



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 Community Hall - Newton Leys Pavilion on Tuesday, 23rd April, 2024 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs S Browne, R Graham, R Haine, E Kelly-Wilson and O Fernandes

Absent: Cllr J Joshi

Apologies: Cllrs K Ely, E O'Rourke and U Osumili

In attendance: Alison Brown (Finance Manager acting as clerk to the committee) and Delia Shephard (Town Clerk)

Min Ref

- FC24/25-1 **To note apologies for absence**
It was RESOLVED to note the apologies listed above and to approve the apologies for absence from Cllr Palmer.
- FC24/25-2 **To note councillors' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**
There were no declarations of interest.
- FC24/25-3 **To approve the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the committee**
It as RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the previous meeting on 27 February 2024 be approved as a correct record.
- FC24/25-4 **Public Speaking Time**
There were no representations from members of the public.
- FC24/25-5 **To review and comment on any planning applications due for review by Milton Keynes City Council**
- FC24/25-5i **24/00604/HOU 60 Baccara Grove Bletchley Milton Keynes MK2 3AT**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the planning application.
- FC24/25-5ii **24/00693/HOU 42 Saffron Street Bletchley Milton Keynes MK2 3AH**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the planning application.
- FC24/25-5iii **24/00738/HOU 18 Manor Road Bletchley Milton Keynes MK2 2HW**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the planning application.
- FC24/25-5iv **24/00384/FUL 53 Osborne Street Bletchley Milton Keynes MK2 2LR**
The Town Council RESOLVED to object to the planning application on the basis that that it results in the loss of a parking space in an area where there is high demand for on-street parking.
- FC24/25-6 **To review and note a financial management information report showing income and expenditure against budget for the year to 31 March 2024**
The RFO stated that the income and expenditure to 31 March 2024 resulted in an underspend of £85,733. The main reasons for the underspend were that:
- i additional revenue from bank interest had been received; during the original budget preparation, it was not anticipated that interest rates would increase to



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- the current level
- ii the budgets on youth work activities had been underspent as the council was not able to procure the required service provision.

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

FC24/25-7

To review and note cash and investment reconciliations to 31 March 2024

The RFO stated that bank statements were now being authorised by a member of the committee on a monthly basis.

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

FC24/25-8

To review and note the council's balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

It was RESOLVED that the balance sheet as at 31 March 2024 be noted.

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

FC24/25-9

To ratify a list of payments made or due to be made to 30 April 2024

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

FC24/25-10

To review the financial regulations and scheme of delegation

The RFO stated that minor amendments to the Financial Regulations 2024 were proposed because of increases in the procurement thresholds, as determined by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. A draft document showing the proposed changes had been circulated before the meeting. (A review of the scheme of delegation was withdrawn from consideration at this meeting and would be reviewed at full council on 30 April 2024.)

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the draft Financial Regulations 2024 be formally approved on 30 April 2024.

FC24/25-11

To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

The Finance Manager introduced the council's completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the financial year 2023-2024 which included page 3 completed by the town council's internal auditor. Discussion followed on page 4 Section 1 the Annual Governance Statement which all members of the council would need to approve.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 be formally approved at Full Council on 30 April 2024.

FC24/25-12

To review the final internal audit report for 2023/24

The final written internal audit report for the year 2023-2024 had been circulated to members of the committee in advance and no matters were brought to the attention of the council in the audit report.



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It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the final Internal Audit Report be formally approved on 30 April 2024 alongside the AGAR.

FC24/25-13

Future of Albert Street Public Conveniences

The clerk gave an oral report reminding members that the council had previously considered a range of options for the future of the public toilets. The building was currently occupied under a tenancy at will from MKCC. The site was one which might be considered for further development as the Town Deal and other developments progressed in the next few years.

A public consultation in 2021 yielded a high response rate and an overwhelming desire from the community to keep the toilets open and free at the time of use. At that time the TC agreed to keep the toilets open until the end of the council's term and to consider ways to improve the facilities. Research had since made it clear that a "light" refurbishment would not easily achieve a significant improvement to the facilities. Therefore a larger refresh has been researched and indicative quotes had been obtained. A project cost of £30K upwards was anticipated which would necessitate a formal tendering arrangement. (A draft tender specification for the project had been included with the meeting pack.)

Following negotiations with MKCC for a short-term lease, heads of terms had been provided to the clerk and these were discussed by the committee at some length.

It was RESOLVED to ask the clerk to approach MKCC to request the following amendments:

- i that the schedule of repayment of investment monies should be on a straight-line basis ie Year 3-60%, Year 4-40% and Year 5-20%
- ii that regular trading hours should also include Sundays.

Members reviewed the draft specification of the refurbishment of Albert Street Toilets and requested that a refurbishment of the disabled toilet should be included in the document.

Members agreed that the likelihood of the lease ending within two years was small and that the toilets should be refurbished until new facilities including a changing places toilet could be provided within the town centre.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that half of the underspend for the financial year 2023-2024 be set aside to go towards this project when the year end adjustment to reserves were approved.

The meeting closed at 8.02 pm