



Finance, Administration & General Purposes Committee 2024-25

Chair: Cllr Richard Noon

Over the last 12 months or so, I believe the Town Council as a whole has started to transition from a position of having to continually ‘*review internal processes*’, to one where we are now act and behave and anticipate in a more structured and rhythmic pattern. This is a major reflection on the efforts taken by the Advisor to the Town Council, Tara Ball and over the last 12 months, as he has adjusted into the role, that of the Town Clerk and RFO (Responsible Finance Officer) Mark Brook.

The Finance, Administration and General Purposes Committee has dealt with matters such as the reclamation of the Section 106 monies owed to Meltham Town Council by developers, the structuring of our staffing profile going forward, had oversight on the latter stages of the refurbishment of the play area at The Robert Ashton Memorial park, as well as progressing financial planning processes for ‘Project 142’, which refers to The Lodge building at the entrance to Robert Ashton Memorial park.

At the start of the financial and municipal year, the Town Council, and this Committee had the challenge of recouping Section 106 monies from developers, through Kirklees Council. I am pleased that the Town Council has managed to recoup £57,987 from an owed total of £215,608. We continue to wait for the remainder of funds to be collected by Kirklees Council and for this to be passed over to Meltham

Town Council. The payments are being received in instalments from the developers.

In order to continue developing a wider asset management plan for the Town Council, I am pleased that this committee was able to produce a budget for the year which included retaining Tara Ball; her expertise in some of the issues which the Town Council will address in the coming 12 months will be invaluable.

During the current financial year, Meltham Town Council has also provided grants to Wilshaw Village Hall (second payment of a grant totalling £9,000). Friends of Robert Ashton Memorial Park £1,000 for the Picnic in the Park event. The Crossroads Charity Shop was awarded £2,500 as part of the Town Councils Shop Front scheme; Meltham Churches Together £350 to support the Carols in the Park event, Meltham Scarecrow Festival £800 to buy bunting and flags for display in the centre of the Town. Plus, the Town Council also contributed £5,000 to the Carlile Institute which supports the costs of hosting Meltham Library within the premises and the young people of Meltham benefited not only from the continued support of the Youth Club, but also Meltham C of E School received £1,000 towards new play equipment in the Junior playground. The Town Council contributed £8,332 to Kirklees Youth Alliance to facilitate core youth work in and around our town. The Christmas Lights Committee received £4,773 which enabled them to purchase new lights for the town centre. Finally, the expenditure on managing trees within the park was £10,452, the inflated cost was caused by diseased and dying trees, this ongoing investment illustrates the Council's commitment to ensuring the park environment is as safe as possible for the public.

The Town Council has utilised large parts of its financial reserves to deliver capital projects over the last 18 months and to ensure caution and good practice, the Town Council adopted a reserves policy during this year to ensure it has sufficient reserves going forward for unexpected issues; it is pleasing to note that during this same financial

year the Town Council has achieved and then exceeded its objective, whilst being able to deliver our services. The objective was to maintain surplus of 2.5 months of running costs, we currently have a surplus of 5 months of running costs.

I'd like to extend my gratitude to the Councillors who sit on this committee for their diligence, patience and service and to Mark and Tara for their attention to detail, sage advice and guidance over the last few months.

Cllr Richard Noon