KIDLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 1AB
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Minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held at Exeter Hall on Thursday 23 November 2023 at 6:30pm

Present: Cllr Lesley McLean (Chair), Cllr Ian Middleton, Cllr Linda Ward, Cllr Alan Graham, Cllr Alison Street, Cllr Danny Wright, Cllr David Thurling, Cllr David Betts

In attendance: Rachel Faulkner – Clerk, Alyson Bateman – RFO

Apologies: Cllr David Robey

23/PF062 The Committee **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023 were a correct record and the minutes were signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

23/PF059 The Clerk advised that the cost of a civil enforcement officer would be in the region of £30,000. Members agreed to refer this to Traffic Advisory Committee where other options would be explored, including the use of ANPR, to prevent vehicles illegally parking in the High Street. Cllr Middleton to follow up with OCC officers regarding progress.

23/PF060 The RFO presented two options for the renewal of the gas energy contract. The committee voted and members agreed by majority that, although more expensive, the 100% green renewable gas contract should be entered into.

Financial Reports

23/PF063 The Earmarked reserve list was presented and the following changes were proposed and agreed:

1. EMR 316 Environmental and Climate emergency - reduce to nil, and remove. Members agreed that environmental concerns should be part of all decision making
2. EMR 331 Electric vehicle – create EMR £40,000
3. EMR 313 Election costs – increase EMR to £7,000
4. EMR 327 Members allowances – reduce to nil, and remove
5. EMR 319 IT Hardware replacement – Increase to £3,000
6. EMR 321 Professional Fees Exeter Close – create new £23,000
7. EMR 334 Major Planning – increase to £35,000
8. EMR 335 Coronation King Charles – remove this reserve
9. EMR 336 Communications – Increase to £10,000
10. General Reserve change to £250k to balance above changes.

23/PF064 The Chair tabled a Planned Capital expenditure document to consider potential projects making use of the £753k capital reserve. She explained that many of the projects had not been costed and would need to go through the Project Framework.

Cllr Betts said that the retention of the unearmarked Capital of £753k would reduce the need for loans should the Exeter Close project, when it comes to fruition, not be a net nil cost to KPC.

Cllr Street suggested that it was possible that some of the suggested projects might also attract outside funding. Cllr Middleton also agreed this was possible and that consideration be given to possible match funding.

Cllr Betts tabled the motion to ringfence £500,000 of the Capital fund against other spending plans until the future of Exeter Close was settled. Cllr Graham proposed adding that this position could be reviewed every six months.

It was **RESOLVED** that a review of the Capital reserves would be tabled for six months' time.

23/PF065 **S137 Grant -** the committee considered the application for a hire discount grant from the Kidlington (1315) Squadron Air Cadets. The committee voted and RESOLVED to offer the grant.

23/PF066 The RFO presented a note from CDC which detailed an increase in Parish election administration costs. The effect of this change would be to increase the maximum cost from £7,000 to over £16,000 for the next elections. As there are no Parish elections next year this increase is not immediately effective. Members agreed to review the earmarked reserve after the end of the financial year when the final outturn would be known. **ACTION**: Add item to budget review in Autumn 2024.

23/PF066 The committee noted the costs of £600 for the binding and storage of Council papers.

23/PF067 Cllr Wright presented a paper concerning the drainage of pitches at Stratfield Brake. He informed the committee that data from CDC stated that over twenty football matches had not been able to be played at Stratfield Brake due to flooding following the recent heavy rainfall.
ACTION The Committee asked the Clerk to arrange a meeting with CDC officers Tony Brummell and Liam Didcock to discuss the issue in advance of the next meeting of the Stratfield Brake Liaison group in late January 2024.

23/PF066 The Committee requested that the Clerk write to the Botley West Solar Farm to express concern at the timing of the consultation period over the Christmas period and to ask if Kidlington residents were considered part of the consultation zone. Cllr Betts agreed to re-draft his original response to the consultation which would be presented to the next meeting of this committee on 18 January 2024

The meeting closed at 8:05pm.