



Ref: Agenda/F&GP– 19/03/2024

14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

All Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee are hereby summoned to the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting of Biggleswade Town Council that will take place on **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024** at the **Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade** commencing at **7:00pm**, for the purpose of considering and recommending the business to be transacted as specified below.

Yours faithfully

Peter Tarrant  
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Distribution: All Town Councillors  
Notice Boards  
The Press

Committee Members:

Cllr. D. Strachan (Chairman)  
Cllr. I. Agnew (Deputy Chairman)  
Cllr. D. Albone  
Cllr. G. Barrett  
Cllr. M. Foster (ex-officio Member)  
Cllr. M. Knight (ex-officio Member)  
Cllr. M. North  
Cllr. M. Russell  
Cllr. S. Sajid  
Cllr. C. Thomas

## AGENDA

### 1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record be kept of the Members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Town Clerk.

### 2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.
- b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, pertaining to matters listed on the agenda.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

**[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_oS9JGOHGSG-mlvqt2D4mUq](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oS9JGOHGSG-mlvqt2D4mUq)**

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman, prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed **one three-minute slot**.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

None.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. The Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024** at the Office of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Grant Applications 23/24 Tranche Three**

For Members to receive and consider a written report from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and the Assistant Account.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- a. None.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

**[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_oS9JGOHGSG-mlvqt2D4mUq](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oS9JGOHGSG-mlvqt2D4mUq)**

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed **(one) three-minute slot**.

## 12. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

The following resolution will be **moved** that it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt items are discussed.

None.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.





**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
MEETING ON TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024 AT THE OFFICES OF  
BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4  
SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE COMMENCING AT 7.00PM**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr D Strachan (Chairman)  
Cllr I Agnew (Deputy Chairman)  
Cllr D Albone  
Cllr G Barrett  
Cllr M Foster (ex-officio Member)  
Cllr M Knight (ex-officio Member)  
Cllr M Russell  
Cllr C Thomas

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
Mr R Youngs – Head of Finance and Deputy RFO  
Ms F Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 1

**Meeting Formalities:**

Following a reminder to meeting attendees, both panel and public, that this is a formal meeting, the Chairman advised that members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during public open session but not at other times. The meeting is being filmed and by being present attendees are deemed to have agreed be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Chairman advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chairman asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr M North, Cllr S Sajid.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:**

None.

**b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:**

None.

**3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements.

**4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No member of the public wished to speak.

**5. INVITED SPEAKER**

No guest speaker was invited.

## 6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were no Members questions

## 7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

The draft Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and the Chairman authorised to sign the said.

## 8. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

## 9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### a. **Precept Report 2024-2025**

Members discussed the report submitted by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and Head of Finance & Deputy RFO.

Commenting on the report, Cllr Knight brought forward various points with regards to the public report for a budget proposal of £1.62m. He added the following points:

- There is no mention of the increase to the tax base which is an increase of 0.5%
- He welcomed savings of just over £29,000 but added there was no data explaining where these have been sourced from and it was important to know so that the public understood there were no cuts to key services.
- There is no comparison to last year's budget which was set at £1.53m.
- There is no detailed budget by account code and chairs of the various committees have not yet seen the budgets per committee.
- The comparative weekly figure of 20p per week is irrelevant and the monthly or annual figure should be included in the report.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive responding to the points indicated that the account code information had been shared with Members in a different forum.

The Head of Finance & Deputy RFO pointed out that the annual figure of the increase was established as £10.64.

Cllr Russell commenting on the report indicated that as this was a key decision of the year, all relevant information needed to be brought together in the public domain. Cllr Russell also mentioned that the likely balance sheet should be included in the documents to come to Council so that Members are able to make an informed decision.

Both the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and Head of Finance indicated that they would be happy to consolidate all documents including the balance sheet in the reports to the next Council meeting.

Cllr Russell proposed a recommendation that the F&GP Committee recommend a precept of £1,625,930 for the year 2024-2025, to Council.

Members **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Council Tax precept for the year 2024-2025 should be £1,625,930.

Cllr Knight also proposed that additional information is provided to the next Council meeting, providing a breakdown by account code showing a comparison against last year's budget.

Members **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** this additional proposal.

b. **Quarterly Bank Reconciliations**

The Head of Finance and Deputy RFO thanked Cllr Woodhead for his review and signing off of the bank statements and reconciliations for the quarter end to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the report and reviewed the supporting documentation.

c. **Additional Credit Card**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive presented the report and noted that despite the majority of payments being made through bank transfers, as the only card holder it was not sufficient especially if he was absent or on holiday. This view was supported by the internal auditor.

The obvious Officer for the second card should be the Head of Finance & Deputy RFO.

Members **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** the recommendation that the second card holder is the Head of Finance & Deputy RFO.

Members commenting on the second half of the proposal with regards to changes to the Financial Regulations, indicated that they did not want to make changes to the regulations piecemeal and asked that the Town Clerk and Head of Finance look over these.

Members **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** that the Financial Regulations are looked over carefully for any other changes and updates necessary and the item is brought back to a Council meeting in the near future to enable the issuing of the second card.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

None.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

a. No member of the public wished to speak.

12. **EXEMPT**

None.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **19.27**





**BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Finance and General Purposes 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024**  
**Grant Applications 2023/2024 Tranche Three**

**Implications of Recommendations**

**Corporate Strategy:** Good Governance – ensure that the Town Council continues to operate within legislation, regulation, ethical guidelines and best practice.

**Finance:** Award as determined by Members. Sanctioned overspend sourced from reserve.

**Equality:** Not applicable.

**Environment:** Not applicable.

**Community Safety:** Not applicable.

**Background:**

Biggleswade Town Council acknowledges the significant contribution that Community Clubs, Charities and other organisations make to enrich and improve the quality of life for so many residents in the town.

The Town Council has a budget of £21,000 to cover three tranches of grant applications for the 2023/204 financial year. The applications are considered without prejudice.

**2023/2024 Budgetary Position**

Budget: £21,000

Expenditure: £23,511#

Overspend: £2,511

*# this includes the 2022/2023 tranche paid in April of 2024*

The net position particular to tranche two currently equates to an overspend of £2,511. The Town Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024 resolved to allow three tranches for the 2023/2024 financial year. Ordinarily this tranche would be paid in the new 2024/2025 financial year.

Any new grants that Members determine will create an overspend which will need to be sourced from the 2024/2025 General Reserve. This is a one off approach agreed by Council in an effort to tidy previous accounting practices highlighted as part of the Precept Process.

The grants budget agreed by Members for the 2024/2025 financial year equates to £28,000.

**Process for awarding grant requests for more than £2,000:**

Grant applications requesting an award for greater than £2,000 cannot be approved at Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings and must instead, be considered by a meeting of the Town Council. The Town Council's Grant Policy states that "*Finance and General Purposes Committee can approve grants to a maximum of £2,000 and recommend to Council for grants above £2,000*".

There is one instance particular to this tranche and that relates to:

Bloomin Well CIC. A Community Interest Company. The company uses Biggleswade Hospital grounds to provide gardening activities for adults with mental health difficulties.

The organisation has requested a grant of £4,500. Any grant would be used to purchase additional gardening equipment.

If the Finance and General Purposes Committee support an allocation of more than £2,000, this award will need to be approved by Council on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

**Summary:**

The grant applications are summarised in Appendix A and a further analysis and the individual applications are available via SharePoint.

**Recommendations:**

Officers recommend that Members consider each individual grant application without prejudice.

It is further recommended that successful recipients of grants be requested to provide evidence that the grant has been used for the stated purpose and the quantifiable impact on behalf of the community. This information will be shared with the Internal Auditor.

Peter Tarrant  
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Alex Wilkinson  
Assistant Accountant

Appendix A: An A3 Financial Summary broken down by relevant financial year

Biggleswade Town Council - Grants Applications 2023-2024

	Organisation	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2022/23 Tranche 1		2023/24 Tranche 2		Grants Requested 2023/24 Tranche 3, to be paid by BACS 25.03.24	Tranche 3 2023/24 Awarded
		Requested (£)	Awarded (£)	Requested (£)	Awarded (£)	Requested (£)	Awarded (£)	Requested (£)	Awarded (£)	Requested (£)	Awarded (£)	Requested (£)	Awarded (£)	Requested (£)	Awarded (£)		
1	Carers in Bedfordshire	3500	0	3000	2000	2000	1000	2000	1000	600	600	2000	600			£2,000	
2	Biggles FM	1850	1850	1850	1850	1850	1850	1850	1850			1850	1850			£1,850	
3	Keech Hospice Care	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000			1000	1000			£1,000	
4	The Royal British Legion - Biggleswade Branch					1000	1000			750	0	750	750			£400	
5	Autism Bedfordshire	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	2000	500			1000	500	£500	
6	Biggleswade Community Group											2000	1500	2000	1000	£1,200	
7	Biggleswade History Society	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750			900	900			£900	
8	Bloomin Well CIC															£4,500	
9	Ivel Bereavement Support															£1,000	
10	Biggleswade United Football Club							310	0							£1,950	
11	Biggleswade, Sandy & District NCT													1450	600	£1,250	
12	Veg Box Donation Scheme													700	375	£700	
13	Hear2Listen CIC					1000	400	1000	0			1000	1000			£1,000	
	<b>Previous Applicants not applying this time:</b>																
	Biggleswade Community Carnival							500	500			1189	500	1500	1000		
	Biggleswade Crab Lane (Railway Embankment) Committee	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	60	60	60						
	Biggleswade First Aid Club	370	370	380	380	370	350	380	380	380	380						
	Biggleswade Good Neighbours	450	450	400	400	400	400	500	500			500	250				
	Biggleswade Sea Cadets	1000	1000	1000	1000	1500	1500	1500	1500			1500	1000				
	Biggleswade Sports	470	470	500	500	500	250	500	400	400	400						
	Biggleswade ATC Squadron (Royal Air Force Air Cadets)	800	1000	500	500	1000	1000	1000	1000	876	876			1000	875		
	For Men To Talk Community Interest Company									500	500						
	East Beds Community Bus Ltd (Ivel Sprinter)	500	500	500	500	600	500	750	500			500	500				
	NHS First Responders									2560	2560						
	Music 24									2000	500						
	PCC of Biggleswade									450	200						
	Biggleswade Living Streets									1000	500						
	Wellbeing in Biggleswade									900	450			500	500		
	Biggleswade Arts Collective CIC									2000	2000			2000	1500		
	Bigg Welcome																
	Biggleswade Community Garden									2000	0	1500	500	1500	1000		
	Biggleswade Community Safety Group	2880	0	800	800									432	432		
	Langford Methodist Church													5000	0		
	Sue Ryder St John's Hospice													3000	1000		
	Stratton Community Farm CIC													2000	0		
	Biggleswade Library, Central Bedfordshire Council													300	0		
	Mind BLMK													1000	0		
	Magpas Air Ambulance	460	460	500	500	500	500	536	536					500	250		
	Lawnside Academy													1300	0		
	Dunton Recreation Association													2000	0		
	Biggleswade Scout Group	10000	0	1800	1000	2090	2090							279	279		
	Biggleswade Amateur Theatrical Society	500	500											5000	1000		
	Respite at Home Volunteers					700	700							1000	600		
	Biggleswade and Sandy Gateway Club	500	500														
	St Andrews Church Biggleswade	1000	0														
	Biggleswade Town Cricket Club	3000	0	4000	2000												
	Biggleswade Town Youth Football Club	1300	1000	1062	1062												
	Revitalise Respite Holidays		708														
	The Avenue (Autism) - no longer in operation	400	400	400	400	400	400										
	Ivel Fix	250	250	200	200					500	0						
	The Mayflower Centre	1200	1200														
	The Need Project	500	500	500	500	500	250										
	2nd Biggleswade (St Andrews) Rainbows			125	125												
	Biggleswade Scout and Guide Gang Show			1000	1000												
	Citizens Advice Mid Bedfordshire			750	750	1000	750										
	Let's get going			600	0												
	St Andrews Lower School PTTA			1700	1000												
	The Weatherley Centre			5000	0												
	Bedford Daycare Hospice					1000	0	1000	500								
	Revitalise					1146	1000										
	Link a ride Community Service - no longer in operation					3000	1500										
	Biggleswade allotment holders							2800	0								
	Central Beds Swim Squad							1000	0								
	Ivel Valley school							800	800								
	Heritage Mosaic Trail Map (Sandy TC)							250	250								
	Biggleswade Community News							2000	2000								
	Trinity Methodist Church							1972	1972								
	Bedfordshire Police Partnership Trust							500	500								
	Country Days Ltd									1000	0						
	Vibrance - Sound experience									500	0						
	<b>Total (£)</b>	<b>26338</b>	<b>9358</b>	<b>21767</b>	<b>12667</b>	<b>14756</b>	<b>11240</b>	<b>23448</b>	<b>16498</b>	<b>18476</b>	<b>9526</b>	<b>17439</b>	<b>12100</b>	<b>36661</b>	<b>11411</b>	<b>£18,250</b>	<b>£</b>
	% awarded from requested (£)		36%		58%		76%		70%		52%		69%		31%		
	Number of applications		25		26		23		24		18		14		14		13
	Number of applications over £2,000		4		3		2		1		1		0		0		1

