

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee
held on Monday 14th December 2020 at 7:00pm online using Microsoft Teams



PRESENT

Cllr S Hitchings – Committee Chairman	Cllr P Osborne – Committee Vice Chairman
Cllr L Lindsay – Chairman of Council	Cllr L Hitchings – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr H White	Cllr C Stevens
Cllr R Carter	Cllr H Mieville
Cllr A Cross	

SITTING IN

Cllr B Quayle	Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
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IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk Nicci Brown	Operations Manager
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28. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

29. APOLOGIES

None

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

Agenda Item No. 12.1 – Blandford Opportunity Group

Cllr S Hitchings and Cllr Stevens declared a prejudicial interest as the President and Chairman, respectively, of the Blandford Opportunity Group and will be leaving the room during discussion and voting. Cllr L Hitchings declared a personal interest as his son is a user of the Group but will remain for discussion and voting.

Agenda Item No. 12.3 – Blandford Railway Club

Cllr Cross declared a prejudicial interest as a member of The Blandford Railway Club and will leave the meeting during discussion and voting. Cllr Carter declared a personal interest due to his work on various commemoration group events with the Club.

Agenda Item No. 14 – Budget 2021/2022

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

A dispensation is granted to all Councillors, except Cllr L Hitchings and Cllr Cross (as they do not live in the parish of Blandford Forum), to enable them to participate in discussion and vote on the setting of the council tax.

31. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH SEPTEMBER 2020

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED unanimously that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED. The minutes will be signed at the earliest opportunity.

32. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE (see Appendix A)

32.1 Thank You – Daniel Cadisch from the Citizens Advice, Central Dorset and Mark Williams from Treads have both written to thank the town council for its ongoing support.

32. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE (see Appendix A) (cont)

- 32.2 Financial Impact of COVID-19 – The RFO has advised that the financial impact on the budgets since the second lockdown is that the council is still within budget and currently showing that we have not overspent the precept. There is a shortfall of income compared to the budgeted income from the hiring of venues of £12,700. However, there has also been lower expenditure of £15,200 than what was budgeted for.
- 32.3 Stay Local – Shop Local – Banners, posters and social media platforms are being used to promote staying local and shopping local, supporting local businesses.
- 32.4 Fire Warden Training – Some of the staff attended a Fire Warden training session on Friday 11th December in the Corn Exchange.
- 32.5 RFO – The RFO has been signed off work for two weeks, with four weeks to follow and cover is required for this role. The Committee Chairman suggested the Salaries budget is used for the cover of this period.

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

33.1 Administration Budget for the year to 20th November 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

33.2 Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 20th November 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

33.3 Reserve Accounts as at 24th November 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

34. REVIEW OF FINANCE DOCUMENTATION

34.1 To receive and retrospectively approve the list of cheque payments 011120 (sheet 868) totalling £104.46

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

The list of cheque payments 011120 (sheets 868) totalling £104.46 are received and retrospectively approved.

34.2 To receive and retrospectively approve direct debit payments for the period 1st August 2020 to 30th September 2020 (sheets 175-176) totalling £58,148.80

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

The direct debit payments for the period 1st August 2020 to 30th September 2020 (sheets 175-176) totalling £58,148.80 are received and retrospectively approved.

34.3 To receive and retrospectively approve BACS payments BACS 276 to BACS 283 totalling £22,816.47

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

BACS payments BACS 276 to BACS 283 totalling £22,816.47 are received and retrospectively approved.

34. REVIEW OF FINANCE DOCUMENTATION (CONT)

- 34.4 To receive and retrospectively approve Online Faster Payments FP017 to FP025 comprising of 30 individual payments totalling £476,457.15 (of which £400,590 are payments to other Town council bank accounts).

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

Online Faster Payments FP017 to FP025 comprising of 30 individual payments totalling £476,457.15 are approved retrospectively.

- 34.5 Retrospective approval of the Investment Account for the period 1st August 2020 to 25th November 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

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

The Investment Account for the period 1st August to 25th November 2020 is approved retrospectively.

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

Cllr S Hitchings carried out a petty cash check last week and found a discrepancy as there is 10p too much in the petty cash. Cllr S Hitchings confirmed that the monthly bank reconciliation had been undertaken during the period and everything was found to be in order.

- 34.7 Bank Reconciliation to 31st October 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

35. TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

36. TO CONSIDER ADOPTING A GENERAL RESERVES POLICY

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

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

The Town Council agrees that the General Reserves policy is included in the financial regulations as well as reporting to Finance & Staffing in December and March.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

37. TO RECEIVE A REPORT REGARDING VIREMENT FROM GENERAL RESERVES TO COVER EXPENDITURE IN 2020/21

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

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

The Town Council vires £9,865 from the Interest Earnt on Earmarked Investments budget line (Code 1001), and £6,213 from Interest Earnt on the Property Fund budget line (Code 1002) to General Reserves (Code 1500).

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

38. TO RECEIVE A REPORT REGARDING VIREMENT FROM UNDERSPEND OF VARIOUS BUDGETS IN 2020/21

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

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

The Town Council vires the underspend from the remaining 75% of the Mayoral Allowance to General Reserves (Code 1500), vires the £15,000 2019/20 underspend of the Blandford Youth Centre grant and the £50,000 from the Blandford Leisure Centre SLA to Skatepark Accrual (Code 1305), and vires the £19,505 underspend of the salaries budget to General Reserves (Code 1500).

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

39. TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICATIONS – (CURRENT AVAILABLE BALANCE IS £11,234.22 WHICH INCLUDES £3,384.22 FROM 2019/20 UNDERSPEND)

Cllr S Hitchings and Cllr Stevens were removed from the meeting during discussion and voting.

39.1 Blandford Opportunity Group (awarded £1,000 in 2017/18 for a support grant)

The paper was noted (see Appendix K).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED (7 in favour, 2 non-votes) that a **RECOMMENDATION** is made to full council that

A grant of £2,500 is approved (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

Cllrs S Hitchings and Stevens returned to the meeting.

39.2 Panda Pre-school

The paper was noted (see Appendix L).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White and SECONDED by Cllr Cross that a grant of £2,000 is approved, but a vote was not taken, and the proposal was withdrawn.

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

A grant of £1,758 is approved (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr Cross was removed from the meeting during discussion and voting.

39.3 Blandford Railway Club

The paper was noted (see Appendix M).

Cllr Carter declared a personal interest as he has worked with some members of the Railway Club through the Commemoration Group events.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville that the Club is asked for specific items but this proposal was withdrawn following further discussion.

39. TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICATIONS – (CURRENT AVAILABLE BALANCE IS £11,234.22 WHICH INCLUDES £3,384.22 FROM 2019/20 UNDERSPEND) (cont)

39.3 Blandford Railway Club (cont)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (6 in favour, 2 abstentions, 1 non-vote) **that a RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

A grant of £951 is approved to cover costs for storage (£465) and insurance (£486) incurred this year (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr Cross returned to the meeting.

Nicci Brown was removed from the meeting.

40. CONFIDENTIAL

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens 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.

40.1 To receive the Payroll budget (staff grading) for the year 2021/22

The paper was tabled (see Appendix N).

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

The staff grading for 2021/22 is approved as per the tabled document. This will be signed and dated by the Committee Chairman at the earliest opportunity (due to COVID-19), as requested by the Internal Auditor.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

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

The public and press were welcomed back into the meeting for the following items;

Nicci Brown returned to the meeting.

41. CONSIDERATION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET 2021/22

41.1 Consideration of the proposed revenue budget for the Finance & Staffing Committee for 2021/22

The paper was tabled O.

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

The proposed revenue budget was accepted.

41.2 Recommendations from Committees

The paper was noted (See Appendix P).

41. CONSIDERATION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET 2021/22 (CONT)

41.2.1 Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting held on Monday 9th November 2020 Minute No. 29 - Consideration of the proposed budget for the year 2021/2022 and recommendation to Town Council

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

A budget line is created within the Revenue Budget and £1,150 is included to replenish the overspend, during this financial year so far, on Phase One of the Persimmon Homes Public Open Spaces.

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

The Revenue Budget is approved (with the inclusion of the Persimmon Homes Phase One replenishment of £1,150 resolved above), the Earmarked Reserves are approved at £18,600 (a reduction of £4,000 on 2019/2020) and the Reserve Accounts are approved.

41.2.2 Town & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 9th November 2020 Minute No. 31 – Consideration of the proposed budget for the year 2021/22 and recommendation to Town Council - Revenue Budget, Earmarked Reserves and Reserve Accounts

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

The Town & General Purposes Committee Revenue, Earmarked Reserves and Reserve Accounts budgets are approved for the 2021/2022 financial year. Budget line 1175 will be renamed to CCTV/ANPR New Equipment.

41.3 Consideration of the overall budget for the year 2020/21 and recommendation of the precept for 2021/22

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

The draft budget of £792,183 is approved for the 2021/2022 financial year (-0.48% less than the 2020/2021 budget). This will be finalised at the Town Council meeting scheduled for Monday 21st December 2020.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

The Meeting closed at 8:36pm.

SIGNED:

DATED: