

**BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee**  
**held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7:05pm held in the Corn Exchange**

**DRAFT**  
Subject to confirmation

**PRESENT**

Cllr L Hitchings – Committee Chairman  
Cllr H Mieville – Vice Chairman of Council  
Cllr S Hitchings  
Cllr P Osborne

Cllr C Stevens – Chairman of Council  
Cllr L Lindsay – Chairman of R&A  
Cllr H White

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Town Clerk

Responsible Financial Officer

In Cllr Cross's absence, the Committee Chairman invited Cllr Stevens to act as Committee Vice Chairman, which was PROPOSED by Cllr Osborne, SECONDED by Cllr S Hitchings and agreed unanimously by those in attendance.

**27. PUBLIC SESSION**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**28. APOLOGIES**

Cllr A Cross – Committee Vice Chairman      Cllr E Bray

**29. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr Mieville declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 17 due to his involvement in Blandford War on Waste, which works closely with the Town Museum.

**30. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2022**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (5 in favour, 2 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

**31. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

**32. ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

**32.1 Administration Budget for the year to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

**32.2 Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

**32.3 General Reserves**

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

### 33. REVIEW OF FINANCE DOCUMENTATION

33.1 Cheque payment 011133 (Sheet 875) totalling £128.11 (for petty cash)

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

**The cheque payment 011133 (Sheet 875) totalling £128.11 is received and retrospectively approved.**

33.2 Direct debit payments for the period 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (sheets 202 - 205) totalling £134,005.94

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

**The direct debit payments for the period 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (sheets 202-205) totalling £134,005.94 are received and retrospectively approved.**

33.3 Online Faster Payments FP124 to FP132 totalling £82,299.70

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

**Online Faster Payments FP124 to FP132 totalling £82,299.70 (includes payments to other Town Council bank accounts and transfer of precept) are received and retrospectively approved.**

33.4 Investment Account for the period 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

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

**The Investment Account for the period 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 is approved retrospectively.**

Staff were asked to check the terms of investment.

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

33.5 Report by Chairman on Bank Reconciliation and Petty Cash checks

Cllr L Hitchings was able to confirm the petty cash check, which balances, and he was also able to confirm that the monthly bank reconciliation had been undertaken during the period and was in order.

33.6 Bank Reconciliation to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

### 34. TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

The paper was noted (see Appendix G) and the Town Clerk confirmed that all points have been actioned accordingly.

**35. INSURANCE RISK ASSESSMENT RELATING TO THE TOWN COUNCIL'S INSURANCE COVER AND APPROVAL OF INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR 2023/24**

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Stevens, SECONDED by Cllr Lindsay and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full Council that**

- **Confirms there are no other aspects of insurance that they wish to amend, apart from the inclusion of the Community Fridge.**
- **Agrees the insurance premium for 2023/24 of £14,236.36 including taxes, subject to any changes the Council decides to make (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

**36. REVIEW OF THE RISK ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY (INCLUDING FINANCIAL) ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2023/24 (SENT TO COUNCILLORS SEPERATELY DUE TO SIZE OF THE DOCUMENT)**

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

**The Town Council approves the Risk Management Policy (including Financial) arrangements for 2023/24 and has no amendments.**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

**37. REVIEW OF ASSET REGISTER**

This item is deferred to the full Council meeting scheduled for Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**38. TO CONSIDER THE CURRENT STATUS OF BAD DEBTS WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

**39. TO REVIEW THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE REMIT AND THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (NO PROPOSED AMENDMENTS FROM STAFF TO EITHER DOCUMENT LAST REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 2022)**

The Chairman raised the consideration of grants and proposed amending the remit to allow for the committee to resolve these applications, without further recommendation to full council where discussions are, generally, repeated. Hence, for some small grant applications, a lot of time is spent on considering and discussing them. During discussion, it was raised that sometimes new information is raised at full council by members not on the F&S committee.

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

**This matter is deferred to the full council meeting scheduled for Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 for consideration by all members.**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

40. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE FREE VENUE HIRE REQUESTS RECEIVED FOR 2022/23**

The paper was noted (see Appendix K).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (6 in favour, 1 against) that

**The free venue hire policy is continued subject to the removal of the performing arts link, which will enable the council to support more organisations.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

41. **TO CONSIDER ADOPTING A MENOPAUSE POLICY (SENT TO COUNCILLORS SEPARATELY)**

The paper was noted (see Appendix L).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr S Hitchings and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

**The Menopause Policy is adopted.**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

42. **TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICANTS**

42.1 Home-Start Blackmore Vale

The paper was noted (see Appendix M).

7:40pm – Cllr Lindsay left the meeting.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED (6 in favour, 1 non-vote) that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

**A grant is not awarded on this occasion, but the families residing within Blandford Forum are advised to apply directly to The Charity of William Williams.**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

7:43pm – Cllr Lindsay returned to the meeting.

42.2 Blandford Information Centre

The paper was noted (see Appendix N).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED (5 in favour, 2 against) that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

**A grant of £750 is awarded to the Blandford Information Centre for the creation of a professional website (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

42.3 Creating Musical Participation – Sing Together

The paper was noted (see Appendix O).

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

**42. TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICANTS (cont)**

A grant of £200 is awarded to Creating Musical Participation – Sing Together for the introduction of a second weekly session for people living with dementia (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

**43. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM THE TOWN MUSEUM TO INCREASE THE FUNDING FOR THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

The paper was noted (see Appendix P).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED (6 in favour, 1 abstention) that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

**The request is deferred until the full accounts are received.**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

**44. TO CONSIDER CHANGING PROVIDERS FOR WATER CONTRACT**

The paper was noted (see Appendix Q).

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

**The council remains with the existing provider at this time.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**45. TO CONSIDER CARRYING OVER UNDERSPEND FROM VARIOUS BUDGETS**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Lindsay and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

**The underspend from the Mayoral Allowance, Civic budget and Grants / SLA budget is rolled over into the 23/24 financial year:**

**The underspend from the Salaries and Corn Exchange Project Manager budget is transferred to 1105 Corn Exchange reserves (due to a previous resolution that the consultants are paid by the Project Manager budget in lieu of recruiting a member of staff).**

**ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL**

The Meeting closed at 8:21pm.

**SIGNED: .....**

**DATED: .....**