



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council held at Sports Hall - Newton Leys Pavilion on Tuesday, 18th April, 2023 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs S Browne, K Ely, R Haine, E Kelly-Wilson, M McDonald and M Wymer

Apologies: Cllrs R Graham, E O'Rourke and A Segebrecht

In attendance: Delia Shephard (Town Clerk) and Alison Brown (Finance Manager) (Clerk)

Min Ref

- FC23/24-1 **To note apologies for absence**
It was RESOLVED to note the apologies listed above.
- FC23/24-2 **To note councillors' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**
Cllr Wymer declared an interest in agenda item 16 which concerned a grant application made by Locals of the Lakes Residents' Association of which she was chair and advised that she would leave the meeting for discussion and voting on this item.
- FC23/24-3 **To approve the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the committee**
It was RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the previous meeting on 28 February 2023 be approved as a correct record.
- FC23/24-4 **Public Speaking Time**
There were no representations from members of the public.
- FC23/24-5 **To review and comment on any planning applications due for review by Milton Keynes City Council**
There were no applications for consideration.
- FC23/24-6 **To note applications due to be considered by MKCC for trading licenses**
- FC23/24-6i **Licensing application 165863 Home Bargains, Beacon Retail Park MK1 1BN**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the licensing application.
- FC23/24-6ii **Street Trading Consent Renewal - Caz Bar. Days and Hours applied for: Mon – Fri 07:00 – 14:00 (Current: Mon – Sat 07:00 - 14:00)**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the licensing renewal.
- FC23/24-7 **To review and note a financial management information report showing income and expenditure against budget for the year to 31 March 2023**
The RFO reported that, for the financial year ending 31 March 2023, the council was reporting an underspend of £22,243, which would be transferred to general reserves.

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The clerk informed members that for the financial year ending 31 March 2024, financial management information reports would be prepared on a committee basis and financial reports will be provided at each committee meeting whilst the full income



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and expenditure against budget would continue to be reported to the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council.

FC23/24-8

To review and note cash and investment reconciliations to 31 March 2023

It was RESOLVED that the cash and investment reconciliations be noted.

FC23/24-9

To review and note the council's balance sheet as at 31 March 2023

It was RESOLVED that the balance sheet to 31 March 2023 be noted.

It was RESOLVED that the list of individual transactions over £500 for the period be noted.

FC23/24-10

To ratify a list of payments made or due to be made to 30 April 2023

It was RESOLVED that the list of payments made or due to be made which had been published with the agenda be ratified.

FC23/24-11

To receive a premises report and consider any recommendations therein

The clerk gave an oral report to members providing information on three areas;

- i Lease of premises at 74/76 Queensway – all required dilapidation works identified in the council's surveyor report had been completed to order that the break clause in the lease could be actioned on 7 April 2023 and confirmed that the building had been handed back to the landlord with vacant possession on 6 April 2023. A summary of dilapidations costs which had been approved in the usual way was tabled. The Town Council's solicitors would be taking steps to remove the registration lease from the Land Registry as soon as practical.
- ii Sycamore Hall – the further bat surveys would start in the first week of May 2023 and take place over a period of 6 – 8 weeks.
- iii 21 Barton Road – the lease for the landscaping depot is complete and ready for signing by members as previously approved by council. It was anticipated that the council would enter the premises within the next 4 weeks which would permit storage of council vehicles at the depot and preparation of the premises for use as the landscaping depot. It was noted that some additional costs would be incurred eg to install bollards at the depot to manage potential parking issues and these would be authorised and reported in the usual way.

Following discussion and questions councillors noted the exceptional work of the staff team on property matters during March which had involved considerable unpaid overtime. It was RESOLVED to recommend to the Employment Policy Committee that staff be compensated by way of an additional day's annual leave.

FC23/24-12

To review financial regulations and scheme of delegations

The RFO detailed the amendments to the financial regulations for the 2023/24 financial year, as detailed below;

Item 6.14 – updated to reflect the change to the single transaction limit approved in minute FC22/23-75. The item will now read as follows,

Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk [and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed. On-line purchases for software that are in excess of £1,500, delegated officer powers should be used (RFO or Proper



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Officer) in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Finance and Governance whose approval would be sought in advance.

Item 6.16 a – the current petty cash float is £250, however, on the basis that the local NatWest branch is closing in June 2023, the RFO would like the limit increased to £500. The item will now read as follows,

The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £500 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the draft Financial Regulations 2023 be formally approved on 25 April 2023.

Review of the scheme of delegation was withdrawn from consideration at this meeting and would be reviewed at full council.

FC23/24-13

To review the council's 2022-2023 delivery plan and to make recommendations to officers regarding preparation of the 2023-2024 delivery plan

Members reviewed the council's delivery plan for 2022/23 and it was RESOLVED to recommend this to full council on 25 April 2023 for approval.

Discussion followed on preparing the delivery plan for 2023/24, members felt that the current format provided a large quantity of information. It was RESOLVED that the new delivery plan would be split into plan into two separate plans one for specific projects/actions and an internal plan for "business as usual". The projects and actions delivery plan would be published and would continue to be reviewed at each Finance and Governance Committee. The "business as usual" plan would be managed internally by officers and made available internally as required.

FC23/24-14

To review the final internal audit report for 2022/23

It was RESOLVED to vary the order of the agenda and deal with the internal audit report next. Members reviewed a final internal audit report for the year 2022-23 completed on behalf of the Town Council by Auditing Solutions dated 12 April 2023. There were no matters brought to the attention of the Town Council. Discussion followed and the committee congratulated officers on their work

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the report be formally approved on 25 April 2023.

FC23/24-15

To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

Members reviewed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the 2022/23 financial year. The clerk reminded members that the review not only relates to the financial data, but also to their responsibility to ensure a sound system of financial control as indicated by their agreement on page 4 of the governance statement.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the AGAR be formally approved on 25 April 2023.



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FC23/24-16

To approve a community grant to Locals of the Lakes to provide a coronation event

(Cllr Wymer left the meeting prior to any discussion of this item of business in which she had an interest.)

Members discussed a grant application from the Locals of the Lakes Residents Association to provide a Coronation Strawberry Fayre for the community, as part of The Big Lunch, on the 8 May 2023. The event would be supported by the Town Council and Leon Residents Association.

It was RESOLVED that a sum of £6,500.00 be awarded to enable the event to be organised. A sum of £5,500.00 to be taken from the coronation budget and the remaining £1000.00 to be taken from the community grants budget.

(Cllr Wymer returned to the meeting after the item was concluded.)

The meeting closed at 8.11 pm