



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 10 OCTOBER 2022 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 M Kingston-James
Councillors: Cllr T Bloomfield, Cllr M Burke, Cllr M Kravis, Cllr J Malin,
Cllr C Palmer*, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr T Venner*
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District Councillor "SWaT")*
*(**denotes Somerset County Councillor "SCC")*

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

Councillors Absent: Cllr C Gilberto

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

Cllr M Kingston-James welcomed Councillors and Officers to the Meeting and the public watching via Facebook.

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

No apologies had been received.

165 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 M Kravis	169ii	Personal	10 10 2022	Stayed in the room, spoke; did not vote
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2022	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2022	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS [Localism Act 2011](#)

No dispensations were requested.

166 TO APPROVE the Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on 11 July 2022 - *Minutes to be agreed by Councillors who were in attendance*

The Deputy Clerk reminded the meeting that the last Finance & Staffing Committee meeting had been held in July, with no meeting scheduled for August and the September meeting having been cancelled following the death of the Queen.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr T Venner**
Agreed with 6 in favour and 1 abstention (Councillor absent).

167 TO ADJOURN the Meeting for Public Inclusion [Standing Order No 3e](#)
 No-one had asked to speak

168 FINANCE

168.1 **To approve** urgent payments for October 2022
 Payments 1-11, totalling £35,848.48
 The Deputy Clerk informed the meeting that the payments to bands were the last of the 2022 season.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield **Seconded: Cllr Malin**
Agreed with all in favour

168.2 **To approve** payments under £1,500 for October 2022
 Payments 12-22, totalling £2,545.81
 Cllr M Palmer queried the payment for skip hire. The Deputy Clerk replied that MTC had recently changed supplier for skips. The payment in question was for skips for the removal of soil at the Cemetery but the new contract was more flexible. Start-up costs had been incurred but there would be no further standing charge to be paid each month. The Deputy Clerk would go through the skip provision with the Amenities Team manager and the Finance Assistant prior to the next Full Council meeting and give Councillors further details.

Proposed: Cllr M Palmer
Agreed with all in favour

Seconded: Cllr Burke

168.3 **To recommend** to Full Council payments over £1,500 for October 2022

Payments 23 and 24, totalling £31,169.06

Referring to payment 23 for play equipment and safety surfaces the Deputy Clerk told the meeting that MTC had paid nearly £40,000 for upgrades to play areas, funded by S106 money. This particular payment related to improvements MTC were funding itself. The invoice for £29,496.31, once VAT had been deducted, would reduce to £24,580.

Cllr Venner suggested that Council should issue a press release, including photographs, of the upgraded play areas as this had been quite an investment for MTC. He thought MTC should let people know what it did and also welcome suggestions to be sent in for further improvements.

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr C Palmer

Agreed with all in favour to recommend to Full Council payments over £1,500 for October 2022

168.4 **To approve** payments by Procurement Card for September 2022

There had been no payments by Procurement Card

168.5 **To approve** Regular Payments for September 2022

Payments 1-23, totalling £4,039.61

Cllr M Palmer queried the £50 charge for electricity in Wellington Square. The Deputy Clerk replied that MTC had been asked to pay a standing charge of £50 per month, which he felt was too high, until the supplier knew exactly how much electricity would be used in this area. Cllr M Palmer queried payments 10 and 13, also for electricity. She was particularly concerned about the cost of power for the Cross Farm Park lights. The Deputy Clerk said he would discuss these invoices with the Finance Assistant and obtain a breakdown of the bills. Cllr Bloomfield wondered if the two similar payments for electricity at King George Playing Field were duplicates. The Deputy Clerk said one payment would be for the Football Club, but he would query the two payments.

168.6 **To receive** the Income Report for September 2022

Income totalling £382,091.63.

Cllr C Palmer asked if this total included interest payments. The Deputy Clerk said interest of £115.91 was in addition to the income total. Cllr C Palmer asked for this to be included in future income totals. Cllr Venner asked about the CCLA interest and Account Total and the Deputy Clerk told him the latest statement had not yet been received but he would obtain a figure for him. The Deputy Clerk also confirmed to Cllr Venner that the loan repayment instalment was the last one. He had let the individual know the debt was now repaid.

The Chair said the Income Report was noted.

169

To consider Small Grant applications

(i) Hugill's Crew

Councillors had seen the Small Grant application from Hugill's Crew, held over from July 2022. After discussion they agreed that this application did not fulfil MTC's criteria for a Small Grant. Councillors applauded Hugill's Crew's performances and fund-raising and wished to offer support to the band in other ways if at all possible.

Proposed: Cllr M Kingston-James

Seconded: Cllr C Palmer

Agreed with all in favour to reject the Small Grant application from Hugill's Crew but offer support to the band, if possible, in some other way

[Cllr Kravis joined the meeting at 8.00 pm]

(ii) Minehead and Coast Development Trust
Councillors had seen the Small Grant application from MCDT. Cllr C Palmer said he was confused as to what the grant was for. The application requested £500 to fund a Minehead microsite on the Visit Somerset webpage but, on inspection, there appeared to exist a microsite already. Cllr C Palmer said he would propose deferring the application until the next meeting to ask for further information. Cllr Venner concurred and the Deputy Clerk said it could be that MCDT were not applying under the correct scheme.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Venner

Agreed with 7 in favour and 1 abstention to request further information as to the purpose of the grant and check what scheme of financial assistance should be used.

170

To receive the half year Budget Monitoring Report

Councillors had seen the Budget Monitoring Report. The Deputy Clerk told the meeting that this had been a recommendation from the Internal Auditor and as a half-year report it gave Council an idea of where it was spending in its Budget.

Cllr C Palmer found the format strange and would prefer to see it in a different one, but the Deputy Clerk told him this was the local government model, produced automatically. Cllr M Palmer asked if there would be a Budget seminar and the Deputy Clerk confirmed that there would be. Cllr Venner was concerned to see that more had been spent on rates than expected and Cllr Kravis wondered if Council was vulnerable with electricity costs going forward. The Deputy Clerk said all electricity contracts would need to be looked at and if anyone had any queries about the Report to please contact him.

171

To receive the Interim Internal Audit Report

Councillors had seen the Interim Internal Audit Report. The Deputy Clerk commented that it seemed to be very positive. There was nothing Council needed to be concerned about.

172

To receive the External Audit Report for 2021/2022

Councillors had seen the External Audit Report for 2021/2022. The Deputy Clerk commented that this had been very late in coming, but there were no matters which needed Council's attention. Cllr Venner said he thought Councillors should thank the officers and staff involved because the result was perfect. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the Report was on Council's website.

The Chair called for a vote to close the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr M Kingston-James

Seconded: Cllr Venner

Agreed with all in favour to close the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm.