

**EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023 at 7.00pm**

Committee Members: Cllr Woodgate (Chairman)  
Cllr Mrs Farren (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Peacock (Town Mayor)  
Cllr Visser (Deputy Town Mayor)\*  
Cllrs: Amos, Mrs Belsey, Matthews, Osborne & Sweatman\*

Others present: Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk

\*= absent

275. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no public present, therefore the Chairman moved along to the next item.

276. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were noted from:

Cllr Visser	Personal Commitment
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277. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: the minutes for the meetings of 15<sup>th</sup> December and 12<sup>th</sup> January were accepted as a correct record and the Chairman bidden to sign them as such.

278. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no new declarations.

279. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The chairman advised that the precept demand has been served on Mid Sussex DC along with the information for billing and the council tax bills are expected to land on doorsteps any day.

We are still awaiting the completion of the sale for St Barnabas to finalise the sale transfer to the Council. Our Solicitors are still waiting for the papers to be received from the Churches solicitors.

An update was requested regarding St Margarets Loop, it was confirmed that the final figures regarding the commutable sums are expected in June so that the final negotiations can be asked.

280. TO RECEIVE THE LIST OF APPROVED PAYMENTS

Questions were asked concerning

- The replacement Mayor's jewel - why was this? It was advised that Cllr Whittaker's jewel had been lost and while the Council paid the bill, Cllr Whittaker repaid the Council for this.
- What was the Christmas lights insurance? - this is because the insurance is only up to 1000 people and the big reveal event was much bigger.
- Christmas lights decorations what were they for - this was for the big reveal / stage decorations
- How was the ticket for the Mayor's jive aces concert attended paid for? it was the Town Mayor's allowance
- Why was first aid provided for the vintage car rally? At an event of that size it is required
- It is pleasing to see that the council has managed to keep the costs of insurance at a reasonable level

RESOLVED: To accept the list of payments included in the appendix for December, January and February.

281. TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE

The Position Statement was noted

In answer to a question Mr Chambers advised that the interest income had performed well, we have not at this time moved money around and the accounts that we use are the best available for the council.

282. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The report was noted

283. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMITTEE

It was noted that there had been no recommendations this cycle.

284. DELEGATED DECISIONS

It was noted that there had been no delegated decisions this cycle.

285. ELECTRIC CAR CHARGEPOINTS

The Chairman introduced the item and threw it open for questions.

How much overall will this cost the council?

This is a new proposal, the previous one was for £15,000. This new proposal would have no cost to the council for the installation and maintenance for the first few years. However there is then a profit share back to the company along with the Council. After year five there could be a maintenance cost currently quoted at around £350 per year.

If the costs are not recouped, the contractor would not be able to vary when the maintenance charge comes in.

It is not known what the profit share would be after the first five years, this would then be renegotiated but as the council then has the costs to maintain the profit share should alter at that time. This is not yet known and would be subject to renegotiation at that time.

The assumption must be that the usage will grow as more electric vehicles become in use.

It was noted that the current usage is not great at 11%, but this may yet grow and that the whole project is subject to the viability analysis by Connectedkerb for the placement of the units in East Grinstead.

It is not known what the MSDC income levels are for their electric charger points, down to an individual charger.

Last time this was discussed the cost was prohibitive, however the scheme is going to be funded by a government scheme, which is taxpayer's funds. It is therefore still too expensive and we should look at the overall community costs not just the Council's cost.

Chairman noted that as we do not charge for car parking we are not losing any income but actually making an income from this scheme. This would be a private business enterprise creating a profit.

The capacity of the car chargers is low and it doesn't seem to be appropriate that the taxpayer pays this. It was countered that this money is already allocated, if East Grinstead does not use it, the investment will go elsewhere and East Grinstead taxpayers will lose out.

The Committee would like to see the proposed contract and a full feasibility study and it was asked to include the community cost of the loss of the car park spaces as part of this.

RESOLVED: The Committee requested a feasibility study as to the scheme to be brought back for further consideration.

## 286. AIR QUALITY MONITORING POSTS

The Chairman introduced the item

It was asked as to what the benefits of the installation would be for the town.

It was explained as to the reasons for bringing these posts forward is about the changing of behaviour, and understanding the pollution levels of the air especially around schools as this may indicate as to what the youngsters health may be affected.

There has not been any query of the district council at this time but officers are aware that one has been put in near the McDonalds on the A22. It was confirmed that the posts do have collection facility for data as well as a visual indicator. Officers became aware that the District Council had put this one in after they had started the work on this report. It may be deemed not to take this forward.

It was suggested that the responsibility was for the billing, housing or health authority not the town council to provide this type of apparatus.

It was suggested that if Mid Sussex are rolling out their scheme that we would want to see the visual indicators outside of the schools

RESOLVED: For Officers to discuss with Mid Sussex DC as to their intention to continue further expansion the project and if so, to request that devices are placed outside schools in East Grinstead.

287. VEHICLE REPORT

It was confirmed that the insurance assessor has visited and we are awaiting to hear from the insurers now.

The report was noted

288. ELECTIONS 2023

The Committee noted the report and that Cllr Mrs Bennett had resigned from her County Council seat therefore adding the East Grinstead Meridian seat to the Elections on 4th May, they also noted that the period of "purdah" would start next week.

The report was noted

The Chairman thanked the committee, the officers and also those Cllrs who were not standing in the next elections as well as those who will be hopefully coming back.

The Chair was also thanked for chairing the committee since January.

The chairman advised that the next full meeting of the Committee will be held on **THURSDAY 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023** at 7.00pm. He ended the meeting at 8.02pm

SIGNED:

CHAIRMAN