



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Finance & Staffing Committee
(Cllr L Hitchings, Cllr N Lacey-Clarke, Cllr H Miéville, Cllr R Holmes, Cllr S Hitchings, Cllr S Chapman, Cllr A Cross, Cllr C Stevens and Cllr T Clarkson)
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 in the **Woodhouse Gardens Pavilion**, The Tabernacle, Blandford Forum DT11 7GQ on **Monday 23rd September 2024 at 7:00pm** to consider the following items. This meeting will also be available to view online using Microsoft Teams [using this link](#).

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
16th September 2024

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 10th June 2024](#)
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 2024](#)
 - 6.2 [Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 31st August 2024](#)
 - 6.3 [Reserves Accounts as at 31st August 2024](#)
7. Review of Finance Documentation
To receive and retrospectively approve the:
 - 7.1 Cheque payment 011145 totalling £205.35 (for Petty Cash)
 - 7.2 Direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2024 to 31st August 2024 (sheets 220 – 223) totalling £129,451.38
 - 7.3 Online Faster Payments FP 230 – FP 253 totalling £837,285.81 (including transfers of maturities, and grants to other Town Council accounts)
 - 7.4 Online Corn Exchange Faster Payments CE012 – CE021 totalling £310,674.98
 - 7.5 [Investment Account for the period to 31st August 2024](#)
 - 7.6 Report by Chairman on Bank Reconciliation and Petty Cash checks
 - 7.7 [Bank Reconciliation to 31st August 2024](#)
8. 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 2024)
9. [To retrospectively approve expenditure for Health Surveillance](#)
10. 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.
 - 10.1 Town Clerk's Report
 - 10.2 To note the Town Clerk's Appraisal (in accordance with Standing Orders), carried out on 9th July 2024 with Cllr L Hitchings and Cllr H Miéville

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
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence

External Audit – The external auditor, BDO has confirmed that the Town Council has a clear audit for the 2023/24 period and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit is now on display on the council's website. There was one advisory to review the internal auditor appointment on an annual basis, irrespective of a long-term contract, which has been noted for the March F&S committee agenda.

Internal Auditor Contract Renewal – The contract expires at the end of March 2025 and the RFO is seeking three quotations for the Committee to consider at its December meeting.

Staff Pay – The Local Government Pay Claim 2024/25 is still awaited. Staff and Councillors will be informed once this comes into effect.

Committee Clerk – The new Committee Clerk will start on 1st October 2024.

Santander Accounts – During a recent update for interest rates on accounts, it came to light that we have two additional Santander accounts; ending 5336 and 5323. Neither has any balance, nor have they had any activity for several years. The 5336 account is a 180-day notice account and the 5323 is a 120-day notice account. In the interests of keeping things tidy (and to forestall any potential future account fees) the RFO has consulted and closed the accounts.

Administration Budget for the year to 31st August 2024

ADMINISTRATION COSTS £		As at 31.08.24				STATUS
N/L code		Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Budget Variance	
4010	Advertising	600	250	257	7	
4012	Audit	4,500	1,875	2,694	819	
4014	Bank Charges	200	83	38	(45)	
4015	Property Fund Admin Charge / Exp	4,500	1,875	2,186	311	CCLA interest on Q1
4018	Equipment Maintenance/Hire	500	208	295	87	Boiler rental Q1
4028	New Equipment	250	104	118	14	
4039	IT New Equip	105	44	172	128	
4040	IT Maintenance/Software	10,435	4,348	4,004	(343)	
4041	IT Consumables	40	17	6	(11)	
4042	Professional Services	10,300	4,292	5,511	1,220	Worknест insurance for the year
4050	Newsletter/Forum focus/publication	2,660	1,108	2,190	1,081	
4053	Photocopier Charges	800	333	239	(94)	
4054	Stationery & Printing	1,250	521	168	(353)	
4057	Subscriptions	2,500	1,042	2,103	1,061	Annual subs: DAPTC, NAMBA, ICCM
4060	Postage	450	188	691	504	Franking machine top up
4065	Telephones	8,862	3,693	1,939	(1,753)	
4094	Staff Training & Travel Exps	4,000	1,667	185	(1,482)	
4095	Staff Travel & Expenses	3,000	1,250	859	(391)	
4096	Cllrs allow, Training & Travel Exps	5,500	2,292	55	(2,237)	
4097	Cllrs Welfare / Meeting Exps	100	42	10	(32)	
4099	Staff Welfare	400	167	53	(113)	
4301	Health & Safety Staffing	150	63	5	(58)	
	<i>Sub Total</i>	61,102	25,459	23,780	-1,679	
4701	Insurance	15,075	6,281	14,084	7,802	Insurance annual renewal
	<i>Sub Total</i>	15,075	6,281	14,084	7,802	
4800	Mayoral Expenses	2,881	1,200		(1,200)	
4802	Civic Expenses	5,305	2,210	2,141	(69)	
4805	Civic Twinning	150	63		(63)	
4806	Civic - Freedom	150	63		(63)	
	Honorariums - Town Crier/Mace					
4803	Bearer	1,400	583		(583)	
	Membership to Guild of Mace					
4809	Bearers and Town Criers	100	42	30	(12)	
	<i>Sub Total</i>	9,986	4,161	2,171	(1,990)	
5500	Grants S137	6,000	0		0	
5505	Grants SLA	23,000	0	7,230	7,230	
		29,000	0	7,230	7,230	
6115	EVCP - Park Road			-118	(118)	
	TOTAL EXPENSES	115,163	35,901	47,146	11,245	
INCOME						
2025	Interest	2,000	833	2,459	1,626	Santander 8119 interest
2003	Property Fund Dividend	30,000	12,500	20,785	8,285	
3701	Events				0	
3893	Grant Income	0	0		0	
3894	Misc Income	500	208	1,255	1,047	
3897	Overtime Charges	50	21	255	234	
3898	Corn Exchange new equipment			775	775	
3899	Photocopying	150	63	92	30	
3901	Proof of Life			113	113	
3920	Admin Charge - Barnes for Rec	5,990	2,496	1,498	(998)	Invoice quarterly
3925	Salary charge -out to Barnes for a Re	27,500	11,458	6,875	(4,583)	
	TOTAL INCOME	66,190	27,579	34,106	6,527	
	NET COST/ (INCOME)	48,973	8,322	13,040	4,718	

Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 31st August 2024

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Budget Variance	Status	
INCOME						
Admin	66,190	27,579	33,331	5,639	Over-Budget	
Admin Total	66,190	27,579	33,331	5,639	Over-Budget	
Corn Exchange	0	0	775	0	Over-Budget	
Woodhouse Gardens	7,500	3,125	2,624	(501)	Under-budget	
Larksmead	1,500	625	480	(145)	Under-budget	
Cemetery	11,000	4,583	8,754	4,171	Over-Budget	
Sundries	3,700	1,542	4,077	2,535	Over-Budget	
Skate park	0	0	0	0	Under-budget	
R & A Income	23,700	9,875	16,710	6,060	Over-Budget	
CCTV, Planters & Markets	15,800	6,583	6,458	(125)	Under-budget	
Marsh & Ham Toilets	550	229	800	571	Over-Budget	
Tabernacle Toilets	0	0	0	0	Under-budget	
T & GP Totals	16,350	6,813	7,258	446	Over-Budget	
Total Income	106,240	44,267	57,299	12,145	On Target	
EXPENDITURE						
Admin	115,163	47,985	40,334	(1,676)	Under-budget	HR/HS contracts, Annual subs
Corn Exchange Project Officer / Consultant	0	0	0	0	Under-budget	
Salaries	578,575	241,073	206,703	(34,369)	Under-budget	
Admin & Payroll	693,738	289,058	247,038	(36,046)	Under-budget	
Vehicles	12,902	5,376	5,604	228	Over-Budget	
Corn Exchange	25,900	10,792	3,323	(7,768)	Under-budget	Maintain fire alarms and emergency lights
Woodhouse Gardens	4,072	1,697	2,359	663	Over-Budget	
Larksmead	1,930	804	2,471	(483)	Over-Budget	
Recreation Ground (Barnes Trust)	36,844	15,352	9,056	(6,296)	Under-budget	
Glenmore Workshop	7,418	3,466	4,767	1,301	Over-Budget	
Cemetery	6,918	3,237	3,900	664	Over-Budget	
Park Road EVCPs	3,000	1,250	(118)	(1,368)	Under-budget	
Langton	330	138	91	(46)	Under-budget	
Skatepark	1,100	458	210	(248)	Under-budget	
Sundries	20,334	8,473	5,941	(2,531)	Under-budget	Annual waste removal contract
R & A Totals	120,748	51,041	37,605	(15,886)	Under-budget	
CCTV, Planters & Markets	22,821	9,509	15,278	(7)	Over-Budget	Parking charges
Marsh & Ham Toilets	14,703	6,126	5,269	(857)	Under-budget	
Tabernacle Toilets	1,135	473	6,706	6,233	Over-Budget	
T & GP Totals	38,659	16,108	27,253	5,369	Over-Budget	
Total Expenditure	853,145	356,206	311,896	(46,563)	Under-budget	<less than 1%
TOTAL (NET COST)	746,905	311,940	254,596	(58,708)	Within Budget	
Note						
Over budget figure positive variance						
Under budget negative variance ()						

General Reserves

Nominal Code(s)	Standard Asset Replacement Accruals	Responsible Committee	Balances	Movements to 31.03.25	Balance at 31.03.25	Sub Totals
			£			£
1300	IT	F & S	24,036.86		24,036.86	
1305	Skate park	R & A	79,251.48		79,251.48	
1310	General Play Equipment	R & A	85,140.51	- 4,960.00	80,180.51	
1315	Maintenance Equipment Replacement	R & A	15,433.60		15,433.60	
1320	Vehicle Replacement	R & A	18,990.00		18,990.00	
1325	Tractor Replacement	R & A	18,820.80		18,820.80	
1330	Mower Replacement	R & A	39,890.02	- 5,750.00	34,140.02	
1340	CCTV / ANPR	T & GP	43,371.78	- 4,104.51	39,267.27	
1345	Benches	T/C	47,751.50		47,751.50	
1350	Glenmore Depot	R & A	39,999.99		39,999.99	
1351	B/Heights Play Equipment	R & A	13,322.91		13,322.91	
1352	B/Heights Maintenance Equipment Replacement	R & A	13,190.91		13,190.91	
			439,200.36			424,385.85
	Earmarked Accounts					
1020	T & GP Town Maps	T&GP	3,282.77		3,282.77	
1021	T & GP DCC Highways	T&GP	86.25		86.25	
1025	T & GP Christmas Lights	T&GP	469.75	14,927.75	14,458.00	
1030	T & GP Tourism	T&GP	3,555.44		3,555.44	
1035	T & GP Twinning	T&GP	1,302.81		1,302.81	
1040	T & GP Town Improvements	T&GP	5,190.10	- 1,120.00	4,070.10	
1042	T & GP Seat Replacement	T&GP	2,633.81		2,633.81	
1045	T & GP Contingency	T&GP	908.33		908.33	
1135	Railway Arches	T & GP	3,745.56	- 708.50	3,037.06	
			20,235.32			33,334.57
10510	R & A B/Heights Phase 1 POS	R&A	56,766.22	- 5,125.64	51,640.58	
10520	R & A B/Heights Phase 2 POS	R&A	24,020.57	- 1,344.20	22,676.37	
10521	R & A B/Heights Phase 2 - Play area com Sums	R&A	2,382.43	- 125.00	2,257.43	
10530	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	12,108.55		12,108.55	
10531	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	50,966.32		50,966.32	
10532	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	57,442.93		57,442.93	
10533	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	24,483.78		24,483.78	
10534	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	34,900.27		34,900.27	
10535	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	172,440.51		172,440.51	
10536	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	113,457.57		113,457.57	
10537	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	9,978.26		9,978.26	
10538	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	52,801.28		52,801.28	
10539	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	116,943.53		116,943.53	
10540	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	13,011.55		13,011.55	
			741,703.77			735,108.93
1060	R & A Plan Preventative Maintenance	R & A	20,108.91	972.87	21,081.78	
1061	R & A Cemetery Chapel	R & A	8,420.00	1,000.00	9,420.00	
1062	R & A Cemetery Workshop	R & A	11,000.00	1,000.00	12,000.00	
1064	R & A Cemetery Wall	R & A	32,654.49		32,654.49	
1065	R & A DDA	R & A	373.87	- 373.87	-	
1067	R & A Play area fencing & surfacing	R & A	11,536.66	4,500.00	16,036.66	
1068	R & A Larksmead Outdoor fitness	R & A	2,000.00		2,000.00	
1070	R & A Seat Replacement	R & A	1,695.85		1,695.85	
1071	R & A Skate Fest	R & A	214.89	445.12	230.23	
1072	R & A Community Fridge	R & A	1,072.00		1,072.00	
1075	R & A 5 Year Tree Survey	R & A	16,913.20	2,000.00	18,913.20	
1080	R & A H&S Mem Cemetery	R & A	1,263.00		1,263.00	
1090	R & A Woodhouse Garden Wall Repairs	R & A	22,150.00	500.00	22,650.00	
1096	R & A Contingency	R & A	1,000.00		1,000.00	
			129,973.09			140,017.21
	Other Earmarked Accounts					
1001	Earmarked Interest	F & S	1,984.64	- 1,984.64	-	Transferred to Corn Exchange
1002	Property Fund Dividend	F & S	25,656.49	- 25,656.49	-	Transferred to Corn Exchange
1003	Office relocation		17,980.02	- 8,555.18	9,424.84	
1005	Election Costs	T/C	5,856.35	- 39.40	5,816.95	
1006	Youth Services	T/C	10,726.03		10,726.03	
1009	BFTC Commemoration Group	T/C	242.60	392.07	634.67	
1010	Capital Interest	F & S	19,016.63	- 19,016.63	-	Transferred to Corn Exchange
1011	Land North of Bypass / Sport & Recreation/Cricket Club path	T/C	5,772.98		5,772.98	
1012	The Blandford Events Group	T/C	442.17		442.17	
1013	Neighbourhood Plan	T/C	4,797.13		4,797.13	
1015	Support for Essential Services (Earmarked)	T/C	49.00		49.00	
1017	Woodhouse Garden Re-build	T/C	19,981.67		19,981.67	
1019	Old Bath House/St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard (Listed Wall & Town Pump)	T & GP	44,351.48		44,351.48	
1050	Allotments	R&A	4,512.13		4,512.13	
1335	Civic Regalia	F & S	14,474.63	- 24.97	14,449.66	
1195	Improvements to Market Area	T/C	69,500.00	- 500.00	69,000.00	
1500	General Reserves	T/C	214,615.22		214,615.22	
			459,959.17			404,573.93
	Capital Projects					
1104	Corn Exchange S106 Funds	T/C	83,177.06	2,100.00	85,277.06	
1105	Corn Exchange	T/C	442,140.35	808,610.25	1,250,750.60	
1110	Corn Exchange Promotions Group	T/C	1,583.11		1,583.11	
1115	Corn Exchange Project Development	T/C	163,928.83		163,928.83	
1116	Corn Exchange HLF Stage 1 Matchfunding	T/C	172,379.97		172,379.97	
1120	Corn Exchange & Venues Refurbishment Project	T/C	79,000.00		79,000.00	
1122	Corn Exchange Community Hall S106 Funds	T/C	103,292.81		103,292.81	
1125	Cemetery Field Project	R & A	1,000.00		1,000.00	
1175	CCTV / ANPR - New Equipment	T & GP	2,451.23		2,451.23	
			1,048,953.36			1,859,663.61
						3,597,084.10
	Total Reserves		2,840,025.07	757,059.03	3,597,084.10	Total Reserves

Retrospective approval of the Investment Account for the period to 31st August 2024

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

Amount £	Details (including period)	Interest Rate %	Bank
2,174,023.08	Public Sector Deposit Fund	5.25%	CCLA
665,280.68	2 Year Fixed Rate Bond – matures May 2025	4%	Cambridge & Counties Bank
281,363.46	Santander 95-day account	4.57%	Santander
Nil	2-year Business Bond issue 43 – matures July 2024 – closed and monies transferred to PSDF	N/A	Hampshire Trust Bank

CCLA – Property Fund Investment Dividend Statement for the period to 31st August 2024

The Local Authorities' Property Fund Prices and Dividend Yields



End of	Aug-24	Jul-24	Jun-24	May-24	Apr-24	Mar-24	Feb-24	Jan-24	Dec-23	Nov-23	Oct-23	Sep-23
Offer Price p	294.40	294.55	294.25	294.22	294.73	295.72	296.32	296.62	297.71	301.04	301.55	303.70
Net Asset Value p	275.78	275.93	275.65	275.62	276.09	277.02	277.59	277.86	278.88	282.01	282.48	284.50
Bid Price p	271.51	271.65	271.38	271.34	271.81	272.73	273.28	273.56	274.56	277.63	278.11	280.09
Dividend on XD Date p*			3.74			3.62			3.59			3.74
Dividend* - Last 12 Months p	14.69	14.69	14.69	14.30	14.30	14.30	13.72	13.72	13.72	13.27	13.27	13.27
Dividend Yield on NAV %	5.33	5.32	5.33	5.19	5.18	5.16	4.94	4.94	4.92	4.71	4.70	4.66
Fund Size £m	1031.3	1032.0	1037.2	1037.2	1039.0	1042.4	1044.7	1138.8	1142.9	1155.7	1157.7	1186.3

* The Dividend is paid gross and is after all charges

Risk Warning

Please remember that the value of units and the income from them can fall as well as rise and an investor may not get back the full amount invested. Past performance is no guarantee of future returns. The Property Fund's unit value will reflect fluctuations in property values and rents. The units are intended only for long-term investment and are not suitable for money liable to be required to be spent in the near term. They are realisable only on each month end valuation date and a period of notice may be imposed for the


Source: CCLA

Bank Reconciliation to 31st August 2024

<u>Bank Statement as at</u>	31st August 2024	
Current Account		£77,278.26 ✓
Less Unpresented Cheques		£0.00
Plus uncleared receipts		£0.00
		£77,278.26 ✓
 <u>Santander 95 Day Notice A/C10555310</u> 4.57% 4.32% from 01.11.24	 31st August 2024	 £281,363.46 ✓ £281,363.46 ✓
 <u>Santander 31 Day Notice A/C10555349</u> 4.08% 3.83% from 01.11.24	 31st August 2024	 £155,746.26 ✓ £155,746.26 ✓
 <u>Santander Business Reserve A/c 10138119</u> 3.23% 2.98% from 01.11.24 Statement balance Interest not yet cleared	 31st August 2024	 £64,673.16 ✓ £246.44 ✓ £64,919.60 ✓
 <u>CCLA/PSDF</u> 0101190001PC	 31st August 2024	 £2,174,023.08 ✓ £2,174,023.08 ✓
 Cambridge & Counties Bank (2 yr fixed rate @ 4%) 09.05.2023 08.05.2025	 31st August 2024 Annual Interest in May	 £665,280.68 ✓ £665,280.68 ✓
 Petty Cash as at	 31st August 2024	 £250.00 ✓ £250.00 ✓
		£3,418,861.34

Prepared by: 
RFO

Date: 11.09.24.

Checked by: 
Town Clerk

Date: 13/9/24

Checked by: Approved by email
Chairman of Finance Committee
Lee Hitchings
(see attached)

Date: 13/9/24.



To retrospectively approve expenditure for Health Surveillance

Background

Our Health and Safety advisor has been advising us to implement Health Surveillance among the staff that use vibrating or noisy machinery and or deal with spraying. This is to ensure that their working practices are not having an adverse effect on their health.

As an organisation we are doing several things to reduce the dangers from vibration and noise, limiting daily exposure and seeking alternative equipment where possible. We have already sourced electric alternatives for Woodhouse Gardens and this will be expanded to other venues in the future.

Report

The health surveillance reports on the following:

- Lung Function
- Audio hearing tests
- Skin surveillance
- Hand Arm Vibration surveillance

This not only ensures we are compliant as a Town Council but more importantly monitors the staff who are exposed to these conditions and would give an early warning of any issues, therefore, looking after their welfare.

We approached Dorset Council Occupational Health who carry out our pre-employment checks, but they could not take this on and recommended we approach the NHS Occupational Health Team. After meeting online with them it was recognised that they could meet our needs and we made appointments for the staff throughout September, as this was not a process that could wait due to staff welfare and the demands of Health and Safety.

The first appointments will provide a baseline so that any deterioration can be picked up at the next appointment.

As this is a specialist service officers are not required to get three quotes, as per financial regulations. At the time of this meeting four staff will already have attended their appointments.

Financial implication

We have been provided with a price list of the surveillance required and each staff member will cost £180 however this figure is only an approximation, and the cost could be higher dependent on the findings. Eight of the staff will need appointments therefore the approximate cost will be £1,440.

This report seeks retrospective expenditure up to £2,500, which will cover any unforeseen need for extra testing.

Recommendation

It is recommended that councillors approve retrospective expenditure of up to £2,500 using funds from the Staff training and travel expenses which has a balance of £3,500.

Jon Goodenough
Operations Manager
5th August 2024