



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR

FULL COUNCIL BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on **Monday 15th January 2024** at The Town Hall, Gillingham, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllr Barry von Clemens, Mayor
Cllr Roger Weeks, Deputy Mayor
Cllr Graham Bashford
Cllr Fiona Cullen
Cllr Rupert Evill
Cllr Alan Frith
Cllr Paul Harris

Cllr Mick Hill
Cllr John Kilcourse
Cllr Val Potheary
Cllr Sarah Snook
Cllr Donna Teye
Cllr David Walsh

In attendance:

Town Clerk, Julie Hawkins
Responsible Financial Officer, Tina Wright
3 members of the public

Via MS Teams:

Michael Streeter, Gillingham and Shaftesbury News

1215. Public Participation.

There was no public participation.

1216. To receive apologies for absence

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies for absence from Cllr Sharon Cullingford, Cllr Graham Poulter, Cllr Alison von Clemens and Cllr Mark Walden who were unable to join the meeting for personal reasons.

1217. Declarations of Interest: Members are required to comply with the requirements of Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 disclosable pecuniary interests.

There were no declarations of interest.

1218. To approve the minutes as a true and accurate record of the Full Council held on 11th December 2023.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 11th December 2023 as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

1219. To receive, consider and adopt the draft minutes of the following standing committees:

a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 8th January 2024

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the General Purposes meeting held on Monday 8th January 2024 are approved and adopted.

b) Planning Committee meetings held on Monday 11th December 2023 and Monday 8th January 2024.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023 and Monday 8th January 2024 are approved and adopted.

c) HR Committee meetings held on Wednesday 10th January 2024.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the HR meeting held on Monday 10th January 2024 are approved and adopted.

1220. To approve payments for the previous months.

A list of payments had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix A](#).

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the list of payments for November and December 2023, as presented, are approved.

1221. To approve payments between £5,000 and £9,999, in accordance with Financial Regulations, para 4.1.2.

A list of payments had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix B](#).

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the payment between £5,000 and £9,999 is approved in accordance with Financial Regulations, para 4.1.2

1222. To approve the Management Accounts and virements to 31 December 2023.

The Management Accounts, including a list of virements, had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix C](#).

Members thanked the RFO for a well presented set of accounts.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the virements, as presented in the management accounts, are approved.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to approve the Management Accounts, as presented.

1223. To receive notification from Dorset Council of the tax base for FY 2024/25

A report was received prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix D](#).

The report was noted.

1224. To consider and agree the Budget for the Financial Year 2024/25:

A report was received prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix E](#).

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5001 is reduced from £2,000 to £1,750 and if necessary, work to the path edges to be carried out over a longer period of time.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5041 is increased from £100 to £150.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5061 is increased from £5,500 to £6,000. Cllr Harris voted against the proposal.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget no. 5062 remains at £8,500 and that planting on the roundabouts and Welcome to Gillingham Signs, are financed from the Gateways Budget no. 5460.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5062 is renamed Gardening.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5197 is reduced from £19,500 to £17,500.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5303 is increased from £150 to £175.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5408 is reduced from £6,000 to nil

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 5458 is increased from £8,000 to £10,525.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 6040 is reduced from £3,000 to £2,650.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 6041 is reduced from £700 to £550.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 6210 is reduced to from £2,000 to £1,500.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 7068 is reduced from £1,000 to £750.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 7104 is increased from £110 to £150.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 7128 is increased from £280 to £1,600. Cllr Snook abstained from voting.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget No. 7203 is increased from £607 to £1,000.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget no. 7502 is reduced from £1,500 to £1,000.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Budget no. 7604 remains at £1,500.

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** that the total Budget for FY2024/25 is £1,094,631.00.

1225. To consider and agree the Precept for the Financial Year 2024/25.

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** that the total precept for FY2024/25 is £1,055,557.00.

It was noted that the increase in council tax for a Band D Property in Gillingham will be 1.86%, £4.46 per year.

The meeting closed at 8.02 pm.

Full Council – 15 January 2024

Minute no. 1220

Gillingham Town Council

Bank payments: November 2023

Row	Log Ref No	Supplier	Date	Details	Amount paid (including VAT where applicable)
1	15840	Dorset Council	01/11/2023	Monthly DD - Rates - Roman Court 2023/24	£ 1,664.00
2	15841	Dorset Council	01/11/2023	Monthly DD - Rates - Town Hall 2023/24	£ 933.00
3	15837	Dorset Council	01/11/2023	Monthly DD - Rates - Cemetery 2023/24	£ 379.00
4	15839	Dorset Council	01/11/2023	Monthly DD - Rates - Town Bridge Office 2023/24	£ 141.00
5	15838	Dorset Council	01/11/2023	Monthly DD - Rates - Chantry Office 2023/24	£ 134.00
6	15923	SSE	03/11/2023	Gas Town Hall Sept 23	£ 92.58
7	15971	Amazon	07/11/2023	PO: 1733 Litter pickers & hoops	£ 81.81
8	15974	Staff expenses	07/11/2023	Eye Test	£ 40.00
9	15972	The Corporate Christmas Tree Co Ltd	07/11/2023	30 x Christmas Lights for small trees	£ 367.62
10	15970	Alfafado Ltd	07/11/2023	320 batteries for the small xmas trees	£ 314.18
11	15973	B Seward	07/11/2023	CCTV Wayleave payment 2023-24	£ 67.50
12	15986	Transfer	07/11/2023	Top up Petty Cash	£ 115.32
13	15988	Staff expenses	08/11/2023	JE travel with JH to SLCC conference 28/9/23 46.2miles @£0.5	£ 23.10
14	15990	SSE	08/11/2023	Unit 2A Roman Court Electric July - 1 Oct	£ 264.18
15	15991	Dorset Council	08/11/2023	Third party payments (HMRC/Pension) - Oct 23	£ 16,451.38
16	16053	The Right Fuel Card Co	08/11/2023	Monthly fuel card charges	£ 207.20
17	15989	SSE	09/11/2023	Unit 1C Roman Court Elec July - 1 Oct 23	£ 105.68

18	15993	Octopus Energy	09/11/2023	Town Hall Electric - 01/10 - 29/10/23	£	137.29
19	15993	Octopus Energy	09/11/2023	Town Hall Gas - 11/10 - 29/10/23	£	63.15
20	16048	Octopus Energy	10/11/2023	Electric Old Mortuary - 01/10 - 31/10/23	£	4.15
21	16026	James Hallam Ltd	13/11/2023	Fleet Ins adj. to add reg OV73 KBK and remove WA54 KNY	£	644.10
22	16023	Design Jam Ltd	13/11/2023	Monthly charge - Website maintenance/support -Oct 23	£	72.00
23	16025	Sydenhams	13/11/2023	Materials	£	23.76
24	16022	Aqua Cleaning	13/11/2023	Hygiene Services - Oct 23 - various -see below	£	91.00
				<i>Hygiene Services -Nov 23-Town hall - £52.00</i>		
				<i>Hygiene Services -Nov 23 - Chantry Office - £13.00</i>		
				<i>Hygiene Services -Nov 23 - Town Bridge Office - £13.00</i>		
				<i>Hygiene Services -Nov 23 - Roman Court - £13.00</i>		
25	16024	Rob Beale Ltd	13/11/2023	Temp WC hire for carnival 4-9 Oct	£	180.00
26	16042	Octopus Energy	14/11/2023	Electric - CCTV Hardings Park 12/9-31/10/23	£	7.23
27	16083	Octopus Energy	15/11/2023	Electric - 2a Roman Court -12/9 - 31/10/23	£	271.12
28	16065	Octopus Energy	15/11/2023	Electric - 1c Roman Court 12/9 - 31/10/23	£	59.63
29	16063	Octopus Energy	15/11/2023	Electric - 1b Roman Courtt 12/9- 31/10/23	£	248.04
30	16064	Octopus Energy	15/11/2023	Electric - Oct 23 - Kiosk Town Meadow	£	197.01
31	16205	Octopus Energy	15/11/2023	Electric - Cemetery (incorrect charge & later credited)	£	431.71
32	16082	Sage (UK) Limited	16/11/2023	Nov 23 fee for Sage 50 Pro software	£	196.20
33	16090	MG Cleaning Ltd	21/11/2023	Cleaning fee- August & September 23 -see below	£	702.00
				<i>Roman Court Cleaning August & September 23 - £351.00</i>		
				<i>Town Hall Cleaning August & September 23 - £351.00</i>		
34	16125	The Royal British Legion (Gillingham)	21/11/2023	Remembrance wreath	£	25.00
35	16093	Sydenhams	21/11/2023	Materials	£	11.10

36	16085	Norsemen Fencing	21/11/2023	Install Fence at Cemetery Rd and Hardings Park	£ 1,515.00
37	16086	Fenland Leisure Products Ltd	21/11/2023	Play area equipment	£ 976.96
38	16087	Francis & Cull Ltd	21/11/2023	Water pipe work at Roman Court	£ 255.60
39	16095	Tudor (UK) Ltd	21/11/2023	Staff PPE	£ 589.04
40	16093	Sydenhams	21/11/2023	Materials	£ 39.35
41	16089	Mark King Property & Building Services Ltd	21/11/2023	Building works to bus shelter in High Street	£ 348.00
42	16092	Sherborne Turf	21/11/2023	Turf for allotment separation	£ 61.49
43	16088	J Parker Dutch Bulbs (Wholesale) Ltd	21/11/2023	Winter bedding plants	£ 366.00
44	16091	Screwfix	21/11/2023	Staff PPE	£ 513.92
45	16094	TF Builders Ltd	21/11/2023	Waste disposal 3-27/10/23 /Topsoil	£ 195.00
46	16098	Transfer	22/11/2023	CCLA (New PSDF acct)	£ 245,000.00
47	16206	Dorset Council	23/11/2023	Staff training (Personal safety)	£ 280.00
48	16207	Talk Talk	28/11/2023	Monthly Broadband fees -see below	£ 49.08
				<i>Chantry Office 10/11-9/12/23 - £20.34</i>	
				<i>Roman Ct Fibre 10/11 - 9/12/23 - £28.74</i>	
49	16143	Octopus Energy	29/11/2023	Electric - Town Bridge 1/10 - 6/11/23	£ 17.69
50	16096	DVLA	30/11/2023	12mth van tax expert van HX14 ODL	£ 320.00
51	16142	Opus Energy	30/11/2023	Electric - CCTV Town Meadow (unmetered) Oct 23	£ 162.75
52	16142	Opus Energy	30/11/2023	Electric Old Mortuary Oct 23	£ 6.54
53	16202	Nov 23 Staff net pay	30/11/2023	Nov 23 Staff net pay	£ 35,925.84
				November 2023 Payments Total	£ 311,368.30

Gillingham Town Council

Bank payments: December 2023

Row	Log Ref No	Supplier	Date	Details	Amount paid (including VAT where applicable)
1	16200	Dorset Council	01/12/2023	Rates - Roman Ct -2023/24	£ 1,664.00
2	16201	Dorset Council	01/12/2023	Rates – Town Hall 2023/24	£ 933.00
3	16197	Dorset Council	01/12/2023	Rates - Cemetery 2023/24	£ 379.00
4	16199	Dorset Council	01/12/2023	Rates - Town Bridge Office 2023/24	£ 141.00
5	16198	Dorset Council	01/12/2023	Rates – Chantry Office 2023/24	£ 134.00
6	16255	David Harness	04/12/2023	PO: 1749 -Tree works -Gyllas Way -Willow	£ 372.00
7	16260	Plantworld	04/12/2023	Plants, compost & gloves	£ 316.50
8	16259	OFCOM	04/12/2023	OFCOM business radio annual licence fee ref 1175317/1	£ 75.00
9	16254	Norsemen Fencing	04/12/2023	Install of fence at Lodbourne as quoted.	£ 6,200.00
10	16264	Tudor (UK) Ltd	04/12/2023	Staff PPE & hedge trimmer	£ 111.00
11	16263	Tower Supplies	04/12/2023	Staff workwear	£ 1,004.16
12	16265	Western workshop supplies Ltd	04/12/2023	Consumables & cleaning materials	£ 115.86
13	16257	Greg Richards	04/12/2023	Electrical works at Chantry office, Town Hall & Hardings Park	£ 283.20
14	16261	Seton	04/12/2023	PO: 1765 -First aid kit components & Town Meadow signage	£ 124.36
15	16258	Mole Valley	04/12/2023	Seed for Town Meadow	£ 69.99
16	16253	The Blackmore Vale Ltd	04/12/2023	Advert re: Public notice for works loan	£ 155.30
17	16264	Tudor (UK) Ltd	04/12/2023	Tools & PPE	£ 432.30
18	16252	Amazon	04/12/2023	Machinery parts	£ 28.20
19	16262	Sydenhams	04/12/2023	Materials	£ 343.88
20	16256	Dorset Council	04/12/2023	Q2 Print charges 23-24	£ 633.05
21	16263	Tower Supplies	04/12/2023	Staff workwear	£ 65.40
22	16296	Dorset Council	08/12/2023	Third party payments (HMRC/Pension) - Nov 23	£ 28,860.42
23	16295	The Right Fuel Card Co	08/12/2023	Monthly fuel card charges -Nov 23	£ 140.36
24	16341	Octopus Energy	12/12/2023	Electric -Town Hall-Nov 23	£ 166.09
25	16341	Octopus Energy	12/12/2023	Gas -Town Hall -Nov 23	£ 963.66

26	16342	Octopus Energy	12/12/2023	Electricity -Town Bridge office/WC -Nov 23	£ 138.12
27	16324	Octopus Energy	12/12/2023	Electric - Mortuary - Nov 23	£ 2.89
28	16345	Transfer	13/12/2023	Top up Petty Cash	£ 41.02
29	16331	Lee Holmes Garden Machinery	13/12/2023	Staff PPE	£ 1,357.54
30	16329	Gillingham Tyre Services	13/12/2023	Number plate for new tractor	£ 18.00
31	16335	Screwfix	13/12/2023	Materials	£ 3.59
32	16339	Tudor (UK) Ltd	13/12/2023	Consumables	£ 8.14
33	16330	JW Services	13/12/2023	Cleaning charges Oct 23 (Town Bridge/ litter bins)	£ 1,352.50
				Town Bridge/WC cleaning -Oct 23 - £356.50	
				Zone B -Duties -empty litter bins-Oct 23 -£500.00	
				Rec Grd -Duties -Oct 23 - £496.00	
34	16335	Screwfix	13/12/2023	Materials	£ 8.98
35	16331	Lee Holmes Garden Machinery	13/12/2023	Service parts/new parts	£ 2,539.99
36	16328	Councillor expenses	13/12/2023	Mayor general & travel expenses	£ 113.10
37	16328	Tower Supplies	13/12/2023	Staff workwear	£ 26.16
38	16337	SYDE0002	13/12/2023	Picket fencing panels for Xmas tree	£ 314.62
39	16336	Seton	13/12/2023	First aid kit components for Town hall	£ 97.84
40	16339	Tudor (UK) Ltd	13/12/2023	Staff workwear	£ 16.85
41	16327	Chat-com	13/12/2023	Service x 13 radios & replacement batteries	£ 912.60
42	16337	Sydenhams	13/12/2023	Materials	£ 155.33
43	16334	Netnorth Limited	13/12/2023	Website Domain licence (2 yrs)	£ 114.00
44	16332	M & D Gas Services Ltd	13/12/2023	Town Hall boiler service	£ 192.00
45	16326	Amazon	13/12/2023	Equipment & stationery for Town Hall	£ 79.62
46	16333	NALC	13/12/2023	Staff Training	£ 52.04
47	16396	Octopus Energy	14/12/2023	Electric - Unit 1b Roman Ct Nov 23	£ 270.71
48	16397	Octopus Energy	14/12/2023	Electric - Unit 1c Roman Ct Nov 23	£ 70.23
49	16395	Octopus Energy	14/12/2023	Electric - Unit 2a Roman Ct Nov 23	£ 296.32
50	16344	Octopus Energy	15/12/2023	Electric - Hardings Park CCTV Nov 23	£ 10.31

51	16412	Octopus Energy	15/12/2023	Electric -Town Meadow - Nov 23	£ 27.93
52	16389	SLCC	18/12/2023	Staff training	£ 198.00
53	16376	Design Jam	18/12/2023	Mthly charge - website maintenance & support - Dec 23	£ 72.00
54	16369	Aqua Cleaning	18/12/2023	Hygiene Services - Dec 23 - various - see below	£ 91.00
				Hygiene Services - Dec 23 - Town hall - £52.00	
				Hygiene Services - Dec 23 - Chantry Office - £13.00	
				Hygiene Services - Dec 23 - Town Bridge Office - £13.00	
				Hygiene Services - Dec 23 - Roman Ct - £13.00	
55	16382	JW Services	18/12/2023	Cleaning charges - Nov 23 (Public toilet / litter bins)	£ 1,141.00
				Town Bridge public toilet cleaning - £345.00	
				Zone B - Duties - empty litter bins - £444.00	
				Recreation Ground - Duties - empty litter bins, litter picking, - £352.00	
56	16386	Lyreco	18/12/2023	Stationery	£ 172.18
57	16390	St Simon and St Jude Church	18/12/2023	Annual service of clock 3.7.23 at St Simon and St Judes Church Milton	£ 319.20
58	16377	DJM Forestry Ltd	18/12/2023	Order of x 100 small Xmas trees	£ 1,440.00
59	16391	Sydenhams	18/12/2023	Materials	£ 94.30
60	16393	Western workshop supplies Ltd	18/12/2023	Consumables, small tools, parts	£ 310.56
61	16403	Sydenhams Hire	18/12/2023	Equipment hire for Xmas tree installation	£ 194.86
62	16375	David Harness	18/12/2023	Tree works	£ 2,178.00
63	16381	Fix A Door Limited	18/12/2023	Service doors and shutters at workshop	£ 300.00
64	16374	Crockers	18/12/2023	Materials	£ 21.48
65	16379	Employ My Ability	18/12/2023	Winter bedding	£ 250.00
66	16387	Mole Valley	18/12/2023	Cleaning, planting and gate repair parts	£ 109.44
67	16388	Partnership Security	18/12/2023	Call out/repair at Town Hall, supply multi sensor at workshop	£ 258.00
68	16392	TF Builders	18/12/2023	Waste disposal/skip hire at workshop	£ 492.00

69	16385	Lee Holmes Garden Machinery	18/12/2023	New Hedge cutter	£ 420.00
70	16380	The Festive Lighting Company Ltd	18/12/2023	Replacement lights for Xmas tree	£ 565.50
71	16384	LBS Worldwide Ltd	18/12/2023	Materials for polytunnels	£ 955.30
72	16371	I West (Bath & NE Somerset)	18/12/2023	Annual fee re: Data Protection services	£ 1,500.00
73	16373	Chat-com	18/12/2023	Hire of radios - Remembrance Parade Nov 23	£ 180.00
74	16378	Dorset Council	18/12/2023	Staff training	£ 60.00
75	16372	Century Southern Security Ltd	18/12/2023	Fee re: inspection of CCTV system	£ 1,590.00
76	16383	Kingsmere Surfacing Limited	18/12/2023	Works to play area & paths	£ 3,090.00
77	16370	Avon valley Motor Group	18/12/2023	Purchase of used Peugeot E Expert van (and part ex of old Partner van)	£ 27,650.00
78	16405	Sage (UK) Ltd	18/12/2023	Dec 23 Sage subscription	£ 196.20
79	16467	Information Commissioner's Office	22/12/2023	ICO annual membership fee	£ 55.00
80	16468	Opus Energy	27/12/2023	Electric - CCTV Town Meadow (unmetered) Nov 23	£ 216.30
81	16470	Talktalk	28/12/2023	Monthly Broadband fees - see below	£ 49.08
				<i>Chantry Office BB 10/12/23 - 9/01/24 -£20.34</i>	
				<i>Roman Ct Fibre BB 10/11 - 9/12/23 - £28.74</i>	
82	16476	Nov 23 Staff net pay	29/12/2023	Dec 23 Staff net pay	£ 26,807.74
December 2023 Payments Total					£ 122,909.30

Full Council – 15 January 2024

Minute no. 1221

Gillingham Town Council

Bank payments between £5,000 – £9,999 - November – December 2023

Log Ref No	Supplier	Date	Details	Amount paid (including VAT where applicable)
16254	Norsemen Fencing	04/12/2023	Install of fence at Lodbourne as quoted.	£ 6,200.00
			Total	£ 6,200.00

Full Council – 15 January 2024

Minute no. 1222

Gillingham Town Council

FY2023/24 Management Accounts Quarter 3 for 1/10/23 to 31/12/23

Author: Tina Wright RFO

Overview

Total Actual income received for first nine months of year currently exceeds the budget by 2.86% totalling £1,072,825 against the total Income budget for the year of £1,042,990,

The year to date (YTD) income is £29,835 above budget and expenditure is £314,696 below budget, giving a surplus of £344,532 precept. Donations and bank interest income are the most significant sources of income.

Income for the Cemetery up to end of Q3 totals £3,777 which is 42% of total budgeted cemetery income. There has been a dip in Cemetery income vs YTD Previous (22-23) and income has decreased by £1,213.00

Allotments income totals £960.00 - the annual tenancy agreements have been issued and exceeds budget by 1%

Income for room hire is £3,155.00 – this is +215% above budgeted room hire income of £1,000

Registrar Office rent is £4,457.00 - this is the income for the year and has reached annual budgeted total. Civil weddings up to end Q3 totals £1,260, currently attaining 63% of annual budgeted total for Civil weddings. There has been a dip in Civil weddings income vs YTD Previous (22-23) and income has decreased by £240.00.

DC Verges income £4,453 and Donations for Solar Panels total £14,120

Other income received

- Bank interest and other Sundry income £12,745.00
- Part exchange of John Deere 4410 & Partner Van £7,280.00

Expenditure

Total actual expenditure up to end of Q3 totalled £728,294 against a total expenditure budget of £1,042,990, actual expenditure up to end Q3 is 69.83% of annual expenditure budget.

Estate Management costs for Q3 were £11,236 - 51.7% of total expense for Estate Management YTD.

Similarly, the play areas cost centre Q3 costs alone were £14,081 – 45% of total expense for Play Areas YTD – replacement play equipment & fencing.

General Purposes - Projects cost centre Q3 costs alone were £3,973 – which equates to 66.53% of total expense YTD – this was primarily due to festive period and the cost of Christmas decorations for the town.

Payroll cost centre (excludes other staff costs) – in November 2023 agreement has been reached on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2023 (covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024) and back-dated pay was included as part of November 23 payroll and Q3 costs alone were £152,757 – 37% of payroll cost YTD

Net Surplus at 31st December 2023 £344,532

Balance Sheet

Total Reserves at 31st Dec 2023 £1,373,338 (at 31/3/23 £1,028,806)

Made up of –

- General Reserves of £798,731 (at 31/3/23 £365,214) (58.16% at 31/12/23)
- Earmarked Reserves of £329,673 (at 31/3/23 £418,658) (24.01% at 31/12/23)
- Commuted Sum Wathen Court Reserves Balance 2022-23 £244,934 (no change from 31/3/23, Earmarked/Restricted). (17.83% at 31/2/23)
- Cash at Bank and in hand - £1,360,392 (at 31/3/23 £1,075,388.67).
- Cash at Bank and in hand have decreased by £307,162.02 in the last quarter.

The second tranche of the precept was received at the end of September 23 Q2 (£510,279.50) and Q3 has also seen payments of an electric van, tractor, hedgecutting equipment, and works to play areas, fences & paths and Town Hall roof works – much of this funded by Earmarked Reserves.

A new account with CCLA has been opened in the Public Sector Deposit Fund for the Council in November 2023 and holds the commuted sum Wathen Court Reserves for sum of £245,000.

Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked Reserves balances are also shown under the relevant budget section to indicate where some budget requirements may potentially be funded.

Opening Earmarked Reserves at 1/10/23 - £357,197

Earmarked Reserves received 1/10/23 to 31/12/23 - £23,439

Earmarked Reserves used 1/10/23 to 31/12/23 - £50,963

Closing Earmarked Reserves at 31/12/23 - £329,673

Virements for Q3 2023/24 are proposed due to budget over spend

5024 Mortuary Elec	£9.00
5021 Mortuary maintenance	£-9.00
5041 Allotment Maintenance 90	£90.00
5001 Cemetery Maintenance -90	£-90.00
5419 S106 Petanque Ct	£125.00
5101 5101 Town Meadow electric	£-125.00
7215 Rom Ct cleaning materials	£18.00
7216 Roman Ct cleaning	£-18.00
7501 Postage	£58.00
7502 Office Stationery	£-58.00
7604 Professional Fees	£506.00
7600 Legal fees	£-506.00
7008 Staff recruitment and advertising (379)	£82.00
7003 Staff Salaries (Gross pay) (376/377)	£-82.00
7031 Staff - Hand Arm Vibration Equipment (HAV) -NEW 2023-24	£163.00
7030 Staff Protective clothing (379)	£-163.00
7061 Town Hall - Gas boiler maintenance & service.	£64.00
8013 Accrual - Town Hall replace boiler (70)	£-64.00

Gillingham Town Council

Tax Base FY2024/25

Author: Tina Wright, RFO

As part of budget setting process, all councils set a 'precept' which is essentially the shortfall after we have deducted our predicted income from our planned expenditure for the following year.

The Council Tax Base is defined as the number of Band D equivalent properties in a local authorities' area.

This is not a monetary amount but an estimate of the number of properties liable for council tax. The tax base figure also takes into account discounts (such as single occupancy), exemptions and the local council tax support scheme.

The tax base is important as it highlights the effect the precept has on an individual band D property; the impact will be less on properties in band A-C and more on properties in band E-H

Dorset Council has advised Gillingham Town Council that the Tax Base for FY2024/25 is 4,331.8 which equates to a 1.5% increase from the previous financial year. This means that the tax burden is divided between more households; therefore, the percentage increase in the budget will be a higher percentage increase than on individual council tax bills.

We recognise that any increase in the budget needs to be closely scrutinized and this needs to be balanced against the costs of delivering services; most of which have increased. It is important that we look at the percentage figure for the band D equivalent – not the percentage figure for the budget.

Gillingham Town Council

Draft Budget FY2024/25

Author: Tina Wright, RFO and Julie Hawkins, Town Clerk

1. Background

The draft budget for FY2024/25 was presented to Full Council on 27th November 2023.

Councillors and members of the public were invited to comment on the draft budget between 28th November 2023 and 5th January 2024.

2. Comments received

During the consultation period the following comments were submitted:

a. Budget No. 5001 – Maintenance, vandalism and spoil heap removal – Gillingham Cemetery

- Cllr Harris has suggested that budget no. 5001 could be reduced from £2,000 to £1,750.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- The spoil heap needs to be removed every other year (or sooner depending on the number of graves that have been dug). The spoil heap was last removed in February 2022 and will need to be removed before the end of this financial year. The cost of spoil removal in February 2022 was £1,800 including VAT.
- The draft budget also includes proposals to improve the water service area, including the laying of a new area of hard standing, a new sink and tap.
- This financial year there is £2,000 in the budget plus £1,940 in earmarked reserves.
- To date £237 has been spent, however, on 8th January 2024 the GP Committee agreed tree work at the Cemetery at a cost not to exceed £1,000 to be funded from Budget No. 5001.
- There is also a requirement for the paths to be edged.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 5001 is reduced from £2,000 to £1,750 and if necessary, work to the path edges to be carried out over a longer period of time.

b. Budget No. 5041 – Allotment Maintenance

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- Last year the council decided to divide up the allotment plots.
- So far this year we have spent £190 on materials used to divide plots which has resulted in an overspend of £90.
- It is anticipated that more plots will be divided up during the next financial year.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 5041 is increased from £100 to £150.

c. Budget No. 5061 - General Maintenance

- The Estate Management Subcommittee has suggested that Budget no. 5061 is increased by £500 to £6,000
- Cllr Harris has suggested that Budget no. 5061 is reduced by £500 to £5,000

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- To date £5,250 has been spent from Budget no. 5061 leaving just £414 for the next 3 months.
- The budget figure for FY2023/24 was £5,000 plus £664 earmarked, we have therefore already exceeded out budgeted amount for this financial year.
- Costs to this budget line include materials, equipment hire, graffiti removal costs, painting and repairs to railings, repairs to fencing, benches etc.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 5061 is increased to £6,000.

d. Budget No. 5062 - Planting Scheme

- The Estate Management Subcommittee has suggested that Budget no. 5062 is increased by £500 to £9,000.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- Costs to this budget line includes all works associated with the gardening team including polytunnel refurbishment, plants, bulbs, herbs, grass and wildflower seed, compost, soil, seed trays, materials used for displays, eg. Coronation etc.
- Costs to this budget line includes all works associated with the planting at the following locations: Two roundabouts; Cemetery; Garden of Remembrance; Beehive Beds; Lodbourne x 3; High Street x 3; Newbury; Gyllas Way x 3; Station Road; St Mary's Churchyard x 3; planters under the welcome to Gillingham Signs; 44 flower planters and 8 hanging baskets throughout the town.

- To date we have spent £7,707 on Budget no. 5062 this financial year.
- Summer bedding will be ordered in January/February which will clear the budget.
- The budget figure for FY2023/24 was £8,500 plus earmarked of £1,701.
- To continue operating in the same way, the budget will need to be increased to £9,000, however, the council may wish to reduce the amount of planting throughout the town.
- Budget no. 5460 - Gateways, currently has a balance of £8,871.

Recommendation:

- **That Budget no. 5062 remains at £8,500 and that planting on the roundabouts and Welcome to Gillingham Signs, are financed from the Gateways Budget no. 5460.**
- **That the budget is renamed Gardening.**

e. Budget No. 5197 - Estate Management costs - Tree Maintenance

- Cllr Harris has suggested that Budget no. 5197 could be reduced from £19,500 to £17,500.

Comments from the Town Clerk and RFO:

- Budget nos. 5197 and 5198 have been combined this year – the emergency tree works budget has been reduced from £3,250 to nil and the tree management budget has been increased by £3,250.
- So far we have spent £2,635 this financial year. The majority of tree work takes place during January and February and there is currently around £9,000 worth of planned work which will take place in this month.
- Last financial year the council spent £18,985 on tree maintenance and emergency work.
- We have suggested £19,500 for tree maintenance, as in 2024 a full tree risk assessment is due to be completed by an arboriculturist and this may result in an increase in tree maintenance work.
- If the council decides to reduce the budget from £19,500 to £17,500, any emergency work may have to be funded from General Reserves.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 5197 is reduced to £17,500

f. Budget No. 5303 – Hardings Park Water

Comments from the Town Clerk and RFO:

- We have been informed by Water to Business of an increase in standing charges and sewerage charges, therefore it will be necessary to make adjustments to the draft budget.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 5303 is increased from £150 to £175

g. Budget No. 5408 – Traffic Regulation Orders

Cllr Harris and Cllr B von Clemens have suggested that Budget No. 5408 can be reduced by £6,000 to nil.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- At the Budget Workshop held on 1st November there was a request from the Traffic Management Subcommittee for £6,000 for traffic surveys.
- On 27th November Full Council agreed a virement of £3,000 to Budget No. 5408 to cover the cost of proposed traffic surveys.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 5408 is reduced from £6,000 to nil

h. Budget No. 5458 - General Purposes costs - Waste disposal

- Cllr Harris has asked for further information to justify the proposed increase in the draft budget from £4,000 to £8,000.
- The Town Clerk and RFO have re-calculated the waste costs – please see the comments below.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- £3,898 was spent on waste disposal in Financial Year 2022/23.
- Budget Line 5458 covers the cost of waste removal collected from the town council's litter bins on the public open spaces and in the play areas. It also covers the disposal costs of the annual hay crop which is sadly contaminated by dog mess. The disposal of non-compostable waste such as hedge cuttings are also charged to this account.
- The hay crop used to be charged to Budget Line no. 5081, however, we have now combined the two budgets, which results in an increase of £1,500 to Budget No. 5458.
- On 16th November 2023 an email was received from Dorset Council Waste Services confirming an increase in waste disposal charges.
- Dorset Council collect 208 x 1100L bins a year (4 x 52 = 208) @ £29.68 per bin = £6,173.44.
- The annual cost of green waste disposal for FY2022/23 was £1,907.
- So far this financial year we have spent £2,308 on green waste (including the hay crop) which is £256 per month over nine months - £256 x 12 = £3,072.
- There is also a cost for bin bags and safety gloves which has cost £101.72 so far this year (clear bags for recycling).

- As you are aware we buy black sacks in bulk on average every other year – the last purchase was in September 2022 at a cost of £1,089, therefore it would be wise to add this to next year’s budget.

Dorset Council	£6,173.44
Green Waste	£3,072.00
Recycling Sacks	£ 135.63
Black Sacks (bulk)	£1,143.45
Total	£10,524.52

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 5458 is increased from £8,000 to £10,525.

i. Budget No. 6040 - Discretionary Powers - CCTV Annual Maintenance only

- Cllr Harris has suggested reducing Budget no. 6040 from £3,000 to £2,750.

Comments from the Town Clerk and RFO:

- The contractors have advised that the annual fee will remain at £2,650.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 6040 is reduced to £2,650.

j. Budget No. 6041 – CCTV Electric Hardings Park

Comments from the Town Clerk and RFO:

- A new contract has been set up with a reduction in charges.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 6041 is reduced from £700 to £550.

k. Budget No. 6210 - Civic costs - Councillor training

- Cllr Harris has suggested that Budget No. 6210 is reduced from £2,000 to £1,500.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- The councillor training budget has been increased to allow training for new councillors. We are aware that we may have at least five new councillors who will all need induction training at £60 each. This then allows £94 per councillor for the year (based on 18 councillors).
- By reducing the budget to £1,500 this would allow £66 per councillor.

- There will be an underspend this financial year and the council may wish to earmark this for additional training for new councillors.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 6210 is reduced to £1,500.

I. Budget No. 7068 – Town Hall - New Office furniture and equipment

- Cllr Harris has suggested that Budget no. 7068 could be reduced from £1,000 to £750.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- Agree that we should work with this figure.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 7068 is reduced to £750.

m. Budget No. 7104 – Chantry Office Water

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- We have been informed by Water to Business of an increase in standing charges and sewerage charges, therefore it will be necessary to make adjustments to the draft budget.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 7104 is increased from £110 to £150

n. Budget No. 7128 – Public Toilet / Town Bridge Office Water

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- We have been informed by Water to Business of an increase in standing charges and sewerage charges which have more than doubled.
- In FY2020/2021 the public toilet and office was closed due to Covid.
- In FY2021/22 we spent £1,112.28 on water and sewerage charges.
- In FY2022/23 we spent £313.32 however the public toilet was closed for a significant period due to vandalism.
- For the first six months of this financial year, £857 has been spent on water rates and sewerage charges which has been funded through virements.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 7128 is increased from £280 to £1,600

o. Budget No. 7203 – Roman Court Water

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- We have been informed by Water to Business of an increase in standing charges and sewerage charges.

Recommendation:

That Budget No. 7203 is increased from £607 to £1,000

p. Budget No. 7502 - Office Stationery

- Cllr Harris has suggested that Budget no. 7502 could be reduced from £1,500 to £1,000.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- In FY2022/23 a total of £1,478 was spent on office stationery.
- To date £652 has been spent this financial year, however, more stationery will need to be ordered before the end of the financial year.
- Following the issue of councillor laptops there has been a reduction in printing and the requirement for paper has been reduced, therefore, we could work with a stationery budget of £1,000.

Recommendation:

That Budget no. 7502 is reduced from £1,500 to £1,000

q. Budget No. 7604 - Professional Fees

- Cllr Harris has suggested that Budget no. 7604 could be reduced from £1,500 to £1,000.

Comments from Town Clerk and RFO:

- Please refer to Minute No. 494 of the Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on 20th February 2023:

*It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that Company A is contracted as the Data Protection Officer (DPO) on a three year contract from 24 May 2023 at an annual cost of £1,500 to be funded from Budget no. 7604 Professional Fees.*

Recommendation:

That Budget no. 7604 remains at £1,500.

Summary of Recommendations

Budget no.	Item	Draft budget	Proposal	Recommendation	Impact on draft budget of RFO/TC proposals
5001	Cemetery – Maintenance	£2,000	£1,750	£1,750	-£250
5041	Allotments	£100	£150	£150	+£50
5061	Estate Management – General Maintenance	£5,500	£5,000	£6,000	+£500
5062	Estate Management – Planting Scheme	£8,500	---	£8,500	----
5197	Estate Management – Tree Maintenance	£19,500	£17,500	£17,500	-£2,000
5303	Hardings Park Water	£150	£175	£175	+£25
5408	Traffic Regulation Orders	£6,000	nil	nil	-£6,000
5458	General Purposes – Waste Disposal	£8,000	£10,525	£10,525	+£2,525
6040	CCTV – Maintenance	£3,000	£2,700	£2,650	-£350
6041	CCTV – Electric Hardings Park	£700	£550	£550	-£150
6210	Civic – Councillor Training	£2,000	£1,500	£1,500	-£500
7068	Town Hall – Equipment	£1,000	£750	£750	-£250
7104	Chantry Office Water	£110	£150	£150	+£40
7128	Public Toilet / Town Bridge Office Water	£280	£1,600	£1,600	+£1,320
7203	Roman Court Water	£607	£1,000	£1,000	+£393
7502	Admin – Stationery	£1,500	£1,000	£1,000	-£500
7604	Professional Fees	£1,500	£1,000	£1,500	0
	Chapel sub-total error in draft				-£200
	Total				-£5,346

Precept	FY23/24	FY24/25	Precept % increase	Precept £ increase	Precept £ per month increase	Band D % annual increase
<i>FY23/24</i>	£1,020,559		5.29%	£8.13	£0.68	3.52%
<i>Band D Equiv cost</i>	£239.22					
FY24/25 draft budget following Councillor workshop		£1,060,903	3.95%			
Band D Equiv cost		£244.91		£5.69	£0.47	2.38%
As above with Town Clerk/RFO recommended changes 10.01.2024		£1,055,557	3.43%			
Band D Equiv cost		£243.72		£4.46	£0.37	1.86%

Impact

- Overall decrease on draft budget V1: £5,346
- Precept increase on previous year: 3.43%
- Band D increase on previous year: 1.86%
- Band D equivalent cost is £243.68 which is an annual increase of £4.46 on the previous year = 37p per month on a Band D property

Members are requested to consider the comments contained within this report.