FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
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SUMMONS

Dear Member 26 November 2024

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** held on Monday, 2 December 2024 at 2.00 p.m at the Parish Office, 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak.

Melanie Stephens
Melanie Stephens, Parish Clerk

PUBLIC INFORMATION: Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. The seating capacity of our Conference Room for members of the public is limited under fire regulations to 22.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme: (a) on items under the Council's remit which are not on the public agenda; and/or (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to attend the meeting or speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme, should contact the Parish Clerk by emailing clerk@fairoak-pc.gov.uk no later than 12.00 noon on Thursday, 28 November 2024.

AGENDA

PART I – PUBLIC SESSION

APOLOGIES

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest and dispensation requests.

2 MINUTES (PAPER A, PAGES 3-5)

To note the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2024.

3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any public participation in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme.

4 COMMUNITY GRANTS (REPORT B, PAGES 6-11)

To approve the grant requests for 2024/25.

5 TIME OFF IN LIEU POLICY (REPORT C, TO FOLLOW)

To agree a time off in lieu policy.

6 WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT D, PAGE 12)

To note the work programme.

7 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

At the conclusion of this part of the Agenda, the Chairman will move the following resolution: -
"That, under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960, the public and the Press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information which would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of its confidential nature (staffing matters)"

PART II – PRIVATE SESSION

Members are reminded that reports and information relating to this session are not for publication and should be treated as strictly confidential.

8 STAFF SALARIES (REPORT E, CONFIDENTIAL)

To agree the staff salaries for 2025/26.

9 STAFFING MATTERS (VERBAL REPORT)

To discuss various staffing matters.

To: Councillors		**Officers**
Cllr P Barrett	Cllr K Forfar	Mrs J Cahill (RFO)
Cllr H Douglas (Chairman)	Cllr T Higby	Ms M Stephens (Clerk)
Cllr W Chivuchi	Cllr M Marsh	
Cllr N Couldrey	Cllr B Tennent	

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Minutes of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** meeting held on Monday 9 July 2024 at 10.00 am at the Parish Office, 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak

Present: Cllrs Couldrey, Douglas (Chair) & Chivuchi.

Officers in attendance: Joanna Cahill, Responsible Finance Officer and Melanie Stephens, Clerk.

Apologies: Cllrs Barrett, Forfar, Higby, Marsh & Tennent

PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public were present.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest raised in connection with an agenda item.

2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS (PAPER A)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2024 be noted.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Douglas moved that Cllr Couldrey be elected Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee for the ensuing municipal year. The motion was seconded by Cllr Chivuchi. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Couldrey be appointed as Vice-Chair for the ensuing municipal year.

4. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT (REPORT B

The Committee considered the Parish Council's current financial position against the approved 2024/25 budgets.

The total budget agreed by the Council for the 24/25 financial year was £645,438. Members were informed that all budget codes were currently within budget with the exception of business rates for Woodland Community Centre which was 25% above budget. Members requested that this be queried with Eastleigh Borough Council.

RESOLVED:

(a) That latest budget position as at 30 June 2024 be noted; and

(b) That the Finance Officer query the business rate fee for Woodland Community Centre with Eastleigh Borough Council.

Action: Jo Cahill

5. FINANCE RISK ASSESSMENT (REPORT C)

The Committee considered the Council's Finance Risk Assessment.

In relation to the Council's fidelity cover, members queried whether this was sufficient and requested that the Finance Officer make enquiries regarding this and increase the cover should budgets allow.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Council's Finance Risk Assessment be approved; and

(b) That the Finance Officer increase the fidelity cover for the Council.

Action: Jo Cahill

6. MARKETING STRATEGY (REPORT D)

The Committee considered the draft strategy for marketing of Council halls for hire and other services.

The strategy was requested by the Committee with the objective of increasing the hire of buildings, particularly the Parish Office, to maximise the Council's income.

Members suggested that further effort could be made to increase the Parish Office's roadside presence through large banners and reducing the hedges along Botley Road, signposting potential hirers to the building.

RESOLVED:

That the marketing strategy be approved.

Action: Carly Giles/Mel Stephens

7. WORK PROGRAMME

Members requested that the Budget Task & Finish Group scheduled to take place on 3 September be moved to 13 September and that the Finance Committee meeting scheduled on 6 December be moved to 2 December at 10am.

RESOLVED

(a) That the Work Programme be noted; and

(b) That the Budget Task & Finish Group meeting scheduled to take place on 3 September be moved to 13 September and that the Finance Committee meeting scheduled on 6 December be moved to 2 December at 10am.

Action: Mel Stephens

8. ENERGY REPORT (REPORT F)

The Committee considered the progress made against the energy audit and proposed actions as a result of this such as the switch to cheaper and green energy suppliers, the installation of solar panels at the Pavilion and best practice methods for energy consumption.

Members were informed that the outstanding complaint with SSE regarding overcharging at the Horton Heath Community Centre was now being dealt with by the Energy Ombudsman. The Deputy Clerk was monitoring this matter and would report back as and when appropriate.

The success of the installation of the solar panels at both the Parish Office and Woodland Community Centre was noted, particularly the energy cost reduction to the Council. Due to the success of these installations, and the increase in the usage at the Pavilion, members were happy to support the commencement of a solar retrofit project at the Pavilion, with the Deputy Clerk investigating outside funding support for this.

In considering other energy saving methods, and particularly the proposal for clothes drying cupboard at the Parish Office, members requested that a full project proposal be submitted as part of the budgeting process. Members suggested that light sensors could be added to community buildings to reduce electricity consumption.

Members passed on their thanks to the Deputy Clerk for a thorough report and the progress made against the energy action plan.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the contents of the report and the energy saving measures set out in the Energy Audit at Appendix 1 be noted;

(b) That the Deputy Clerk be given delegated authority to commission green energy suppliers, seeking the best tariffs for all parish owned sites;

(c) That the Deputy Clerk be instructed to seek quotations for solar installation with battery storage at Lapstone Pavilion and investigation outside funding sources; and

(d) That Officers submit a project proposal as part of the budgeting for 2025/26 to the Budget Task & Finish Group for the installation of a drying cupboard at the workshop.

Action: Michelle Leadbitter-Allen

Signed …….

Chairman

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FINANCE COMMITTEE: 2 DECEMBER 2024

B

COMMUNITY GRANT AWARDS 2024/25

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 That the community grant allocations as set out in paragraph 8.1, and in more detail in **Appendix 1,** be approved.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council's Community Grants Policy was updated in June 2023 by Full Council to reflect the Council's commitment to a sustainable future and to improving the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the community by aligning the Grants Policy with the Objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan 2023-2026, namely People, Planet & Place.

2.2 The deadline for the receipt of Community Grant applications received for the 2024/2025 financial year was 31 October 2024, after advertising the grant process on the Council's website and social media pages.

2.3 As with previous years, all the applications were measured against the Council's eligibility criteria and all applications having met the criteria have been put forward for members' consideration.

3. PROCESS

3.1 The Committee must consider all applications, as set against the Council's budget framework. The grant budget for 2024/25 is £4,000.

3.2 A total of ten applications were received within the grant application period, with a total value of £9,655. Four of the ten applications where seeking 100% of the project costs which is contrary to the Council's grant allocation criteria.

3.3 The increase in applicants is likely due to the increase in communications and target work undertaken by the Community Development Officer.

3.4 Officers have undertaken an initial review of the applications, and recommendations, with reasons, for the determination of each of the grant request, are set out in paragraph 7.1 below and in further detail in Appendix 1.

3.5 Allocations were considered on a case-by-case basis with the Council's core objectives in mind. Where a successful award was made, the full amount has not been awarded in every case.

3.6 Applicants will be informed of the Committee's decision following the meeting, and grant awards will be paid in January 2025.

4. PREVIOUS YEARS GRANT AWARD

4.1 As part of the grants terms and conditions, successful grant recipients are requested to complete a monitoring form to demonstrate how the funds have helped their group and the wider Parish. For example, with last years' award, St. Thomas's Church have been able to buy some gardening tools for the garden maintenance team. This was set up to help those who are unable to tend to their gardens anymore. By having better equipment, the team have been able to run their service more efficiently and as a result are able to help more people in need. Monitoring forms are still outstanding and will be reviewed by the Clerk and Community Development Officer.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The total amount to be awarded, should the Council approve the recommendations set out in paragraph 8.1, is £4,000.

5.2 The grant allocation fund has not been amended for some time. The advisory sum for the purpose of Section 137 grant allocation for 24/25 is £10.81 per electorate. An increase for 25/26 is likely to be 10% increase based on the last four-year figures. Therefore, it is advised that the grant fund be increased to £4,500 in next years' budget.

6. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The grant application process is available to all relevant bodies meeting the Council's eligibility criteria. By including social value and environmental criteria it is hoped that this will have a positive impact on equality and diversity in the community.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 To ensure that the grant process is more aligned to the Council's corporate priorities, the Council requests that applicants to demonstrate their project supports/protects the environment.

8. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS: SUMMARY

8.1 The table below gives a summary of applications received and recommended award:

ITEM	APPLICANT	TOTAL PROJECT	%	REQUEST	RECOMMENDATION
A	Eastleigh CAB	£2,000	25	£500	£350
B	FO Cricket Club	£1,500	33	£500	£300
C	FO Trefoil Guild	£300	67	£200	£100
D	FO Village Hall	£1,000	100	£1,000	£450
E	Friends of FO Infant School	£1,000	100	£1,000	£300
F	Kings School Charity	£150	100	£150	£50
G	Sport in the Community	£1,000	100	£1,000	£500
H	St Francis Animal Shelter	£2,100	48	£1,000	£500
I	St Thomas Church	£1,920	52	£1,000	£850
J	Wyvern FC	£1,285	69	£885	£600
			Total	**£9,655**	**£4,000**

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Council has the power to award grants to organisations under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

9.2 The Council's Community Grants Scheme supports local community and voluntary organisations to deliver activities that benefit residents in the area.

APPENDIX 1

A	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	Eastleigh CAB	Replacement office intercom for visitor and staff protection.

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£2,000	£500	£0

SUMMARY:

Citizens Advice Eastleigh is an independent charity that assists people with legal, debt, consumer, housing and other problems.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £350 be awarded.

REASON: For staff and visitor welfare/protection.

B	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	Fair Oak Cricket Club	Purchase of training equipment for junior team and maintenance of equipment

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£1,500	£500	£600

SUMMARY:

To increase junior participation in cricket through the purchasing of new training equipment.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £300 be awarded.

REASON: To support the growth and development of the junior cricket team.

C	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	Fair Oak Trefoil Guild	Assist with the cost of guest speakers.

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£300	£200	£0

SUMMARY:

The Trefoil Guild is a local community group for over 18's, with connections to Guilding who undertake voluntary community-based activities within the local area, providing social interaction for its members. The group meet three times a year and have guest speakers. The group have approximately 25 members.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £100 be awarded.

REASON: To support the provision of guest speakers at the Groups meetings.

D	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	Fair Oak Village Hall	To provide the annual pantomime for the children (and their families) in the village.

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£1,000	£1,000	£700

SUMMARY:

The funding will enable the village hall to continue to provide a Christmas pantomime.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £450 be awarded.

REASON: To support the provision of community performance for local children and their families.

E	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	Friends of Fair Oak Infant School	New bike rack to encourage greener methods of travel to school.

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£1,000	£1,000	£1,000

SUMMARY:

As part of a large playground refurbishment project, the Friends of Charity is looking to remove shrubbery area within the car park to provide bike racks for parents and children. It is hoped that this will encourage more cycling to school relieving the pressure on the local roads. The current bike rack is old and only stores five bikes.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £300 be awarded.

REASON: To support greener methods of transport to school and reduce carbon emissions within the parish as well as improving air quality in the parish.

F	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	The Kings School Charity	Installation of a heritage plaque

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£150	£150	£0

SUMMARY:

The School has recently discovered the original ‘founding stone’ of this historical building which was previously used as a nunnery. The charity wish to install the stone in the main reception with a plaque highlighting the local history to visitors and children.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £50 be awarded.

REASON: To preserve and highlight local heritage.

G	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	Sport in the Community 2020 CIC	Provision of over 65's mobility activity sessions

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£1,000	£1,000	£0

SUMMARY:

The CIC was established to increase participation in sport, physical activity and promote health and wellbeing within the local community. Working in the two local care homes, the CIC wish to offer gentle physical activity sessions to residents aged over 65 and the local community. The sessions aim to increase mobility of participants helping them to live more independently for longer.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £500 be awarded.

REASON: To support the provision of activity sessions for over 65's in the parish contributing to their overall health and wellbeing.

H	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	St Francis Animal Welfare	Support the refurbishment of the main shelter building.

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£2,100	£1,000	£0

SUMMARY:

St Francis Animal welfare is a small charity rescuing, caring ad rehabilitating homeless or unwanted domestic animals. They currently have over 60 animals in their care. The charity wishes to upgrade its existing building which is in poor state of repair including an animal drying laundry facility as well as the installation of LED lighting tubes.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £500 be awarded.

REASON: To support the provision of animal welfare support in the area.

I	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	St Thomas Church	To support the provision of a weekly community lunch

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£1,920	£1,000	£500

SUMMARY:

St Toms church provides weekly community lunch which provides free refreshments/lunch to local residents. It also provides a welcoming space for people

attending alleviating social isolation and loneliness.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £850 be awarded.

REASON: To support the provision of free lunch to those most vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness in the Parish.

J	APPLICANT:	REASON FOR APPLICATION:
	Wyvern Football Club	Develop ladies football team and increase SEN participation including equipment to support sessions.

TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS AWARD
£1,285	£885	£0

SUMMARY:

Wyvern FC provides football training for players aged 6 to 50+. The only football club in Fair Oak with over 450 playing members. The grant requested would help support the development of a ladies team through the purchase of equipment and pitch hire. The grant would also support provision of SEN sessions through equipment to allow those needing specialist support to fully participate in football training sessions. Funding would also be used to support the purchase of equipment for younger team players.

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £600 be awarded.

REASON: To support the increased participation of a wider group of individuals i.e females and those needing additional support in local football.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME (2024/25)

D

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
DECEMBER 2024			
Budget 2025/26 (including Budget T&F recommendations)	To review the draft budget prior to being submitted for final approval by Full Council	Report	Mel Stephens/Joanna Cahill
Grant Applications	To review applications received during the application deadline	Report	Mel Stephens
MARCH 2025			
Finance Monitoring Report	To receive an update from the RFO including EOY progress.	Report	Mel Stephens/Joanna Cahill
Allocation of Capital Reserves	To agree allocation of capital reserves.	Report	Mel Stephens
Investment Strategy	To review the Strategy	Report	Mel Stephens/Joanna Cahill
JULY 2025			
Finance Monitoring Report	To review the quarterly accounts	Report	Joanna Cahill
Financial Risk Assessment	To review the Financial Risk Assessment	Report	Mel Stephens
Marketing Strategy	To consider a strategy for marketing halls/venues to maximise income opportunities	Report	Carly Giles/Joanna Cahill
Review of VAT	To undertake the VAT review	Report	Joanna Cahill