

ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

23rd JANUARY 2024

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT
19:09

Present: Councillor P Blakeley
Councillor Mrs C Hardingham (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs G Sands
Councillor T Sands
Councillor Ms J Sharp
Councillor D Warrington (Vice Chairman)

In Attendance: Mrs Christine Gurr – Parish Clerk

Apologies for absence (received and accepted): None to receive.

(To avoid possible disqualification under the 6-month rule, Councillors must provide a reason for non-attendance)

F.24.01 Review of Bank Account Statements

Members reviewed and discussed the following documents:

- Bank Reconciliation as at 31/12/23
- List of Unpresented cheques as at 31/12/23
- Current Account (42334801)
 - 010/2023 to 03/10/23
 - 011/2023 to 03/11/23
 - 012/2023 to 03/12/23
 - 001/2024 to 03/01/24
- Deposit Account (42334836)
 - 001/2023: From 06/09/22 to 05/09/23
 - Online extract to 22/01/24

Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor Warrington, seconded by Councillor T Sands, and agreed, that the copy statements be accepted.

F.24.02 Review of Receipts & Payments against budget to 31st December 2023 (9 months)

Members reviewed and discussed the following documents:

- A financial report to 31st December 2023, *per* the following Appendices:
 - Appendix 1: Significant variances
 - Appendix 2: Payments
 - Appendix 3: Receipts
 - Appendix 4: Unapplied Capital
 - Appendix 5: Bank Reconciliation
 - Appendix 6: Unpresented cheques

Action/Comments Agreed:

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It was proposed by Councillor Blakeley, seconded by Councillor Mrs G Sands, and agreed, that:

- The above reports be accepted;
- Request Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd to identify the variance in the VAT account in the Alpha Suite software at a fee of £535 plus VAT.

F.24.03 Review of Current Debtors/Creditors

Members reviewed and discussed a summary of current debtors and creditors which showed that the following amounts were outstanding at 31st December 2023:

- Garage Tenants - £545.22;
- County Court Judgments - £1,179.80
- Invoices – £5,488.84

Action/Comments Agreed:

The following points were highlighted and/or action agreed:

- Garages:
 - Tenant No 10 – Debt recovery for £217.32 not possible until a current address can be obtained
- Invoices:
 - No action required at this time
- CC Judgments:
 - A Warrant of Execution to be entered in respect of Claim No. C03YP159 (if a current address can be obtained)

F.23.04 Review of Hire Charges for 2023/25

Members reviewed and discussed the following draft Schedules from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 showing an increase of 2% (rounded up/down as appropriate):

- Hire Charges for Parish Council Properties;
- Supplementary Charges/Conditions for Hire of Parish Council Properties;
- Obtain price for advertising the Village Hall in Village Voices to increase hall usage.

Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor Ms Sharp, seconded by Councillor Mrs Hardingham, and agreed, to recommend to full Council that:

- Hire Charges for the Village Hall remain the same as 2023/24;
- Hire Charges for Playing Field & Pavilion remain the same as 2023/24;
- Hire charges for Garages be increased by approximately 7% (rounded up or down as appropriate) to take account of the increased costs of maintaining the garages.

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19:57 ***Exclusion of the Press and Public***
The Parish Council resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

F.24.05 **Review of Salaries for 2024/25**
Members reviewed and discussed the schedule of Salary Rates for 2024/2025.

Action/Comments Agreed:

- It was proposed by Councillor Warrington, seconded by Councillor T Sands, and agreed unanimously, to recommend to full Council that the schedule of Salary Rates for 2024/2025 be accepted without amendment;
- Agenda for January PC meeting;
- Staff absence cover to be discussed at a future meeting.

20:00 ***The Meeting was re-opened to the press and public***

F.24.06 **Consideration of Budget for 2024/25**
Members reviewed and discussed the following documents:

- Report to Finance Committee dated 22nd January 2024 compiled by RFO (Responsible Financial Officer – Christine Gurr) which highlighted the following points for consideration;
 - Following Medway Council's decision in 2022/23 to withdrawn funding of £7,500 from this parish, a potential substantial rise in Precept for 2022/23 was avoided by using £5,000 from a carry-forward balance of £13,527;
 - Medway Council reinstated the Formula Grant (Rural Liaison Grant) of £3,600 in 2023/24 and in these calculations, it has been assumed that this will continue in 2024/25;
 - The predicted carry-forward balance at 31/03/24 has now reduced to £10,572;
 - Utility costs rose substantially in July 2023 when the 4-year fixed term agreements came to an end. Alternative fixed-term agreements are still being sought although a price rise is still likely;
 - The Government Energy Bill Relief Scheme comes to an end in April 2024 although we were unable to apply for any relief owing to the fixed term agreement;
 - It is important to maintain a buffer in the budget to reduce the full effect of the loss of £7,500 in 2022/23, the effects of

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which are ongoing. That buffer will reduce each year until the full impact of the loss of income cannot be avoided and a substantial increase in precept (tax) demands will then take effect;

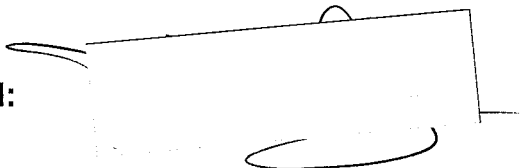
- It would be prudent to introduce increases gradually each year rather than impose a substantial increase when the buffer has been exhausted;
 - Consider that, although the Government has so far not capped Parish Council Tax demands, such capping can be introduced at any time.
- Draft Budget giving 5 Options for setting the Precept for 2024/25.

Action/Comments Agreed:

- It was proposed by Councillor Warrington, seconded by Councillor T Sands, and agreed, to recommend to full Council that Option 5 of the draft budget proposing that the Precept be set at £52,991 be accepted;
- Option 5 sets a Precept per Band D Dwelling of £121.89 (an increase of £14.76 over 2023/24) and a percentage increase of 13.9% (3% more than 2022/23);
- Members thanked the Clerk for her excellent work in preparing and presenting a very difficult budget in a clear and concise format;
- Agenda for January PC meeting.

20:21 ***There being no further business, the meeting was closed.***

Signed:



Finance Committee

24/04

Date:

30/1/2024

23rd January 2024

APPENDIX 1
ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24
SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

Payments Period:	9 Months
Target Percentage:	75%
Actual Percentage:	75%
Variance:	0%

The following significant variances occurred:

1.1	Salaries	80%	Duplicate payment of £700 owing to bank error
1.2	Insurance	109%	Annual premium renewal paid on 12/09/23
1.3	Administration	63%	POBox-£330/Website-£546/Backup-£200/Accounts(Rialtas)-£135/DPO-£150/Gen-£689
1.4	Stationery & Equipment	69%	Toners-£392/Keyboard & Mouse-£58/Telephone & Headset-£93/Photocopier-£149/General-£766
1.5	Telephone & Postage	69%	Broadband-£433/Postage-£115
1.6	KALC & Subscriptions	86%	KALC-£407/KWT-£50/SLCC-£229
1.10	Miscellaneous	87%	3 foreshore benches-£552 (donations received from UJCP & FoGCP)
1.11	Business Rates	0%	No payments due following revaluation
1.13	Village Hall M&R	84%	See page 7
1.14	Village Hall Electricity	76%	9/12 supply to 31/10/24
1.15	Village Hall Water	92%	9/12 supply to 17/10/23
1.16	Refunds & Perform Rights	206%	Hirers' refunds-£300/PPL PRS-£637
1.17	General M&R	48%	See page 8
1.18	Pavilion M&R	116%	Legionella Risk Assessment-£578
1.19	Garages M&R	46%	Door repair-£324
1.20	Water	98%	Pavilion(12/12)-£171/Allotments(9/12)-£57/LMIDB-£65
1.21	Electricity	72%	9/12 supply to 31/10/23 (Floodlights-£302/Pavilion-£183/Garage-£189)
1.22	Capital Account	£5,020	See Page 4
1.23	Election Costs Reserve	£2,605	Unspent allowance
1.24	Equipment Replacement	0%	

Receipts Period:	9 Months
Target Percentage:	75%
Actual Percentage:	73%
Variance:	-2%

The following significant variances occurred:

2.1	Capital Account Interest	146%	Deposit Account Interest-£146
2.2	Wayleaves	99%	Annual payments received - No further payments due
2.3	Miscellaneous	625%	Benches donation-£552/Refunds-£984/Santander-£75/General-£125/Cancelled cheques-£262/Survey Fee-£500
2.4	Lettings	62%	General Lettings-£3,421/GP Surgery-£6,199
2.5	Garages Rent	73%	Rent arrears £545 (excludes bad debt of £956)
2.7	Whitehouse Agri Rent	0%	No new agreement finalised
2.8	Capital Account Receipts	£0	See Page 4
2.9	External Funding	£3,636	MC Rural Liaison Grant for 2023/24
2.10	Precept	£54,728	For information only (excluded from percentage calculation)
2.11	VAT Repayments	£0	No digital claims submitted owing to delay in setting up Alpha Suite Accounts

APPENDIX 2
ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24
PAYMENTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

2022/23 Actual		2023/2024 Budget	Total Spend to Date	%	Budget Remaining	VAT	Total Cost	Page No	
Administration & General									
39,186	Salaries	40,303	32,164	80%	8,139	0.00	32,341.52	2	1.1
5,104	Insurance	5,100	5,571	109%	-471	0.00	5,571.01	3	1.2
3,594	Administration	3,000	1,899	63%	1,101	302.76	2,201.90	4	1.3
2,257	Stationery & Equipment	2,100	1,458	69%	642	291.56	1,749.29	6	1.4
742	Telephone & Postage	800	548	69%	252	0.00	548.36	7	1.5
841	KALC & Subscriptions	800	686	86%	114	81.45	767.68	8	1.6
788	Audit	1,000	409	41%	592	63.00	471.50	9	
980	Section 137 Expenditure	700	191	27%	509	34.16	225.00	10	
170	Chairman's Allowance	170	89	52%	81	10.75	99.49	11	
701	Miscellaneous	650	569	87%	81	113.73	682.39	12	1.10
54,362	Sub-Total	54,623	43,584	80%	11,039	897.41	44,658.14		
Village Hall									
0	Business Rates	0	0	0%	0	0.00	0.00	13	1.11
5,319	Gas	6,000	1,642	27%	4,358	211.75	1,853.35	14	
7,140	Village Hall M & R	5,500	4,636	84%	864	923.89	5,560.31	15	1.13
1,545	Village Hall Electricity	3,000	2,291	76%	709	114.54	2,405.60	16	1.14
562	Village Hall Water	500	462	92%	38	0.00	461.67	17	1.15
1,187	Refunds & Perform Rights	600	1,237	206%	-637	127.36	1,364.15	18	1.16
15,753	Sub-Total	15,600	10,268	66%	5,332	1,377.54	11,645.08		
Pavilion & Open Spaces									
8,379	General Main't & Repairs	6,000	2,898	48%	3,102	563.92	3,462.30	19	1.17
1,272	Pavilion Main't & Repairs	500	578	116%	-78	115.50	693.00	20	1.18
1,489	Garages Main't & Repairs	700	324	46%	376	64.84	389.00	21	1.19
112	Water	300	293	98%	8	0.00	292.50	22	1.20
758	Electricity	1,000	723	72%	277	35.17	709.52	23	1.21
12,010	Sub-Total	8,500	4,816	57%	3,684	779.43	5,546.32		
82,125	Total Revenue Spend	78,723	58,667	75%	20,056	3,054	61,849.54		
5,532.88	Capital Account	0	5,020		0	1,004.00	6,024.00	24	1.22
0.00	Election Costs Reserve	2,605	0	0%	2,605	0.00	0.00	25	1.23
1,108.52	Equipment Replacement	1,300	0	0%	1,300	0.00	0.00	26	1.24
0.00	Rural Liaison Projects	0	0		0	0.00	0.00	27	
88,766	Total Spend	82,628	63,687		23,961	4,058.38	67,873.54		
6,287	VAT Paid						N/A		
95,053	Cash Book Total						67,873.54		

APPENDIX 3
ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24
RECEIPTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

2022/23 Actual		2023/24 Budget	Total Received to Date	%	Budget Remaining	VAT	Total Received	Page No	See Note
Administration & General									
8	Capital Account Interest	100	146	146%	-46	0.00	146.26	2	2.1
256	Wayleaves	260	256	99%	4	0.00	256.46	3	2.2
1,520	Miscellaneous	400	2,499	625%	-2,099	98.24	2,597.11	4	2.3
1,784	Sub-Total	760	2,902	382%	-2,142	98.24	2,999.83		
Village Hall									
15,157	Lettings	15,470	9,620	62%	5,850	59.96	9,679.73	5	2.4
15,157	Sub-Total	15,470	9,620	62%	5,850	59.96	9,679.73		
Pavilion & Open Spaces									
8,540	Garages Rent	6,670	4,840	73%	1,830	968.12	5,808.28	6	2.5
0	Playing Field Rent	0	0	-	0	0.00	0.00	11	
0	Whitehouse Agri. Rent	0	0	-	0	0.00	0.00	12	2.7
8,540	Sub-Total	6,670	4,840	73%	1,830	968.12	5,808.28		
25,481	Total Revenue Receipts	22,900	17,362	76%	5,538	1,126.32	18,487.84		
0	Capital Account Receipts	0	0	-	0	0.00	0.00	13	2.8
0	External Funding	0	3,636	-	0	0.00	3,636.36	14	2.9
47,099	Precept	0	54,728	-	0	0.00	54,728.00	15	2.10
47,099	Total Other Receipts	22,900	58,364		5,538	1,126.32	76,852.20		
3,581	VAT Repayments		0				0.00	16	2.11
76,161	Total Receipts	22,900	75,726		5,538	1,126.32	76,852.20		
1,548	VAT Paid								
59,797	Balance b/fwd 01/04/23						47,191.88		
7,506	Cash Book Total						124,044.08		

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APPENDIX 5
ST. JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24
BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

Previous £	<u>Cash Account Balance:</u>	Current £	£
47,191.88	2022/23 Balance brought forward	47,191.88	
<u>73,988.13</u>	Add: Receipts to 31/12/23	<u>76,852.20</u>	
121,180.01		124,044.08	
<u>-42,544.90</u>	Less: Payments to 31/12/23	<u>-67,873.54</u>	
78,635.11	<u>Cash Account Balance:</u>		<u>£56,170.54</u>
	<u>Bank Balances:</u>		
40,704.69	Current Account @ 31/12/23 > as per Statement No. 001/2024	15,293.78	
	Deposit Account @ 05/09/23 > as per Statement No. 001/2023	41,430.85	
	> Add:	0.00	
	> Less:	0.00	
<u>41,430.85</u>	Deposit Account @ 31/12/23	<u>41,430.85</u>	
82,135.54		56,724.63	
<u>4,079.83</u>	Less: Unpresented Cheques @ 31/12/23	<u>618.50</u>	
8,055.71		56,106.13	
579.40	Add: Cheques/Cash banked - 11/01/24	44.60	
0.00	Add: Bank error - Southern Electric D/Debit	19.81	
0.00	Add:	0.00	
<u>0.00</u>	Add:	<u>0.00</u>	
78,635.11	<u>Bank Account Balance:</u>		<u>£56,170.54</u>
	<u>Accounts Reconciliation:</u>		
40,879.20	Unapplied Capital Account (see Page 4)	35,859.20	
2,605.00	Election Costs Reserve	2,605.00	
<u>35,150.91</u>	Revenue Account	<u>17,706.34</u>	
78,635.11	<u>Accounts Reconciliation:</u>		<u>£56,170.54</u>

24/09



APPENDIX 6
ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24
LIST OF UNPRESENTED CHEQUES AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

Cheque Number	Supplier/Payee	Amount £	VAT £	Total £	Date Signed
123068	Kent County Council	324.58	64.92	389.50	12/812/23
123070	Society of Local Council Clerks	229.00	0.00	229.00	12/12/23
Totals		553.58	64.92	618.50	

