

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - Finance and Governance Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee Held on 19th April 2022 at 7PM in The Wing, Pathfinder School, Northstowe.

Members: 6 - Cllr Castelino (Chair); Cllr Benedicic (Vice-Chair); Cllr Gamon; Cllr Littlemore; Cllr Owen; Cllr Panvekar.
Quorum: 4 Members.
Present: Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Castelino; Cllr Gamon, Cllr Littlemore, Cllr Owen, Cllr Panvekar.
No members of the public.

Meeting started at 19:00 pm. Cllr Castelino took the Chair.

01/22-23 APOLOGIES

None received; all Committee members were present.

02/22-23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

03/22-23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No member of the public was present.

04/22-23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING, 15th MARCH 2022

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Owen and **RESOLVED, with 4 votes for and 2 abstaining, to approve the minutes of the meeting of 15th March 2022 as a true record of that meeting.**

05/22-23 UPDATES ON RESOLUTIONS & ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

For information - To receive updates from the RFO on the following items;

- *66/21-22 DEBIT CARD: Update on checks made with Unity Trust Bank Card, to understand Unity Trust's standard card replacement fees.*

The RFO informed the Committee that he has sought clarification from Unity Trust Bank as to the costs for replacements cards, as information about replacement cards is only available on their website for emergency replacement which come with very high fees. He was informed that there is no fee for ordinary, non-urgent replacement costs in the following situations: when a card is due to expire normally; when a card name is to be changed; or when a card needs replacing due to loss, breakage or not working anymore. He continued, explaining that he will soon pursue the card application.

- *67/21-22 (a) QUARTERLY FINANCIAL CHECKS MADE: Update on checks carried out by Cllr Bros Sabria on 31st March 2022, for checks '21-'22, Q4.*

The RFO informed the Committee that Cllr Bros Sabria carried out the quarterly financial checks for Q4 of '21-'22 and has found all paperwork to be in order, except for missing Cllr authorisation signatures on paperwork related to two direct debit payments made. These have since been rectified in accordance with the proceedings as recorded in the relevant minutes.

- *67/21-22 (c) INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDITING AND AGAR PROCESSES: Update on Internal Audit carried out (13th April 2022) and subsequent timeline for AGAR processes.*

The RFO informed the Committee that the Internal Audit was carried out by the contracted company, CAPALC, on 13th April, in the presence of the RFO. He furthermore informed that the auditor also looked at the draft AGAR form and filled in and signed the internal audit section (section 1) of the AGAR form, following the audit. A report on the audit is to be received shortly and will be added to the agenda for the next Full Council meeting. The AGAR form itself is also expected to be ready for signing in May at Full Council.

- *69/21-22 GRANT POLICY: Update on Grant Awarding Policy: adopted by Full Council on 30th March 2022.*

The RFO informed the Committee that the Town Council has adopted the Grant Awarding Policy as proposed, at its 30th March 2022 Full Council meeting, and that the [policy and a separate application form have been added to the website](#) since.

06/22-23 FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

For information:

- a) *Statement of Accounts – 2021-'22 (attached).*
- b) *Budget overview – comparison 2021-22 with 2022-'23 (attached).*
- c) *Overview New budget 2022-'23, as of 1st April 2022 (attached).*

The RFO informed the Committee that the three documents as shared in advance and [available on the website](#) together provide a useful overview of the account situation at the end of the '21-'22 financial year, and a comparison with the new budget as set up on the Council's accounting system following closure of last year's account.

07/22-23 FINANCE

1) TO APPROVE BANK STATEMENTS AND BANK BALANCES

- i) *31st March 2022.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Owen and **RESOLVED unanimously to approve the bank statements for 31st March 2022.** The Bank Reconciliation was signed by the Chair.

2) TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE

DIRECT DEBITS - RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL:

- i) *Service Charge Unity Trust Bank, period Jan-Mar 2022 (cashd 31st March '22)* £18.00
- ii) *ICO – Data protection renewal fee* £35.00

APPROVAL OF NEW PAYMENTS:

- iii) *SLCC training 'Preparing for Year End', training received on 31st March 2022* £36.00
- iv) *Salary Town Clerk – Apr 2022 (payment date 23/03/2022)* £2,518.82

It was proposed by Cllr Benedicic, seconded by Cllr Owen and **RESOLVED unanimously to approve the above retrospective and new payments.**

Cllr Littlemore and Cllr Panvekar counter-signed the invoices & relevant paperwork for above payments; Cllr Littlemore and Cllr Owen carried out the online banking authorisations.

3) TO RECEIVE SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS REPORT

Noted. No questions raised.

08/22-23 PURCHASE OF BOOKS OF CONDOLENCE

- 1) *To receive a report from the Clerk on options for Books of Condolence purchase.*
- 2) *To approve the purchase of Condolence Books, as per the Clerk's recommendations.*

Following a brief explanation by the Clerk of the options as set out in the paper a discussion followed whereby a preference was expressed by Councillors to buy a single Book of Condolence first, to have one ready in case this may be needed soon, whilst considering future purchase of more books once a crest and Town Council branding has been decided on. It was also noted that the relatively high costs for the high-quality Books of Condolences needed already would take the cost for a single book over the budget allocated for this financial year for 'Civic ceremonies and events'.

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Gamon and **RESOLVED unanimously to amend the proposal to change the wording to: 'To approve the purchase of a Book of Condolence, from Barnard and Westwood, with 500 loose condolence sheets.'**

It was proposed by Cllr Gamon, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED unanimously to approve the purchase of a Condolence Book, as amended.**

09/22-23 DATES OF FUTURE COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Full Council: Wed 27th April 2022 at 7PM (The Wing)*
- Finance and Governance Committee: Tue 21st June 2022 at 7PM (Location: TBC)*
- For all Council meetings, see www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk*

Noted.

Meeting closed at 19:48 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of the Finance & Governance Committee

Date.....