

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Corn Exchange Meeting
Held on Monday 12th February 2024 at 7:00pm in the Corn Exchange



PRESENT

Cllr H Miéville – Chairman of Council
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr C Stevens
Cllr P Osborne
Cllr H White
Cllr R Carter
Cllr R Holmes

Cllr N Lacey-Clarke – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr K Herbert
Cllr A Cross
Cllr S Chapman
Cllr L Lindsay
Cllr L Hitchings

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Ross Ingham, Ingham Pinnock Associates
Chris Johnson, Caretaker
Gary Ayriss, Grounds & Property Supervisor
John Scott, Member of public
Rose Churchill, Resident
Andy Reynolds, Market Manager
Rachael Harding, Bookings Receptionist
Tom Clarke, Groundsman

Operations Manager
Malcolm Simmonds, Architect
Gareth Alyson, Groundsman
Nicci Brown, Resident
Neil Churchill, Groundsman
David Jardine, Mace Bearer
Sam James, oh no it isn't
Kat Clark, Business Support Officer

IN ATTENDANCE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Ian Walker, Quantity Surveyor
Andy Sargeant, Caretaker

Amanda Crocker, RFO

22. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no requests to speak in the public session.

23. APOLOGIES

Cllr P Clark

Cllr C Jacques

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

None had been submitted.

Cllr L Hitchings proposed a dispensation to all Councillors, excluding Cllr Cross, for voting on the impact the project would have on the precept, but this was not seconded.

25. MINUTES OF THE CORN EXCHANGE MEETING HELD ON 16th OCTOBER 2023

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED (12 in favour, 2 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

26. TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CONTRACTOR FROM THE TENDER PROCESS, AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE, AND APPROVE THE LOAN APPLICATION TO THE PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD

The paper was noted ([see Appendix A](#)).

26. **TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CONTRACTOR FROM THE TENDER PROCESS, AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE, AND APPROVE THE LOAN APPLICATION TO THE PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD (cont.)**

Ross Ingham delivered a presentation to attendees, summarising the journey of the project and the significance of the current position. He spoke about the importance of the improved disabled access and continuing with what we are currently doing but doing it much better.

Cllr L Hitchings asked about the timing of the interest rate on the PWLB and if it needed to be drawn down immediately or could be delayed until the funds are required.

Chairman, Cllr Miéville requested a recorded vote, due to the significance of the decision with this being the first time the Town Council has been in a position to proceed with the project after decades of attempts.

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

The Town Council:

- **Appoints Contractor A, subject to the successful completion of a process of value engineering.**
- **Confirms notification of the appointment on the Contracts Finder website.**
- **Agrees expenditure authority for the project of £3,461,630 including fees, with the reallocation of the Reserves referred to in Appendix A (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 s1-8).**
- **Approves the PWLB application for a loan of £1,300,000 being submitted with the following wording:**

At the full council meeting of the Blandford Forum Town Council Corn Exchange meeting of Monday 12th February 2024, it was resolved unanimously to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £1,300,000 over the borrowing term of 50 years (EIP) for the Grade I Listed Town Hall / Corn Exchange refurbishment project. The annual loan repayments will come to around £100,000 a year. It is not intended to increase the council tax/precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

The votes were cast and recorded as follows:

In Favour

Cllr H Miéville –Chairman of Council
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr C Stevens
Cllr K Herbert
Cllr P Osborne
Cllr A Cross
Cllr H White
Cllr S Chapman
Cllr R Carter
Cllr L Lindsay
Cllr R Holmes
Cllr L Hitchings

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The meeting closed at 7:35 pm.

SIGNED

DATED