

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee
held on Monday 9th September 2019 at 7:00pm in the Corn Exchange

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr S Hitchings – Committee Chairman
Cllr L Lindsay – Chairman of Council
Cllr H White
Cllr R Carter

Cllr P Osborne – Committee Vice Chairman
Cllr L Hitchings – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr C Stevens

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk

Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

SITTING IN

Cllr D Russell

Cllr N Lacey-Clarke

13. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

14. APOLOGIES

Cllr H Mieville

Cllr A Cross

15. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Carter explained that he has a link with the Blandford Literary Festival organisers because he has agreed to do historic tours of the Corn Exchange for them as part of their week of events. He sought permission to remain in the meeting during discussion and voting for the agenda item regarding their grant application and it was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED (6 in favour, 1 non vote) that Cllr Carter can remain in the meeting and take part in discussion and voting.

16. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3RD JUNE 2019

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (6 in favour, 1 abstention) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

17. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

17.1 Will Thorpe – A new groundsman started with the Town Council on 2nd September 2019.

17.2 Youth Advisors – At the Enrichment Fayre held at The Blandford School on Tuesday 3rd September 2019, two students volunteered to become Youth Advisors and have been invited to attend council meetings from 16th September onwards.

18. ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET FOR THE FOLLOWING:

18.1 Administration Budget for the year to 9th August 2019

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

18.2 Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 9th August 2019

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

18.3 Reserves Accounts as at 9th August 2019

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

19. REVIEW OF FINANCE DOCUMENTATION

- 19.1 To receive and retrospectively approve the list of cheque payments 010894 – 010958 (Sheets 822-834) totalling £217,655.51

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

The list of cheque payments 010894 – 010958 (Sheets 822-834) totalling £217,655.51 are received and retrospectively approved.

- 19.2 To receive and retrospectively approve direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2019 to 31st July 2019 (sheets 160-162) totalling £88,972.62

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

The direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2019 to 31st July 2019 (sheets 160-162) totalling £88,972.62 are received and retrospectively approved.

- 19.3 To receive and retrospectively approve BACS payments BACS 231 to BACS 237 totalling £45,593.19

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

BACS payments BACS 231 to BACS 237 totalling £45,593.19 are received and retrospectively approved.

- 19.4 To receive and retrospectively approve CHAPS payments CHAPS 009 to CHAPS 010 totalling £679,745.00

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

CHAPS payments CHAPS 009 to CHAPS 010 totalling £679,745.00 are received and retrospectively approved.

- 19.5 Retrospective approval of the Investment Account for the period 22nd May 2019 – 12th August 2019

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

The Investment Account for the period 22nd May 2019 to 12th August 2019 is approved retrospectively.

- 19.6 Report by Chairman on Bank Reconciliation and Petty Cash check

Cllr S Hitchings carried out a petty cash check and confirmed that the monthly bank reconciliation had been undertaken during the period and everything was found to be in order.

- 19.7 Bank Reconciliation to 30th April 2019

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

20. TO RECEIVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FREE VENUE HIRE WORKING GROUP

The paper was tabled (see Appendix F).

Cllr Lindsay PROPOSED that the system remains the same, within the Grants budget, but this was not SECONDED.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

20. TO RECEIVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FREE VENUE HIRE WORKING GROUP (CONT.)

The recommendations of the Working Group are approved, starting from 1st April 2020, subject to the following amendments:

- (Amendment to last bullet point in the report) In March each year, the Committee notes the free venue hire requests approved throughout the financial year and considers the virement of any underspend.
- A separate budget line is created for free venue hire within Earmarked Reserves.
- Any grant approved is worth no more than £300 of venue hire.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

21. TO AMEND THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS IN LINE WITH NALC'S GUIDANCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

22. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CCLA FUND AND CONSIDER HOW TO PROCEED

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

Councillors note the report, do not take any action at present, and review the matter immediately after Brexit.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

23. REVIEW OF ASSET REGISTER

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

24. TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICATIONS

24.1 Blandford Literary Festival – First Application

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr P Osborne and AGREED (5 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention) that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full Council that**

A grant of up to £360 + VAT is awarded for free hire of Town Council venues for the Blandford Literary Festival.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

Post Meeting Note: The Bookings Receptionist has confirmed that the total cost of the current reservations is £409.29 + VAT and this would be reduced to £327.44 + VAT due to there being 10+ bookings (20% discount).

25. CONFIDENTIAL

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED unanimously that

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

25.1 Town Clerk's Report

Nothing to report.

25. CONFIDENTIAL (CONT.)

25.2 To note the Town Clerk's Appraisal (in accordance with Standing Orders)

The Committee Chairman confirmed that he and the previous Chairman of Council carried out the Town Clerk's appraisal in April.

25.3 To receive a report regarding the Town Council's salaries budget and current workload and consider suggestions for the 2020/2021 budget

The paper was noted (see Appendix K).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED unanimously that

The Committee:

- a) Formally approves the extension of the Project Coordinator's contract until 31st March 2020 and will review the position closer to the time, which is dependent on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan.
- b) Notes the Internal Auditor's concerns and acknowledges the current position with the caretakers, which should be fully reviewed once there is a significant change to the Town Council venues.
- c) & d) These requests will be considered at the December Committee meeting.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The Meeting closed at 8:34pm.

SIGNED:

DATED: