

**MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2024**

- * Councillor Follows – Chair
- * Councillor Weightman – Vice Chair

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|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| * Councillor Adam | * Councillor Holliday |
| 0 Councillor Clayton | 0 Councillor Kiehl |
| * Councillor Crooks | * Councillor Martin |
| * Councillor Crowe | * Councillor PMA Rivers |
| * Councillor C Downey | * Councillor Steel |
| 0 Councillor S Downey | * Councillor Thomson |
| 0 Councillor Duce | * Councillor Williams |
| * Councillor Heagin | |

* Present # Absent & No Apology Received 0 Apology for Absence L Late

287. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2024, having been previously circulated were signed by the Chair as a true record.

288. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

289. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS

Members made no declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting, which is required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

290. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No petitions/statements/questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order No 4.

291. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions from Councillors were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 6.

292. YOUTH SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

At Full Council on 5 September 2024, Members received the 2023/24 Annual Report for the Godalming Youth Services. At that meeting the Mayor wished to pass the Council's thanks to the Youth Services Officer for such a comprehensive report and with the agreement of Members, deferred questions on the report to the next Policy & Management Committee meeting and asked the Town Clerk to invite the Youth Services Officer to that meeting.

As the Youth Services Officer was on leave on the 26 September, this was the first available opportunity for Members to formally discuss the Youth Services' Annual Report with the Youth Services Officer.

The Youth Services Officer – Tom Manning outlined the work of the Youth Services over the previous 12 months, informing Members that the service had now reached a point where consolidation was required before determining any further expansion of the service.

Members thanked the YSO and the Youth Services staff for the work they have undertaken and for the benefits they are providing not only to the young people of the town, but also to the wider community. During the discussion on the work of the youth services and the annual report, Members requested that future reports indicate the staffing levels and the attendance/participation figures of the service users.

Members noted that of itself the number of participants, whilst an indication of the success of the service, does not by itself indicate the complexities of the work undertaken by the youth services and the difference it can make to the lives of individual service users.

293. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

	£
Godalming Town Council	
Accounts paid since the 15 August 2024	837,677.60
Receipts received since the 15 August 2024	915,441.99
Balance held in HSBC Current Account	
Balance at 17 October 2024	232,022.60
Balance held in the HSBC Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 17 October 2024	889,196.05
CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 17 October 2024	950,000.00

A schedule of the accounts paid was tabled for the information of Members and a copy is attached to record minutes. The vouchers relating to these payments were also tabled at the meeting for inspection. All payments made were in line with the agreed budget or other resolution of this Committee or Full Council.

Members agreed that the Chair should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

294. BUDGET MONITORING

Members considered a budget monitoring report to 30 September 2024 (detailed report attached to record minutes) and raised no issues.

295. COMMITTEE REPORTS & KEY DATES

Members noted the Committee's Reports' Schedule and Key Dates Programme.

296. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

Information:	£
24/2025 Grants Budget	64,700.00
Allocations this year to date	53,146.00
Balance available for allocation	11,554.00
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24/2025 SLA Fund Allocation	45,500.00
Allocations this year to date	45,500.00
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24/2025 Council Community Fund Allocation	19,200.00
Allocations this year prior to this meeting	7,646.00
Council Community Fund approved at this meeting (including Grant Aid in Kind)	7,030.00
Balance unallocated	4,524.00

Members considered the following applications for grant aid – the summary of the application is given below.

Applications for Council Community Funding

Joyfull Greens CIC

Sponsors: Cllr Thomson

Frederique Lecer from the Joyfull Green CIC was in attendance and answered questions from Members.

£1,500 was awarded to support setting up the Joyfull Greens Community Interest Company, whose aim is to create a plant-based community cookery school in Godalming to help people grow, cook and eat real food with more plants to lead healthier, happier, and more sustainable lives. The classes and courses will be a learning and a social occasion, with classes ending with a shared meal. The project will support people to improve their physical & mental health, create communities that they want to be part of, and tackle the climate crisis through dietary change.

The project is aimed at local residents and communities who disproportionately experience health inequalities, for young people and adults suffering from mental or physical ill health, for carers also, whilst ensuring everyone can access the *JoyFull Greens* programme.

Previous applications: None

The Burys Scout & Guide HQ

Sponsors: Cllr Crooks, Cllr Steel

£1,500 was awarded to the Management Committee of The Burys Scout & Guide Headquarters to assist with the cost of £2,772 for renewing the access doors at the HQ to complete works aimed at making the facility fully accessible for all members of the community.

Previous Grants: 2023/24 - £1,000, 2019/20 - £500, 2012/13 - £435

The Meath Epilepsy Charity – Every Minute Counts

Sponsors: Cllr Penny Rivers, Cllr Paul Rivers

£1,500 was awarded in support The Meath’s “Every Minute Counts” project.

The project aims to implement a defibrillator training programme for staff, residents, volunteers, and the local community at The Meath. The Meath specialises in supporting individuals with complex epilepsy and given the increased risk of sudden cardiac arrest among individuals with epilepsy, it is critical that its staff, volunteers, and local community members are equipped with the skills and knowledge to respond effectively in an emergency.

Whist The Meath has two defibrillators on-site, the effectiveness of these life-saving devices is contingent upon having trained personnel who can use them quickly and efficiently. Currently, only a limited number of staff and volunteers have received training, and there is a need to expand this to ensure broader coverage and readiness. The proposed training will

enhance the safety and wellbeing of the people we support and will strengthen the skills and resilience of our local community in Godalming.

Members noted that there are currently 29 defibrillators available at various locations throughout Godalming, of which 13 are in public locations available 24/7 (40% of which are provided by and maintained by GTC) with the remaining 16 being registered on the defib database. If appropriate the Ambulance Service can advise emergency callers of the location of the nearest defibrillator, including when appropriate those located within business premises who have registered operating times and public availability, for example WBC offices, Farncombe & Godalming Leisure Centre, Waitrose, The Library etc., which are available during their opening times.

Previous Grants: £36 in 2013/14 (Grant Aid in Kind)

Godalming Junior School

Sponsors: Cllr Paul Rivers, Cllr Penny Rivers

£1,030 was awarded as financial support for free school meal children to attend residential trips.

As Members noted that school budgets are tighter than ever and though schools are allocated additional funding, this only goes so far. Members also noted that in most cases those children who qualify for free school meals (FSM) also have other, sometimes complex, needs and that the additional funding received by the school needs to be prioritised towards daily support and does not extend to funding these children on school trips. Arguably, the very children that need these opportunities the most.

Previous Grants: £628 & £657 in 2022/23 and £1,516 & £376 in 2023/24

Green Hub Project for Teens

Sponsors: Cllr Adam Duce, Cllr Penny Rivers

£1,500 was awarded to support the Green Hub Project for Teens to continue to deliver support for young people in collaboration with Munstead Wood.

Munstead Wood Extension Programme Project

Following the successful pilot project in summer 2024, The Green Hub wishes to continue to develop the project with Munstead Wood into 2025.

- The Munstead Wood pilot project in summer 2024 was a huge success, having boosted the skills and self-esteem of the participating teens.
- It is hoped to evolve the programme into a series of modular half-termly cycles, each lasting 6 weeks, each having a specific horticultural focus and contributing to specific parts of the garden restoration plan.
- These modules will become available to teens opting for an extension programme.
- Comment from Katherine Mills, NT Project Manager for Munstead Wood *“We were utterly inspired by the work of The Green Hub and what it is doing in supporting young people and instantly wanted to find a way to work together. We have been delighted to share the magic of the gardens with some of The Green Hub teens this summer and plan to continue the pilot with further sessions next year.”*

Who it will benefit:

- Teens who attend Green Hub programmes are drawn from across the Waverley area – however, due to the local proximity of the Green Hub gardens, we receive large numbers

of applications from local Godalming families. We have forged strong alliances at the key GP surgeries serving Godalming residents (primarily Binscombe, The Mill, and Milford & Witley), as well as links with all key local schools. Our midweek programmes cater specifically for young people struggling with Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA), which is a significant issue facing both Broadwater and Rodborough Schools.

- Teens wanting to continue to evolve and develop their Green Hub mental wellbeing 'journey', via social therapeutic horticulture; in other words, teens who have already completed at least 12 weeks with the Green Teens programme.
- Teens will be nominated for this extension programme if they demonstrate having benefitted from the programme so far, as well as being enthusiastic to move on to a development programme.
- Teens can take part in multiple modules according to their needs, the purpose being to develop their confidence, sense of purpose and achievement.

The purpose for which the grant will be used:

- To fund costs associated with the next 12 months (6 half-termly modules of 6 weeks each) – i.e. an additional craft table, gardening equipment and craft materials, volunteer training etc. for the full 12 months.

Previous Grants: £5,000 in 2021/22.

297. POLICY DOCUMENT REVIEW

Members reviewed the Communications Policy and agreed to resolve to recommend its adoption by Full Council.

298. OCKFORD PARK BUILDING

Members noted that under delegated authority granted by Full Council on 15 February 2024 (Min No 513-23 refers), the Town Clerk has accepted the offer of transfer of the Ockford Park building from CALA homes and instructed the council's solicitors. Under the terms of the S106 agreement and agreed Heads of Terms, the following conditions apply:

- Godalming Town Council will be granted rights of access and egress from the adopted highway (being Aaron's Hill) through the estate roads (subject to contribution towards maintenance of the same).
- Godalming Town Council will be granted right to connection and/or use service media serving the community building (subject to contribution towards maintenance).
- There is a positive obligation on the Town Council to comply with all relevant planning consents and planning agreements and any other statutory consents and/or agreements and restrictive covenant not to use the community building other than as a community building.
- Transfer to be free of any charge and/or mortgage binding the community building but subject to all matters stated within title register SY865170 as at the date of the transfer.
- Town Council to be granted a right to park over the parking spaces adjacent to the community building as well as rights to use the adjacent open space.

Additionally, Members noted that having accepted the offer on 1 October 2024, reasonable endeavours will be used to complete the transfer of the community building to the Town Council within 60 working days of acceptance.

However, should the transfer not complete within the 60-working day period above, CALA reserves the right to offer a transfer of the community building to another community group (or ultimately the Management Company or any other party).

299. FEES & CHARGES 2025/26

Members to consider Officers' recommendations set out below and to resolve to agree the fees and charges for council services during the civic year 2025/26.

Cemetery Fees

Members agreed the proposed cemetery fees and charges (attached to record minutes) and resolved to approve them for implementation on the 1 April 2025.

Members noted a rise of 6% for Exclusive Rights of Burial at Eashing Cemetery rounded to the nearest £5, with a discount applied to the Waverley/Guildford and Resident/Excepted category rates. Additionally, Members noted that the Interment fees and other cemetery fees had been adjusted by an average of 2%, rounded up to the nearest £5 excepting that the interment fee for cremated remains into an existing purchased grave space have been adjusted to a flat rate of £375 for all categories.

Community Buildings

When setting the fees and charges for 2025/26 (attached to record minutes), Members took the following factors into consideration:

- current inflation;
- current utility costs;
- occupancy rate; and
- opportunity to simplify combination of hall hire options.

Members agreed that no changes should be made to individual hall hire fees for the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, although each hall will become subject to a stand-alone hire fee, meaning the discount for multi-area hire is removed. The previous restrictions on charity and voluntary rates after 6.00pm on a Friday and Saturday have been removed. Additionally, a minimum hire period for casual (non-regular) hirers for a Saturday/Sunday hire has been set at 3 hours.

Hire fees for the Pepperpot and Broadwater are subject to an increase of approx. 2%, rounded to nearest 10 pence. A minimum hire period for casual (non-regular) hirers for a Saturday/Sunday hire has been set at 3 hours.

Members noted that the proposed hire charges for the new Ockford Park building are based on those of Broadwater Park. However, unlike Broadwater Park the hire charges for the Ockford Park building are not subject to VAT and the hire periods are session based as opposed to hourly based.

Allotments

Members agreed that for 2025/26 the rent charges for allotments be increased by 2.2% in line with the CPI rate published by the Office of National Statistics on 18 September 2024.

300. UPDATE ON PEPPERPOT REFURBISHMENT

Members were informed that due to the challenging weather conditions towards the end of September and throughout October, the external renovation of The Pepperpot has been delayed until Spring 2025.

301. REVENUE COST CENTRES

Members agreed to adjustments to cost centre identifiers for the 2025/26 budget setting process to enable costs to be more accurately identified. Members noted that this is purely an action to improve financial efficiency, transparency and to enable areas of expenditure to be more readily identified.

Members agreed to the:

- Splitting of 208 Land & Property Other into separate cost centres to more readily reflect the expenditure allocated to that heading. This will create new cost centres:
 - Public Conveniences – To clearly indicate costs associated with operation public toilets in Godalming & Farncombe.
 - Street Scene – To clearly identify costs associated with the maintenance of the public realm, which covers bus shelters, benches, noticeboards and bollards, signage including fingerposts and going forward to include Floral Godalming, which would be removed from Town Promotion, which is considered a poor fit for that activity.
- Cost Centre 301 – Cemeteries, to become Cemeteries and Open Spaces, this is for practical reasons as it reduces the need to apportion elements of equipment and operation expenses between cemetery operations and works undertaken in the future at other outside spaces such as The Bury's Field and Canon Bowring Field.

302. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES

Members noted the update provided by Councillor Crooks on the future of the District Scouts Executive which will cease to exist as the governance of the organisation moves to a Trustee model. Members thanked Cllr Crooks for his work with the Scouts executive and noted that he would not be taking up a position as a trustee.

303. COMMUNICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Members wished the awarding of grants and the focus on supporting youth groups to be communicated via social media.

304. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 7 November 2024 at 7.00pm or at the conclusion of the preceding Environment & Planning Committee meeting, whichever is later.

305. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

IN PURSUANCE OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 S.1(2), THE COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM(S) 20 BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED I.E STAFFING MATTERS.

306. UPDATE ON STAFFING MATTERS

Members received an update on staffing matters from the Chair of the Staffing Committee, noting the following:

- The work to build in additional resilience to the Youth Services structuring is progressing.
- The maintenance team has seen personnel changes and is currently operating with a 25% vacancy rate.
- The recruitment process for a new finance officer has been completed with the successful candidate due to start on 7 January 2025.

- The arrangements for the locum finance officer remain in place, although a request has been made for an increase in hours in order to assist the Town Clerk during the budget setting period.