



Wokingham Town Council

Town Hall, Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1AS
Tel: 0118 978 3185 www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk
Town Clerk: Katy Hughes

This Council Meeting is open to the Public and Press
Please notify the Officer or Chairman if you wish to record the meeting

16th October 2023

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the **Finance and Personnel Committee** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** at **7.30pm** on **Tuesday 24th October 2023** for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the subjects and matters set out in the agenda below.

Yours sincerely

K Hughes
Town Clerk

Contact Officer – Katy Hughes, Town Clerk and Interim Responsible Finance Officer
(direct line: 0118 974 0888)

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive and declarations of interests from members on the business about to be transacted

3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC

The Chair to answer questions raised by members of the council or public.

This is an opportunity for the people of Wokingham to ask questions of, and make comments to, the Town Council. Members of the public are requested to restrict their questions and comments to three minutes. Questions which are not answered at this meeting will be answered in writing to the person asking the question.

4 F&P BUDGET REQUESTS 2024-25

To consider budget request items for the committee for the 2024-25 financial year.

5 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, e.g. legal and financial matters, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and that they are instructed to withdraw.

PART TWO

6 IN-YEAR SMALL GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

To receive and consider the Town Clerk's report 28/2023 (copy attached)

7 APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE 2024/25

To consider the applications for financial assistance for the financial year ending 31st March 2025

Committee members: Cllrs B Alvi (Vice Chair), B Callender, R Comber, M Gee (Chair), T Lack, M Lucey, A Mather, H Richards and I Shepherd-Dubey.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that this meeting will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is that it acts as an aide-memoir in assisting the clerk of the meeting in the compilation of minutes. The recordings are held in a secure location and deleted once it has been resolved that the minutes are a true and correct record.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies regulations 2014, persons attending this meeting may make their own recordings of the proceedings subject to the Council's Policy on Filming, Recording & Reporting on Council and Committee Meetings (copy available on request).



Wokingham Town Council

Town Clerk's Report 27/2023

To: Finance & Personnel

Date: 24 October 2023

Subject: Funding proposals – F&P Committee 2024-25 budget

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider a number of proposals for funding for the 2024-2025 budget, for items which fall under the F&P Committee responsibility.

2 FOR CONSIDERATION

2.1 Hire vehicle for grounds team

- In March 2023 the F&P Committee agreed (Resolution 30598) an in-year budget request for an additional 0.5 FTE grounds staff to support our current 2 person grounds team.
- Recruitment attempt was made, but was unsuccessful. It is planned that a further recruitment attempt will be made in the coming months.
- At present, our grounds team has use of a hire van which is used for various tasks, including transporting goods between the town hall and stores area at Woosehill Community Hall. This vehicle is securely parked at Ormonde Road Allotments overnight.
- As the team expands, the Grounds and Bloom Officer has requested access to another vehicle, so the team of 3 staff would share two vehicles.
- The Proposed budget request for this is: £4,500
- This is based on a 36 month hire agreement for a small van (Citroen Berlingo or similar) at approximately £315 per month, plus an allowance for additional insurance costs)

2.2 Laptop replacement program

- The town council currently has 16 laptops. Of these, 14 were purchased in 2020 to enable officers to work from home during the covid pandemic.
- We now need to look at a rolling replacement program, to ensure that we can replace laptops as they reach their end of life, and to avoid a one-off large hit of cost with replacing many at the same time.
- We would like to budget to replace 5 laptops in the 2024-25 financial year, at an expected cost of approximately £600 per laptop.
- The Proposed budget request for this is: £3,500, based on 5 x £600 plus £500 for any price differential on laptops or any necessary screen, cable, keyboard etc. replacements.

2.3 Museum Intern / placement

- The Town Council has made a commitment to work towards museum accreditation for the town hall and the town council's collection of items.
- This accreditation process is part of ensuring that the collection of items that the town council holds are properly cared for, and there is an

opportunity for residents to see them and understand how they tell the story of the town, the council, the building etc.

- Whilst much progress has been made to date, we do have capacity issues, with the officers struggling to find sufficient time to dedicate to this project.
- We have an opportunity to work with the University of Reading to bring in a university student, through the Reading Internship Scheme, who could help support us progress part of this project. Reading University runs a museum studies degree course, so we are hopeful that we could attract a student who has relevant knowledge and experience to really help us progress in this area.
- We have two potential options here:
 - Option one – 140-hour summer internship
 - A summer internship which would be mostly funded via a grant from Reading University (covering salary at NLW), but would require a budget to cover Employer NI and travel costs.
Budget request: £1,000
 - Option two – six-month placement
 - A placement student, organised outside of the RIS program, which the town council would need to self-fund.
Budget request based on 750 - 800 hours over six months at NLW, including 'on costs': £13,000

2.4 Member Remuneration

- At the September Strategy Working Party meeting, members considered a report compiled by the Town Clerk (TC24/2023) and a verbal summary of the findings of the IRP, published by WBC in March 2023.
- Following extensive discussion at the SWP meeting, members recommended to the Finance and Personnel Committee, a proposal for the adoption of members remuneration, at the rates suggested by the IRP.
- The proposed budget for this request is: £10,000 based on an annual allowance of £400 per elected member.
- For information, I have included the written report (TC24/2023) reviewed by the SWP as this includes information relevant to any budget discussion on this matter.

3 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Costs as specified above, relating to each proposed budget item:
Vehicle hire: £4,500
Laptop replacement: £3,500
Museum Internship: £1,000 or £13,000
Member remuneration: £10,000

4 **NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 To consider and resolve upon which items to recommend for inclusion in the 2024-25 budget.