



**BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee**

held on Monday 23rd September 2024 at 7:00pm held in the Woodhouse Gardens Pavilion

PRESENT

- | | |
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| Cllr L Hitchings – Committee Chairman | Cllr C Stevens – Chairman of T&GP |
| Cllr N Lacey-Clarke – Chairman of Council | Cllr H Miéville – Vice Chairman of Council |
| Cllr S Chapman – Chairman of R&A | Cllr S Hitchings |
| Cllr A Cross | Cllr T Clarkson |
| Cllr R Holmes | |

SITTING IN

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Cllr Y Miéville | Cllr M Putt |
|-----------------|-------------|

IN ATTENDANCE

- | | |
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| Town Clerk (via Microsoft Teams) | Operations Manager |
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18. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of public in attendance.

19. APOLOGIES

None

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

None had been submitted.

21. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10th June 2024

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED (7 in favour, 2 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED subject to an amendment on Page 2, 9.4 and the Committee Chairman changed the letter from D to C.

22. 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.

23. ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET FOR:

23.1 Administration Budget for the year to 31st August 2024

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

23.2 Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 31st August 2024

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

23.3 Reserves Accounts as at 31st August 2024

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

24. REVIEW OF FINANCE DOCUMENTATION

24.1 To receive and retrospectively approve cheque payment 011145 totalling £205.35

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

The cheque payment 011145 totalling £205.35 is received and retrospectively approved.

24.2 To receive and retrospectively approve direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2024 to 31st August 2024 (sheets 220 – 223) totalling £129,451.38

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

The direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2024 to 31st August 2024 (sheets 220-223) totalling £129,451.38 are received and retrospectively approved.

24.3 To receive and retrospectively approve Online Faster Payments FP230 to FP253 totalling £837,285.81 (including transfers of maturities, and grants to other Town Council accounts)

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

Online Faster Payments FP230 to FP253 totalling £837,258.81 (including transfers of maturities, and grants to other Town Council accounts) are received and retrospectively approved.

24.4 Online Corn Exchange Faster Payments CE012 – CE021 totalling £310,674.98

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

Online Corn Exchange Faster Payments CE12 – CE0021 totalling £310,674.98 are received and retrospectively approved.

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

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Clarkson, SECONDED by Cllr H Miéville and AGREED unanimously that

The investments are retrospectively approved.

24. REVIEW OF FINANCE DOCUMENTATION (cont.)

24.6 Report by Chairman on Bank Reconciliation and Petty Cash checks
Cllr Holmes carried out a petty cash check on Friday and confirmed that everything was found to be in order. In addition, Cllr L Hitchings confirmed that the monthly bank reconciliation had been undertaken during the period and he has been checking these.

24.7 Bank Reconciliation to 30th August 2024

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

25. TO REVIEW THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE REMIT AND THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED unanimously that

The Finance & Staffing Committee Remit and the Financial Regulations are not amended at this time.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

26. TO RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR HEALTH SURVEILLANCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION** is made to full council that

The councillors approve retrospective expenditure of up to £2,500 using funds from the Staff Training and Travel Expenses budget line, which has a balance of £3,500.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

27. CONFIDENTIAL

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke 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 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

27.1 Town Clerk’s Report

The Town Clerk advised that one of the actions raised by the Internal Auditor earlier in the year is now being dealt with.

27.2 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

Cllrs L Hitchings confirmed that the Town Clerk’s appraisal was carried out on 9th July 2024 by himself and Cllr H Miéville.

The Meeting closed at 7:21 pm.

SIGNED: DATED: