



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Finance & Staffing Committee
(Cllr L Hitchings, Cllr R Holmes, Cllr H Mieville, Cllr N Lacey-Clarke, Cllr K Herbert, Cllr L Lindsay, Cllr S Hitchings, Cllr H White and Cllr A Cross)
All other Members of the Town Council Dorset Council Councillors
Members of the Public & the Press

Dear Member

FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Finance & Staffing Committee to be held **online** using Microsoft Teams on **Monday 18th September 2023 at 7:00pm** to consider the following items. This meeting will also be available to view online using Microsoft Teams [using this link](#).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Linda Scott-Giles'.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
11th September 2023

A G E N D A

Prior to consideration of the following Agenda, there will be a democratic quarter of an hour, which may be extended at the discretion of the Committee, during which time members of the public may speak. During the course of the meeting, members of the public and our elected representatives from the Dorset Council may indicate they wish to speak, and, at the discretion of the Chairman, and with the approval of the Members, they may be allowed to do so on points of information only. The Committee may on occasion invite members of the public to comment on specific issues where points of information or their particular knowledge on a subject might prove of benefit to the Committee.

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, belief or disability), Crime & Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights. Disabled access is available.

All in attendance should be aware that filming, recording, photography or otherwise may occur during the meeting.

1. Public Session
2. Apologies
3. To receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
4. [Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th June 2023](#)
5. [Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence](#)
6. Analytical Review of Expenditure against Budget for the following:
 - 6.1 [Administration Budget for the year to 31st August 2023](#)
 - 6.2 [Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 31st August 2023](#)
 - 6.3 [Reserves Accounts as at 31st July 2023](#)

7. Review of Finance Documentation
 - 7.1 To receive and retrospectively approve cheque payment 011137 - 011138 (Sheet 879 - 880) totalling £294.64 (for petty cash)
 - 7.2 To receive and retrospectively approve direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2023 to 31st August 2023 (sheets 208-211) totalling £135,611.94
 - 7.3 To receive and retrospectively approve Online Faster Payments FP150 to FP164 totalling £182,987.22
 - 7.4 [Retrospective approval of the Investment Account for the period 1st June 2023 to 31st July 2023](#)
 - 7.5 Report by Chairman on Bank Reconciliation and Petty Cash checks
 - 7.6 [Bank Reconciliation to 31st August 2023](#)
8. [To review the Free Venue Hire policy/criteria](#)
9. To consider feedback from the working group regarding a request from the Blandford Youth & Community Centre for a Service Level Agreement (subject to receipt of financial information prior to the meeting)
10. To review the Finance & Staffing [Committee Remit](#) and the [Financial Regulations](#) (no proposed amendments from staff to either document – last reviewed by full council May 2023)
11. Confidential

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.

 - 11.1 Town Clerk's Report
 - 11.2 To note the Town Clerk's Appraisal (in accordance with Standing Orders), carried out on 24th May 2023 with Cllr L Hitchings and Cllr C Stevens.

Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings are available from the Town Clerk's Office and at www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk.

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



Town Clerk's Office
Church Lane, Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 7AD



Twinned with Mortain, France



Tel: 01258 454500 • Fax: 01258 454432
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence

Staff Meetings – A full staff meeting was held on 5th September 2023, with the Town Clerk updating employees on the work of the council, projects and events with a focus on the Corn Exchange. In addition, the Town Clerk is in the process of meeting with all office staff to discuss their roles, responsibilities, and workload. This is mainly due to the number of new staff employed over the last year.

Insights into Facebook Account – Staff who use our social media platforms received a training session with Breakthrough Communications on Friday 4th August 2023. The course leader advised referring to our Insights to see what engages people the most and encouraged using more content featuring real people.

External Auditor – To date, BDO Stoy has asked the Town Council for evidence of the confirmation of renewal with the Internal Auditor and terms of their appointment, October minutes confirming acknowledgement of the last external auditor's report and some bank statements.

Letters to Grounds & Caretaking Staff – The R&A Chairman asked the Town Clerk to thank the staff for their hard work in making our areas so presentable, which was supported by the Committee. A letter has therefore been sent to all the staff involved.

Public Sector Deposit Fund – The RFO has completed a form to apply for The Public Sector Deposit Fund, which is a CCLA investment account. Cllrs S Hitchings and Lacey-Clarke have been asked to be signatories to the account. The interest rate was 4.5348% as at 20th June 2023, and more information on the Fund can be found here:

<https://www.ccla.co.uk/funds/public-sector-deposit-fund>

Staff Pay – The Local Government Pay Claim 2023/24 is still awaited. Staff and Councillors will be informed once this comes into effect.

Administration Budget for the year to 31st August 2023

ADMINISTRATION COSTS £

N/L code		2023/24			Budget Variance	STATUS
		Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date		
4010	Advertising	515	172	788	617	Additional adverts - vacancy, Armed Forces Day
4012	Audit	3,764	1,255	-62	(1,316)	
4014	Bank Charges	309	103	68	(35)	
4015	Property Fund Admin Charge / Exp	3,400	1,133	1,136	3	
4018	Equipment Maintenance/Hire	515	172	106	(66)	
4028	New Equipment	515	172		(172)	
4039	IT New Equip	103	34	668	634	New laptop for reception
4040	IT Maintenance/Software	10,131	3,377	8,532	5,155	Upgrade to Cloud
4041	IT Consumables	50	17	7	(10)	
4042	Professional Services	10,000	3,333	3,907	574	
4050	Newsletter/Forum focus	2,266	755	730	(25)	
4052	Publications	155	52		(52)	
4053	Photocopier Charges	824	275	317	42	
4054	Stationery & Printing	1,545	515	366	(149)	
4057	Subscriptions	2,196	732	1,979	1,247	Annual fees paid at start of year
4060	Postage	650	217	185	(32)	
4065	Telephones	3,605	1,202	3,261	2,060	Increased fee following Cloud upgrade
4094	Staff Training & Travel Exps	3,914	1,305	1,150	(155)	
4095	Staff Travel & Expenses	3,090	1,030	915	(115)	
4096	Cllrs allow, Training & Travel Exps	5,500	1,833	126	(1,708)	
4097	Cllrs Welfare / Meeting Exps	103	34	47	13	
4099	Staff Welfare	258	86	237	151	
4301	Health & Safety Staffing	720	240		(240)	
	<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>54,128</i>	<i>18,043</i>	<i>24,463</i>	<i>6,420</i>	
4701	Insurance	14,636	4,879	14,111	9,233	
	<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>14,636</i>	<i>4,879</i>	<i>14,111</i>	<i>9,233</i>	

ADMINISTRATION COSTS £

N/L code		2023/24			STATUS	
		Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date		Budget Variance
4800	Mayoral Expenses	2,797	932	60	(873)	
4802	Civic Expenses	5,150	1,717	2,453	737	
4805	Civic Twinning	200	67		(67)	
4806	Civic - Freedom	200	67		(67)	
4803	Honorarium - Town Crier	300	100		(100)	
4807	Honorarium - Deputy Town Crier	300	100		(100)	
4804	Honorarium - Mace Bearer	400	133		(133)	
4808	Honorarium - Deputy Mace Bearer	400	133		(133)	
4809	Membership to Guild of Mace Bearers and Town Criers	100	33	30	(3)	
	<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>9,847</i>	<i>3,282</i>	<i>2,543</i>	<i>(739)</i>	
	TOTAL EXPENSES	78,611	26,204	41,118	14,914	
INCOME						
2025	Interest	1,545	515	11,811	11,296	Santander account interest greater than budgeted
2003	Property Fund Dividend	0	0	17,419	17,419	
3893	Grant Income	0	0		0	
3894	Misc Income	0	0	356	356	
3897	Overtime Charges	72	24	101	77	
3899	Photocopying	165	55	101	46	
3920	Admin Charge - Barnes for Rec	5,816	1,939		(1,939)	
3925	Salary charge -out to Barnes for a F	25,921	8,640		(8,640)	
	TOTAL INCOME	33,519	11,173	29,788	18,615	
	NET COST/ (INCOME)	45,092	15,031	11,329	(3,701)	

Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 31st August 2023

2023/24						
	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Budget Variance	Status	Comments
INCOME						
Admin	33,519	11,173	29,788	18,615	Over-Budget	
Admin Total	33,519	11,173	29,788	18,615	Over-Budget	
Corn Exchange	9,092	3,031	3,761	731	Over-Budget	
Woodhouse Gardens	6,695	2,232	2,949	717	Over-Budget	
Larksmead	1,864	621	452	(169)	Under-budget	
Cemetery	13,390	4,463	3,137	(1,326)	Under-budget	
Sundries	3,573	1,191	2,672	1,481	Over-Budget	
Skate park	0	0	0	0	Under-budget	
R & A Income	34,614	11,538	12,972	1,434	Over-Budget	
CCTV, Planters & Markets	21,200	7,067	8,876	1,809	Over-Budget	
Marsh & Ham Toilets	515	172	691	519	Over-Budget	
Tabernacle Toilets	0	0	0	0	Under-budget	
T & GP Totals	21,715	7,238	9,567	2,328	Over-Budget	
Total Income	89,848	29,949	52,327	22,377	On Target	
EXPENDITURE						
Admin	78,611	26,204	41,118	14,914	Over-Budget	HR/HS contracts, Report on rental value, ROSPA
Corn Exchange Project Officer / Consultant	20,600	6,867	0	(6,867)	Under-budget	
Salaries	500,000	166,667	154,119	(12,548)	Under-budget	
Admin & Payroll	599,211	199,737	195,236	(4,501)	Under-budget	
Vehicles	12,564	4,188	4,622	434	Over-Budget	
Corn Exchange	44,241	14,747	21,341	6,594	Over-Budget	Roof slates, repair lights, maintain alarms and emergency lights
Woodhouse Gardens	3,548	1,183	1,127	(56)	Under-budget	
Larksmead	2,425	808	2,371	1,562	Over-Budget	Annual Inspection - Play Area
Recreation Ground (Barnes Trust)	37,163	12,388	-3,553	(15,941)	Under-budget	
Glenmore Workshop	7,399	2,466	2,295	(171)	Under-budget	
Cemetery	6,753	2,251	1,880	(371)	Under-budget	
Langton	335	112	128	16	Over-Budget	Annual Inspection + £2901 work carried out at Langton Lane park
Skatepark	1,445	482	2,262	1,780	Over-Budget	
Sundries	19,314	6,438	6,629	191	Over-Budget	
R & A Totals	135,187	45,062	39,101	(5,961)	Under-budget	
CCTV, Planters & Markets	22,983	7,661	16,655	8,994	Over-Budget	£3918 summer bedding etc
Marsh & Ham Toilets	14,990	4,997	4,917	(80)	Under-budget	
Tabernacle Toilets	1,483	494	264	(231)	Under-budget	
T & GP Totals	39,456	13,152	21,835	8,683	Over-Budget	
Total Expenditure	773,854	257,951	256,173	(1,778)	Under-budget	<less than 1%
TOTAL (NET COST)	684,006	228,002	203,846	(24,156)	Within Budget	
Note						
Over budget figure positive variance						
Under budget negative variance ()						

General Reserves

Nominal Code(s)	Standard Asset Replacement Accruals	Responsible Committee	Balances	Sub Totals
			£	£
1300	IT	F & S	21,033.73	
1305	Skate park	R & A	158,322.24	
1310	General Play Equipment	R & A	74,839.80	
1315	Maintenance Equipment Replacement	R & A	13,268.94	
1320	Vehicle Replacement	R & A	16,258.00	
1325	Tractor Replacement	R & A	16,701.20	
1330	Mower Replacement	R & A	34,546.77	
1340	CCTV / ANPR	T & GP	36,230.92	
1345	Benches	T/C	12,516.65	
1350	Glenmore Depot	R & A	10,384.93	
1351	B/Heights Play Equipment	R & A	14,494.28	
1352	B/Heights Maintenance Equipment Replacement	R & A	2,386.62	
				410,984.08
	Earmarked Accounts			
10510-10540	Recreation & Amenities Funds B/Heights	R & A	799,308.52	
1020-1045&1135	Town & General Purposes Committee	T & GP	32,938.87	
1060-1096	Recreation & Amenities Funds Other	R & A	129,256.88	
				961,504.27
	Other Earmarked Accounts			
1001	Earmarked Interest	F & S	4,363.39	
1002	Property Fund Dividend	F & S	38,425.60	
1004	Well & Connected		-	
1005	Election Costs	T/C	4,976.35	
1006	Youth Services	T/C	10,726.03	
1007	Woodhouse Gardens Wall Rebuild (Moved to R & A)	R & A	-	
1008	High Street Clean Up	F & S	-	
1009	BFTC Commemoration Group	T/C	262.60	
1010	Capital Interest	F & S	2,793.86	
1011	Land North of Bypass / Sport & Recreation	T/C	5,772.98	
1012	The Blandford Events Group	T/C	442.17	
1013	Neighbourhood Plan	T/C	5,772.13	
1015	Support for Essential Services (Earmarked)	T/C	28,049.00	
1017	Woodhouse Garden Re-build	T/C	19,981.67	
1019	Old Bath House / St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard (Listed Wall & Town Pump	T & GP	52,964.49	
1050	Allotments	R&A	4,708.69	
1335	Civic Regalia	F & S	18,849.84	
1185	Pension Deficit	F & S	20,000.00	
1195	Improvements to Market Place	T/C	70,000.00	
1500	General Reserves	T/C	238,154.79	
				526,243.59
	Capital Projects			
1104	Corn Exchange S106 Funds	T/C	83,177.06	
1105	Corn Exchange	T/C	298,113.12	
1110	Corn Exchange Promotions Group	T/C	2,768.11	
1115	Corn Exchange Project Development	T/C	108,928.83	
1116	Corn Exchange HLF Stage 1 Matchfunding	T/C	117,379.97	
1120	Corn Exchange & Venues Refurbishment Project	T/C	79,000.00	
1122	Corn Exchange Community Hall S106 Funds	T/C	103,292.81	
1125	Cemetery Field Project	R & A	1,000.00	
1175	CCTV / ANPR - New Equipment	T & GP	4,331.23	797991.13
	Total Reserves			2,696,723.07

Retrospective approval of the Investment Account for the period 1st June 2023 to 31st July 2023

In line with the Town Council's Investment Policy, the Chairman of Finance & Staffing and the Town Clerk have made the following investments on behalf of the council, seeking the highest possible interest rates and financial security.

Date	Amount £	Period	Interest Rate %	Bank
31 st July 2023	103,092.14	One Year Business Bond	3.75	Hampshire Trust Bank
31 st July 2023	420,142.50	1 Year Business Bond	3.75	Hampshire Trust Bank
31 st July 2023	426,112.05	2 Year Business Bond	2.11	Hampshire Trust Bank

CCLA – Property Fund Investment Dividend Statement for the period to 30th June 2023

Statement of unitholding held on 30 June 2023					
Date	Description	Cost/Proceeds £	Price per unit p	Number of units	Total unitholding
01/04/23	Brought Forward				252,825.00
30/06/23	Carried Forward				252,825.00

On 30 June 2023 the mid market value (net asset value) of one unit in the Fund was 287.87 pence and the bid market value of one unit was 283.41 pence giving your investment at that date a mid market value of £ 727,807.33 and bid market value of £ 716,531.33.

Advice of management expenses for the period to 30 June 2023			
For Period Ended	Number of units held	Expenses per unit p	Total Expenses £
30/04/23	252,825.00	0.147800	373.68
31/05/23	252,825.00	0.152900	386.57
30/06/23	252,825.00	0.148600	375.70
			1,135.95

Statement of dividends for the period to 30 June 2023					
For Period Ended	Number of units held	Gross per unit p	Gross Distribution £	Expenses Paid £	Amount Payable £
30/04/23	252,825.00	1.212500	3,065.50	373.68	2,691.82
31/05/23	252,825.00	1.364300	3,449.29	386.57	3,062.72
30/06/23	252,825.00	1.226700	3,101.40	375.70	2,725.70
			9,616.19	1,135.95	8,480.24

The dividend payment of £8,480.24 for the period will be paid to the nominated bank account, reference Blandford Forum To on 31/07/2023

Bank Reconciliation to 31st August 2023

<u>Bank Statement as at</u>		31st August 2023			
	Current Account			£47,812.73	
	Less Unpresented Cheques			£0.00	
	Plus uncleared receipts			£0.00	£47,812.73
 <u>Hampshire Trust Bank - A/c No: below</u>		 31st August 2023			
	From	To	Accounts		
	11/01/2023	10/01/2024	11535793	3.75%	£420,142.50
Old Acc No	23/07/2022	Expired 10/01/23 22/07/2024	10495192		
			11208028	2.11%	£426,112.05
				Annual Interest in Jan and July	£846,254.55
					23/07/2022 No Change
	 Hampshire Trust Bank - 1 Yr Fund @ 3.75%		31st August 2023	103092.14	
Old Acc No	11528753	08/01/2023 - 10/01/2024	11001623	Annual Interest in Jan	£103,092.14
 <u>Santander 95 Day Notice A/C10555310</u>		 31st August 2023		 £812,110.49	
					£812,110.49
 <u>Santander 31 Day Notice A/C10555349</u>		 31st August 2023		 £52,290.96	
					£52,290.96
 <u>Santander Business Reserve A/c 10138119</u>		 31st August 2023		 £1,171.73	
					£1,171.73
 <u>Lloyds PLC Fixed Term Deposits as at</u>		 31st August 2023			
	From	To			
 <u>CCLA Property Fund Account</u>		 31st August 2023			
	Purchased			£400,000.00	
	30/10/2013	Switched to Long Term Asset		-£400,000.00	
	31/03/2021	Lloyds Fixed term matured		£276,830.94	
	31/03/2021	Switched to Long Term Asset		-£276,830.94	
					£0.00
	 Cambridge & Counties Bank (2 yr fixed rate @ 4.00%)		31st August 2023	£665,280.68	
	09/05/2025	15028429	Annual Interest in May		£665,280.68
	 Petty Cash as at		31st August 2023	£250.00	
					£250.00
					£2,528,263.28

<p>CHECKED BY..... </p> <p style="text-align: center;">Town Clerk</p>	<p>Date...6th September 2023.....</p>
<p>CHECKED BY..... Cllr Lee Hitchings</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chairman of Finance</p>	<p>Date... 6th September 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Approval by email</p>

To review the Free Venue Hire policy/criteria

The Chairman of the Finance & Staffing Committee has requested this item to consider adding the following points to the free venue hire policy. He is not aware of any issues to date but would like to tighten up the rules.

1. It is proposed that the £300 is per year (financial or annual) and anything over this amount will be taken to an appropriate meeting.
2. It is suggested that there is an appeal process for unsuccessful applications.

At present, the criteria is as follows:

From 1st April 2020, Blandford Forum Town Council will consider free venue hire requests separately from any grant application. Applications for free hire will be considered by the Chairman of the Finance & Staffing Committee, the Town Clerk and the Bookings Receptionist, subject to the following criteria:

1. *Free venue hire will be considered for any activity.*
2. *Applicants must be a charity or not for profit organisation.*
3. *Events/productions must be free or low cost and appeal to the community.*
4. *Applications will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis.*
5. *Regular, paying hirers will not be cancelled or relocated to accommodate a free hire, unless there are exceptional circumstances approved by the council.*
6. *Any application approved will be worth no more than £300 of venue hire.*
7. *Successful applicants will not receive any cheque/cash payment.*
8. *Any hiring past 10pm will result in overtime fees being charged to the free hirer.*
9. *A set of accounts must be provided by the applicant.*

Councillors are asked to consider amending the policy to include the points raised above.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
6th September 2023