

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on 20th MAY 2025 at The Cabin, Northstowe

MEMBERS: 5: Cllr Castelino (Chair); Cllr Benedicic (Vice-Chair); Cllr Littlemore; Cllr Oluwasanya; Cllr Owen.
QUORUM: 3 Members.
Present: 3 Members: Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Littlemore; Cllr Oluwasanya.
Town Clerk.
Members of the public: 1.
Apologies: Cllr Castelino; Cllr Owen.
Absent: N/A

The meeting was started at 19:08 pm. In the absence of the Committee Chair, Cllr Benedicic took the Chair.

07/25-26/FG APOLOGIES (Standing Item)

To record apologies for absence received prior to the meeting.

Apologies had been received, and accepted, from: Cllr. Castelino; Cllr Owen.

08/25-26/FG DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Standing item)

a) *Councillors to declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any items on the agenda.*

b) *Councillors to declare any prejudicial interest in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chair if they wish to speak on the matter during public participation.*

None were declared.

09/25-26/FG PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Standing item)

a) *To allow members of the public and Councillors declaring a prejudicial interest to address the meeting in relation to business to be transacted at this meeting (maximum 3 minutes per person; up to 15 minutes in total).*

No member of the public wished to speak.

10/25-26/FG MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETINGS (Standing Item)

1) *To receive minutes of the 15th April 2025 Finance & Governance Committee meeting and to resolve to accept these as a correct record (attached).*

It was proposed by Cllr Benedicic, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to accept the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meetings held on 15th April 2025 as a true record.**

11/25-26/FG GRANT APPLICATION

1) *To receive a grant application received from Northstowe Running Festival Ltd, for a grant request of £3,300 towards the costs of the free community entertainment planned for the event (application and associated documentation shared with Cllrs.). The applicant is planning to be present at the meeting to answer any questions.*

M. Lis, representing the applicant, was present and summarised the application and request made to the Town Council; he highlighted:

- Following the Town Council's feedback on the previous year's grant application, the event cost breakdown has been further detailed, in particular for cost headings related to the event's entertainment elements being more clearly differentiated from similar, event-wide costs;
- The event is kept free for everyone;
- There are also no costs listed for the company: all company directors deliver the event as volunteers;
- The event is not generating any income, hence the request for extra funding. Overall entertainment costs are calculated to be over £7,000, with the organisation in the process of seeking further grant funding and sponsorship to obtain the remaining finances.

2) *To consider the grant application.*

Councillors raised a number of questions;

- In response to the outreach of the event, it was answered that the event attracts over 4,000 attendees, of which an estimated 2,200-2,800 are local people, a significant percentage of the resident population. It was mentioned that the event also provides a wide range of opportunities for local community organisations to present themselves and provides a number of volunteering opportunities.
- Regarding the sustainability of the event, in particular whether the NTC's grant funding requests could be reduced in the future, it was answered that in contrast to the April Half Marathon, which is largely paid for through runners' fees, the summer event is kept free for everyone and that other grants and income streams are to be targeted. NTC's investment will always remain a last resort if other routes do not provide sufficient funds.

Councillors commented that the event can be seen as providing good value for money, considering the number of attendees and its wider impact; and that it has been realised how much work is involved in organising and delivering what is a good, annual, free event. The organisation was also thanked for taking on board the feedback provided by the Town Council at last year's grant request, and that this was clear from the application as received.

3) *To decide on the grant application and grant amount requested.*

It was proposed by Cllr. Benedicic, seconded by Cllr. Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to award Northstowe Running Festival Ltd. a grant of £3,300 towards the costs of the free community entertainment planned for the Northstowe Running Festival event to take place on 30th August 2025.**

12/25-26/FG FINANCE (Standing Item)

1) BANK STATEMENTS & BALANCES

i) *To receive Bank Statement for 30th April 2025 (shared with Cllrs).*

Noted; no questions were raised.

ii) *To approve, and for the Chair to sign, the Bank Reconciliation for 30th April 2025 (attached).*

It was proposed by Cllr Benedicic, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to approve and for the Chair to sign the Bank Reconciliation for 30th April 2025.**

2) RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS REPORTS

i) *To receive the Receipts and Payments Report, dated to 30th April 2025 (attached).*

Noted; no questions were raised.

3) INCOME

i) *To receive **Supporting document A** for an overview of income received (attached).*

Noted; no questions were raised.

4) EXPENDITURE

i) *To approve retrospective and new payments; see **Supporting document A** for payments overview (attached).*

It was proposed by Cllr Benedicic, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to approve the retrospective and new payments as listed in Supporting document A.**

ii) *To allocate 2 Councillors to sign paperwork for afore-mentioned payments and to carry out bank authorisation.*

Cllr Benedicic and Cllr Littlemore were allocated to sign paperwork for afore-mentioned payments and to carry out online bank counter-authorisations.

13/25-26/FG INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR END-OF-YEAR 2024-2025

1) *To receive the Internal Audit Report for end-of-year 2024-2025 (Report and cover letter from internal auditor, CAPALC, attached). The report will be formally presented, for approval, at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 27th May 2025.*

The report was discussed in some detail. It was recognised that the report praises the Council for its overall good records and proper practices adhered to. It was, however, noted that the key need for the Council to consider updating its Risk Management Plan had not been picked up in time, although now rectified at this meeting. A Councillor also queried the need to mention recent staff reduction in relation to the delay in updating the Risk Management Plan.

It was recommended that the internal auditor's report, going forward, should provide the Council with more defined, stronger statements where needed, in particular where there might be consequences if certain recommendations are not implemented within a specific timeframe. The **clerk was tasked** to provide this feedback to the internal auditor for their future services for the Town Council.

14/25-26/FG ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2024-25

1) *To receive the AGAR's Annual Governance Statement 2024-2025 (section 1) and Accounting Statement 2024-2025 (section 2) - with separate 'Explanation of variances report' - and Annual Internal Audit Report 2023-2024 (section 3). The AGAR documentation will be formally presented, for approval and signing, at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council to take place on 27th May 2025.*

Noted; no questions were raised.

15/25-26/FG POLICIES

1) *Further to recommendations made in internal audit report. To receive an updated Risk Management Plan and recommend for adoption by Full Council (attached).*

Noted. No questions were raised; considered an appropriate update. The clerk was thanked for the quick action taken following the Risk Management Plan update need as highlighted recently as urgent by the internal auditor.

2) *Further to Standing Order 13. To receive a draft Granting of Dispensations Policy, with associated forms, and recommend for adoption by Full Council (attached; associated dispensation procedure guide, from South Cambridgeshire District Council, shared with Cllrs.).*

Noted; no questions were raised.

3) *To receive the latest version (updated March 2025) of the NALC template Financial Regulations and to decide to recommend this as a basis for adoption by Full Council, to replace the existing NTC's Financial Regulations [in line with the resolution passed at the Full Council meeting 25th February 2025, item 242/24-25(2)] (shared with Cllrs.).*

Considering the thorough rewrite by NALC, a wish was expressed to have a clear overview of all changes between the current Town Council's Financial Regulations which had been based on an older NALC template, and the most recent

NALC template. The **clerk was tasked** to provide this in as much detail as possible when the new Financial Regulations document is to be presented to Full Council for adoption purposes. It was proposed by Cllr Benedicic, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to recommend the updated Risk Management Plan, draft Granting of Dispensations Policy with associated forms, and the updated Financial Regulations to Full Council for adoption, taking into account the above observations made.**

16/25-26/FG DATES OF UPCOMING MEETINGS (Standing item)

a) *Annual Meeting of the Town Council: Tue 27th May 2025, 7-9 pm; The Cabin, Northstowe.*

[Final versions of motions & papers to be received by 16/05 at the latest].

NB: For all NTC meetings, see www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk

Noted.

The meeting was closed at 19:47 pm.

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

Date.....

DRAFT

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Tuesday 20th May 2025, 7-8 PM

Supporting Document A

INCOME [Details for item 12/25-26/FG]:

• **Income – Market Pitch Fees:**

Company	Reason	Market dates	Received in account	Amount
Sustainable Northstowe	Trader Pitch fee	APR/MAY/JUN 2025	28/04/2025	£36.00

• **Income – Other:**

Origin	Reason	Date received	Amount
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Precept 2025-2026, 1 of 2 instalments	24/04/2025	£84,793.48
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Grant Funding for Northstowe Community Lounge – MAR 25 sessions	17/04/2025	£96.00
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Grant Funding for Northstowe Community Lounge – APR 25 sessions	15/05/2025	£96.00
Northstowe Sports & Wellbeing	Refund of (surplus) grant awarded originally in Dec 2024	29/04/2025	£236.79

EXPENDITURE [Details for item 12/25-26/FG]:

[RETROSPECTIVE] - PAYMENTS MADE / DIRECT DEBIT:

i)	Lloyds Bank - Credit card; period: MAR 25 (items for Community Lounge, paid with additional grant received in March; monthly card fee) (cashd 16/04/25)	£305.71
ii)	EE Limited - Mobile phones staff – APR 25 (cashd 17/04/25)	£74.41
iii)	Unity Trust Bank – Bank service charge, period MAR 25 (cashd 30/04/25)	£9.00

NEW PAYMENTS:

iv)	Staff salaries – MAY 25 (payment date 28/05/25)	Confidential
v)	HMRC – period 1, 6 MAY – 5 JUN 25	Confidential
vi)	South Cambs. DC - Hire rooms in The Cabin, for Council meetings – MAY 2025	£214.00
vii)	South Cambs. DC - Rent NTC office; Hire rooms for: Community Lounge; market – MAY 25	£565.00
viii)	Cloudy IT –monthly management costs, for period MAY 2025	£422.21
ix)	CBS Office Solutions - Printing costs – APR 25	£9.83
x)	Phoenix Events (East) Ltd - Market management support – MAY 2025 market plus additional hours as per new contract (approved 22 nd APR 2025, item 13/25-26/FC)	£878.40
xi)	Greenbelt – electricity use on The Green on market days; period 1 st Dec. 2024 – 6 th Apr. 2025, at £8.00 per trader using electricity per market.	£56.00
xii)	NABMA – 2025-26 membership [NB: also to reappear at Full Council agenda 27 th May 2025]	£484.00
xiii)	Northstowe News, Town Council contribution towards Jun-Jul 2025 edition [Further to resolution 25 th March 2025 Full Council meeting, item 272/24-25]	£100.00