/25 staffing budget

**Proposed:** Cllr Sargeant      **Seconded:** Cllr Baker-Oxley      **motion passed.**

Meeting closed 20:25

*Any business to be considered at a Parish Council meeting must be delivered to the clerk for inclusion in accordance with Standing Order 9b.*