

Minutes of a meeting of the **FINANCE and GENERAL PURPOSES** Committee held in the Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.30pm

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Present	Councillors	Peter Bucklitsch Suzanne Dixon* Martyn Everitt Martyn Garrett Kay Moss Matthew Street* Neil Waller Natalie Whittle	Vice-Chairman      Chairman
Also present		Caroline Miles Karen Whiley	Town Clerk Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

4 members of the public  
Cllr David Hedges CTC

\*Denotes non attendance

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## **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Suzanne Dixon  
Cllr Matthew Street

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Martyn Everitt declared an interest in 6.2 as a trustee of Clued-Up  
Cllr Kay Moss declared an interest in 6.2 as a trustee of Clued-Up

## **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**10272 RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2023 as confirmed be ratified by the Chairperson.

The chairperson moved to hear item 6 due to members of the public present.

*Standing orders were suspended*

A representative of Clued-Up addressed the committee. Since lockdown the drop-in service has not been as popular so they are now working with groups of young people rather than on an ad-hoc basis. The service is now open on some evenings rather than just afternoons.

The only funding received is from CTC and WDC as ESCC no longer supports the Organisation financially.

There will be an open evening on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October to celebrate 25 years since Clued-Up was opened and all councillors were invited to attend.

A representative from the Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) addressed the committee and advised that the CAB had moved into an office at Basepoint in Pine Grove. Although they had downsized, the new location was more suitable in terms of accessibility for clients, being near the library and the council offices. The CAB had been booking other empty spaces in Basepoint on an ad-hoc basis to provide a confidential meeting space for clients but were in the throes of the hiring of another office space for a permanent interview room.

*Standing orders were reinstated.*

## **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS**

- 10273 RESOLVED** to award an annual grant of £25,000 to Clued -Up from 2024/25 and to continue with the 3-year rolling agreement.

Cllr Kay Moss and Cllr Martyn Everitt did not take part in the vote.

- 10274 RESOLVED** to award an annual grant of £25,000 to Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau from 2024/25 and to continue with the 3-year rolling agreement.

4 members of the public left the meeting at 7.50pm.

## **FINANCE**

To note the finance report and supporting appendices and agree any action

The Income and expenditure was noted.

The Earmark Reserves were noted

To review and note the external auditors report and comments

The external auditors report was noted.

To note the funds between NatWest and Lloyds account

The funds were noted

To review the current investments

It was noted that the council has an environmental ethos and that further examination should take place with regards to what companies it uses are investing in. It was pointed out by the RFO that many companies are labelled as 'green' but in practice this may not be the case. It was also noted that funds are moved every 60 days therefore what may be acceptable today may not be acceptable in 60 days' time. It was therefore extremely difficult to make a judgement on how 'green' a company was in practice. Members agreed that the council has an obligation and a duty to invest public money in the best interests of the community. It was noted that there was access to money at all times with the CCLA.

- 10275 RESOLVED** to invest £500k with the CCLA.

To note the latest Loan Summary

The loan summary was noted.

To note and agree next steps regarding replacement server or cloud based hosting

It was noted that the cost of the purchase of the tablets would be the same whether the committee opted to have a server or a cloud based hosting system.

It was agreed that the purchase of tablets was essential for the long term security of the council in terms of how data is managed and that deletions must be in line with the council's retention policy.

- 10276 RESOLVED** that the council moves to a cloud based hosting system and that 16 x android tablets are purchased for councillors which are to be used solely for Crowborough Town Council business.

To review the changes and recommend the Financial Regulations to Full Council

- 10277 RESOLVED** to recommend the four amendments to the Financial Regulations to Full Council.

To note the latest information on Insurance Claims

The report was noted

To agree the budget report for 2024/25 for recommendation to Full Council

It was noted that there was a 0.4% in the projected net spend.

- 10278 RESOLVED** to recommend the F&GP budget 2024/5 and the projected budgets for 2025/6 and 2026/7 to Full Council to consider as part of the whole council budget.

Review of F & GP policies

Member's allowances

- 10279 RESOLVED** to accept the Members' Allowances policy as submitted.

**EXEMPT BUSINESS**

- 10280 RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr David Hedges left the chamber at 20.20hrs

To note the confidential aged debt report

The report was noted.

**URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING AND/OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

The meeting closed at hrs. 20:25hrs