



## Minutes of the Personnel and Finance Committee meeting held at 7.00pm at the Arts & Heritage Centre on 25 July 2023

Present: Cllr J. Bowman (Chair), Cllr R. Lyus, Cllr M. Galligan, Cllr J. Cox, Cllr L. Milner,  
In Attendance: Cllr S. Davey, Cllr S. Hodson, Michelle Moss (Clerk), Cllr A. Clark,  
Members of public present: 0

**1 To elect a chairperson for the committee - Ref: 2135**

Cllr Bowman was nominated to stand as Chair of the personnel and finance committee and following a unanimous vote was duly elected.

Proposed: Cllr M. Galligan Seconder: Cllr L. Milner All in favour

**2 To receive declaration of interests and requests for dispensations and to consider granting dispensation(s) - Ref: 2136**

None.

**3 To receive apologies and reasons for absence - Ref: 2137**

None.

**4 Public Participation (10 minutes max). Individual members of the public are permitted to address the council for up to 5 minutes each - Ref: 2138**

An issue was raised about the council not being properly in touch with residents, that there is a lack of consultation regarding priorities, residents have issues and concerns regarding maintenance, litter and bins, size of grants given without consultation and lack of consultation regarding the proposed loan for 2-4 Market Place. It was suggested that the council should find better ways to connect with residents.

It was agreed that this was a matter for full council and that an agenda item should be added to a future meeting to discuss this.

**5 To review and approve the draft minutes from Employment committee meeting 7th March 2023 and Finance Committee 16th March 2023 - Ref: 2139**

It was noted that the committee structure and some members had changed since the meetings were held, but agreed that the draft minutes were an accurate reflection of the meetings.

RESOLVED to approve the minutes from Employment committee meeting 7th March 2023 and Finance Committee 16th March 2023 and accept as a true record of the meetings.

Proposed: Cllr J. Bowman Seconder: Cllr R. Lyus All in favour

**6 To review the projected spend against budget forecast including any variances and make appropriate recommendations to full council - Ref: 2140**

It was noted that there will be a significant variance to staff costs/contractors due to the change in employment status of the contractor. It was noted that there is £3850 in reserves for election costs, and agreed it should remain in place due to the possibility of a contested election. All other significant variances relate to conscious/approved expenditure and no recommendations to full council are required at this time.

The committee was also presented with a bank reconciliation and account balances for review and approval. RESOLVED to accept the bank reconciliation as a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Cllr M. Galligan Seconder: Cllr R. Lyus All in favour

**7 To review the issue raised by the external auditor regarding the asset register and agree any next steps - Ref: 2141**

It was noted that both the internal and external auditors had raised issues with the asset register and that on review the asset figures submitted in previous audits did not accurately reflect the true value of assets held by the council. The clerk and estates committee have been working on ensuring the asset register is fully up to date and accurate and the revised register will be included for review at the next P&F committee meeting. The external auditor has been briefed on the issue and is in the process of completing their final report for full council. It was agreed that no additional action is required at this time.

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**8 To agree the appointment of the internal auditor and the month for the interim audit for 2023/24 - Ref: 2142**

RESOLVED to appoint Andy Hopkins to undertake an interim internal audit in October.

Proposed: Cllr J. Bowman Seconder: Cllr L. Milner All in favour

**9 To consider projects, wish lists and must do's for 24/25 and beyond and agree next steps - Ref: 2143**

It was noted that all councillors should be asked for their views on projects/work for 24/25, the requests should be appraised and prioritised by full council after which they should be brought to P&F committee to include in the budget.

RESOLVED to include an agenda item at the next full council meeting to discuss projects and priorities.

Proposed: Cllr J. Bowman Seconder: Cllr M. Galligan All in favour

**10 To review the current workload of the town clerk and make any recommendations to full council - Ref: 2144**

The clerk had shared an updated task status list and noted that there are still many mandatory jobs which are outstanding and are not being actioned due to the high workload. It was noted that previous clerks had been employed on a full time basis, but the clerk does not wish to work full time. Following a lengthy discussion it was RESOLVED to propose to full council to consider employing an assistant and budgeting for this from 24/25 and to look at what current activities can be outsourced, e.g. payroll.

Clerk to propose a job outline for the role.

RESOLVED to propose to full council that the council don't hold a meeting in August.

Proposed: Cllr R. Lyus Seconder: Cllr J. Cox All in favour

**11 To acknowledge the end of the probationary period of the town clerk and agree a review process - Ref: 2145**

It was noted that the clerk has now been in post for just over 6 months, and that the probationary review date has passed.

RESOLVED that Cllrs Bowman and Milner will complete a 6 month review with the clerk to share 2 way feedback.

Proposed: Cllr R. Lyus Seconder: Cllr M. Galligan All in favour

**12 Review staff holiday requests and requirements for cover - Ref: 2146**

Holiday requests were noted and approved.

The clerk is on annual leave for the CTC meeting in September and it was agreed that a councillor would take the minutes of that meeting.

It was agreed to ask WLDC to cover the bin emptying on the days the Estates operative is on annual leave and councillors will organise other critical tasks themselves.

**13 To agree the date and any agenda items for the next meeting - Ref: 2147**

The next scheduled meeting is scheduled for 28th November, but it was noted that an interim meeting may be required to discuss the budget for 24/25 before this meeting.

Meeting closed at 8:49pm

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