

**MIDDLETON-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024**

**PRESENT** – Councillors Mrs Haywood (Chairman), Allsopp, Mansfield and Newton

**1. APOLOGIES** – Mrs Pendleton

**2. MINUTES** – Approval of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were proposed by Mr Allsopp and seconded by Mr Newton and agreed unanimously by members following approval the minutes were signed.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were none.

**4. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD** – No members of the public were present.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

**1) Update on actions from previous meeting** – The General Contingency has been increased to £15,000 in accordance with the financial rules.

**2) External Auditors Certificate 2023-2024**

The external auditors signed off the certificate and commented on a couple of small signing off irregularities.

**3) Review Draft Parish Council Accounts as at August 2024**

It was noted that a grant for Willowbrook of £25,200 distorts the bank balance. The funds will be utilised in early 2025. The delay in finding a new Clerk coupled with the creation of a Clerk's office plus the additional equipment required has increased general expenditure. A more realistic understanding of the position will be seen once budgets for 2025/2026 are produced. It is anticipated that a significant increase in the precept will be required.

**4) Bank Reconciliation at 17 September 2024**

The reconciliation was produced by the Clerk and checked/signed off by Councillor Allsopp.

**.....5) Update on recruitment of a new Parish Clerk**

Natalie Leal the present Administrative Assistant has been appointed as Parish Clerk with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November. The duties of the Responsible Financial Office (RFO) will continue to be undertaken by Joe Lake and the role of the Administrative Assistant has been discontinued.

**.....6) Update on Middleton News Revenue**

In order to retain existing advertisers and encourage new ones a special offer was promoted for the September 2024 edition. This required advertisers to commit to 4 adverts (full year) but only pay for 3 adverts. The payment had to be made up front.

This has proved very successful however it does have the effect of bringing in advertising revenue now with none in the first half of 2025. A decision whether to repeat the offer in September 2025 can be taken in early 2025.

**.....7) Update Benches and Repairs to Playground and Gym Equipment**

Two benches have been installed outside the Sports Pavilion, one on the green by Cootes Lane and one at The Cabin bus stop. These originally were to have been seats but an ordering error meant benches were received and it was too costly to exchange them for seats.

Repairs to the playground have been completed but repairs to the gym equipment were not possible and they need replacing

Playground/sports equipment suppliers are being invited to provide quotations, however, replacement will not be possible unless grant funding is obtained.

**6) ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.16 p.m. The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.