



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 11 OCTOBER 2021 AT 7.30 PM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, IRNHAM ROAD, MINEHEAD TA24 5DW

The Meeting was streamed live on the MTC Facebook page

The Meeting was digitally recorded

Members are reminded that 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 and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and Biodiversity

Present: Chair: Cllr C Palmer*
Councillors: Cllr M Burke, Cllr A Kingston-James, Cllr J Malin, Cllr M Palmer,
Cllr T Venner*
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)*

Officers in Attendance: Ms S Rawle – Clerk
Mr B Howe – Deputy Clerk
Mrs J Notley - Notetaker

Members of the Public and Press: 0 members of the public
0 members of the press

Councillors Absent: Cllr T Bloomfield, Cllr P Bolton, Cllr R Lillis, Cllr H Rose

Cllr C Palmer welcomed Councillors and Officers to the Meeting and the public watching on Facebook.

1296 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr Harvey and Cllr A Lawton.

1297 TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY DISPENSATIONS
[In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members](#)

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/Vote
Cllr A Kingston-James	1300.2	Personal	13.09.2021	Stayed in the room. Did not speak or vote
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS [Localism Act 2011](#)

There were no dispensations requested.

- 1298 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2021 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Malin**
Approved with 1 abstention (Councillor absent) and 5 in favour.

- 1299 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION [Standing Order No 3e](#)

There were no members of the public in attendance.

- 1300 FINANCE

- 1300.1 *To approve urgent payments for October 2021*

Payments 1-4, totalling £32,302.18, including £18,975.87 for staff salaries.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Burke**
Approved with all in favour.

- 1300.2 *To approve payments under £1,000 for October 2021*

Payments 5-20, totalling £3,581.34.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr M Palmer**
Approved with 1 abstention and 5 in favour.

- 1300.3 *To recommend to Full Council payments over £1,000 for October 2021*

Payments 21-23, totalling £5,675.75.

The Deputy Clerk told the Meeting that payment 22 regarding repairs and maintenance of Warren Road public toilets needed approval but would not be paid until this was completed.

Cllr Malin queried the cost of van hire. The Deputy Clerk said the van for the toilet cleaner's use needed to be hired because the old van was not repairable and the new electric vehicle was still awaited. It had been anticipated that van hire would be for 2-3 weeks but had instead been 16 weeks. Cllr Main wondered if it would be better to purchase a cheap van in the interim rather than hiring one.

Cllr Malin requested the Payments List to be put in the Members' Area in a larger format to make it easier to read.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James**
Agreed with all in favour to recommend to Full Council payments over £1,000.

1300.4 *To approve payments by Procurement Card for September 2021*

Payments 21-30, totalling £280.42.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr M Palmer**
Approved with all in favour.

1300.5 *To approve Regular Payments for September 2021*

Payments 1-22, totalling £5,465.10.

Cllr M Palmer felt the water/sewage rate for Summerland Place toilets still seemed very high. The Deputy Clerk said he would check if this was an estimated billing but pointed out that these toilets were very well used.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Malin**
Approved with all in favour.

1300.6 *To receive the Income Report for September 2021*

Income totalling £363,122.31.

Cllr Venner asked if the loan repayment was complete but the Deputy Clerk said it still had some way to go because repayments had been at the rate of £50 rather than £100 per month.

Cllr C Palmer confirmed the Meeting noted the Income Report.

1301 TO NOTE THE ACTIONS LOG

The Chair said the Actions Log was much reduced, as requested.

Cllr Venner asked about item 49 to investigate the possibility of installing CCTV within the refurbished Summerland Place toilet block. The Deputy Clerk said he had approached the original installers of the CCTV in Summerland Place who had promised to investigate the legal position and reply to MTC. They had not yet done so and he would chase this up.

1302 TO NOTE COMPLETION OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR 2021

The Deputy Clerk explained that the AGAR had been completed and displayed in the office window for public view. Completion needed to be noted by the Committee and recommended to Full Council for confirmation.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Burke**
Agreed with all in favour that Finance & Staffing Committee note completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and recommend it to Full Council for confirmation.

1303 TO RECEIVE THE INTERIM REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR 2021-2022

Cllr C Palmer reported that Council had passed its audit with flying colours. The only item needing attention was Item 5 where the audit trail needed strengthening. The Deputy Clerk explained that the audit was conducted remotely. The computerised accounting system had recognised that invoices were not issued for Cemetery charges and needed to see which charges related to entries in the Register. The Deputy Clerk told the Meeting that invoices for the Cemetery had never been issued but this would soon be implemented. The Clerk said the second audit was booked for February 2022.

1304 TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL GRANT FUNDING AT IRNHAM ROAD RECREATION GROUND

The Deputy Clerk said he was looking for a recommendation to Full Council to agree payment of the invoice for commission on all the funding raised for the projects in Irnham Road Recreation Ground, including the Outdoor Gym, MUGA, MUGA floodlights, Recreation Ground floodlights and the tennis courts. The commission, at the agreed 5% amounted to £2,574.74.

Cllr Malin said the commission had been really well earned. Cllr Venner enquired who would be responsible for any tax and national insurance due and the Deputy Clerk confirmed it would be the person receiving the payment.

Cllr M Palmer asked whether the arrangements would now be reviewed. The Deputy Clerk said if Council wished to source further funding it should issue new instructions for any new projects.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Venner

Agreed with all in favour that Finance & Staffing Committee recommend to Full Council that this commission payment is made and that the current contract is reviewed to decide whether it goes forward as it is or is ended now that the specific projects have been completed.

1305 TO DISCUSS THE PROVISION OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS IN WELLINGTON SQUARE AND THE PARADE 2021- 2023 – VERBAL REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK

The Committee had seen the Deputy Clerk's report on the provision of Christmas illuminations and the three quotes he had obtained from professional lighting companies. The proposal was urgent because the switch-on of the lights would be at the end of November. The Clerk told the Meeting that SWaT had confirmed that the £15,000 funding from the Welcome Back Fund initially allocated to provision of a Community Warden could instead be used for either Christmas entertainment or dressing Wellington Square. SWaT was happy that this use met the criteria for the funding. The first year's lighting would be funded entirely by the Welcome Back Fund but all three quotes were for supplying lighting for three years, with MTC funding years 2 and 3. Quote No 1 was £14,255, Quote No 2 was £16,850 and Quote No 3 was £15,500. Quotes were per year based on a 3-year contract.

The Deputy Clerk said the estimated cost for in-house erecting and removing decorations was £5,750 and excluded the cost of any new decorations or lights. Each year it was a stressful deadline to meet for the workforce and every year the staff had struggled with lights failing.

Cllr M Palmer was concerned that Council would be tied into a 3-year contract when it did not know what the lights would look like. Cllr Malin suggested that the contract should be subject to a satisfactory review at the end of the first year.

The Deputy Clerk told the Meeting that the Amenities Team would still instal the Park Street and Friday Street lights.

Cllr Venner proposed accepting Quote No 2 but had no seconder.
Cllr Malin proposed accepting Quote No 1.

Proposed: Cllr Malin

Seconded: Cllr Burke

Agreed with 4 in favour, 1 abstention and 1 against that the Committee recommend to Full Council acceptance of Quote No 1 for the provision of Christmas illuminations, agreeing with the provider that the 3-year contract would be subject to a review at the end of the first year's display.

1306 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON "CHANGING PLACES" TOILET PROVISION

Councillors had seen a report on "Changing Places" toilets. SWaT had applied for a share of the £30 million Government funding available for these toilets which were much more sophisticated than the usual disabled toilets. The units cost £40,000-£60,000 to instal. MTC had the ideal site using the old, now closed, disabled toilet. There was parking outside and the unit and door were the correct size. MTC would have to pay at least £5,000 of capital cost plus the usual running costs. The nearest Changing Places toilets were at Weston-Super-Mare, Ilfracombe and Wellington.

Cllr M Palmer asked whether Council's BID representatives could suggest BID match-funding the scheme. Cllr Venner said there would be a BID board meeting the following day and he would raise the suggestion.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Burke

Agreed with all in favour that the Finance & Staffing Committee recommend to Full Council that MTC take forward the scheme to provide Changing Places toilets at Summerland Place toilet block.

1307 TO DISCUSS THE RESTORATION AND CONSERVATION OF FOUR PAINTINGS OWNED BY MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr C Palmer had visited the County Archives to view four paintings owned by MTC which had been temporarily loaned to the County Museum in 2004. He described the 3 oil paintings and 1 watercolour with a brief description of what restoration and conservation measures might be necessary and Councillors had seen his report. He felt the paintings were an important part of Minehead's history and were passed across to the County Museum with no formal agreement in 2004. He wished to seek authority of the

Committee to obtain new estimates for the conservation and restoration of the paintings and also potentially bring them back to Minehead, hopefully to be stored in a safe environment where they could be viewed by the public. They hadn't been seen by the public since 2004.

Cllr Burke very much wanted to bring the paintings back to Minehead but wondered where they could be kept. Cllr Burke recommended this should be pursued with vigour. Cllr Malin said the painting from the English primitive school was the most interesting and potentially the most valuable. He expected it would be expensive to restore all the paintings, and possibly as much as £5,000 to restore the primitive school painting. There was also the question of insurance to be considered. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that all four paintings were listed on Council's asset register. Cllr Venner said the paintings were sent to Taunton in 2004 for safe keeping having been valued – 2 were found in the Town Hall attic, covered in dust.

Proposed: Cllr Burke

Seconded: Cllr Venner

Agreed with all in favour that Cllr C Palmer look into establishing the value of the four paintings and obtain estimates for their restoration.

1308 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Burke

Agreed with all in favour.

The Public Meeting ended at 8.37 pm.