

FERNDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Monday 22 February 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom.

Present: Councillors: T Cordery (Chairman), P Hanson Graham (Vice Chairman), C Lugg, A Miller, J Robinson.
 Officers: L Harrison (Town Clerk/RFO), T Dudley (Committee Administrator), and Trudy Sollazzo (Finance Officer).

359	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Flay (work)</p> <p>Resolved – apologies for absence from Cllr Flay were received and accepted.</p>
360	<p>Declarations of interest and dispensations</p> <p>None.</p>
361	<p>Public participation</p> <p>None.</p>
362	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Robinson that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021 be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and be duly signed by the Chairman when appropriate, seconded by Cllr Lugg and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved - the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were to be duly signed by the Chairman when appropriate.</p>
663	<p>Matters to report from the Town Clerk in relation to agenda item 4 above.</p>

Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting 22 February 2021
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	<p>The Clerk informed the meeting that the resignation of Cllr Worth and agreed long-term apologies from Cllr Flay impacted on the membership of the Committee.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hanson Graham that the current membership remain as it was, seconded by Cllr Miller, two in favour and three against.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Robinson that Cllr Parkes be invited to become a member of the Committee, seconded by Cllr Lugg, three in favour and two against.</p> <p>Resolved: Clerk to invite Cllr Parkes to become a member of the Committee.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the Vice Chairman of Council/Deputy Town Mayor had a standing invite to all Council meetings and had voting powers.</p>
<p>364</p>	<p>Finance reports</p> <p>The budget comparison report and expenditure transactions were noted. It was agreed that the impact of COVID-19 on Council's income for the current financial year would be reviewed at the next committee It was proposed by Cllr Hanson Graham that the bank reconciliation for month ending December 2020 and January 2021 be approved and initialled and dated by the Chairman at an appropriate time, seconded by Cllr Miller and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved: bank reconciliations for month endings December 2020 and January 2021 were approved and were to be initialled and dated by the Chairman at an appropriate time.</p>
<p>365</p>	<p>Internal Auditor's report</p> <p>The Internal Auditor's report was discussed.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the External Auditor's observation on the 2019/2020 AGAR was incorrect as flagged by the Internal Auditor ("Council has confirmed that it does not act as sole managing trustee for trust funds and thus the answers given in previous years in Section 1, Box 9 and Section 2, Box 11 are incorrect. The Council should respond "N/A" and "No" respectively if it does not act as sole trustee"). The Clerk confirmed that the Finance Officer would be writing to the External Auditor to query this assertion as to ensure this issue was resolved and clarification sought before the submission of the</p>

	<p>2020/2021 AGAR.</p> <p>The Clerk, as RFO, confirmed that she now signed and dated all bank reconciliations.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the acquisition of a debit card for KGV was ongoing.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Finance Officer would clarify the grants and outstanding pension payment issues raised in the Internal Auditor's report.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Clerk and Finance Officer were to review Council's Insurance Fidelity Guarantee cover with Council's insurer.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Personnel Committee was to consider the position of a communications officer to address the Transparency Code issue raised in the Internal Auditor's report and report back any budget requirements to FGPC.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Barrington Centre Management Committee was to consider the future staffing needs of the Barrington Centre to address the staffing and budget issue raised in the Internal Auditor's report and report back any budget requirements to FGPC.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Clerk and Finance Officer would review the system and timings of authorisation of payments in line with Council's Financial Regulations.</p> <p>All the above issues would be reported back to the Committee at its next meeting 12 April 2021.</p> <p>The Internal Auditors report was noted.</p>
<p>366</p>	<p>Timetable of meetings May 2021 to May 2022</p> <p>Cllr Lugg proposed that the timetable of meeting from May 2021 to May 2022 report be referred to Full Council for a decision, seconded by Cllr Robinson and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved: the timetable of meeting report May 2021 to May 2022 was referred to Full Council for a decision.</p>
<p>367</p>	<p>Governance document review</p> <p>Cllr Lugg proposed that the Business Continuity Plan be approved and adopted, seconded by Cllr Hanson Graham and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolve: the Business Continuity Plan was approved and adopted.</p>

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	<p>Cllr Hanson Graham proposed to accept and adopt the reviewed Virtual Meeting Policy with one amendment (delete the following words in point 5ii: “This Council is a corporate body and as such we will behave in a professional manner in line with our Standing Orders and Code of Conduct....to our Standing Orders and/or code of Conduct...for the Clerk of the meeting”), seconded by Cllr Miller, four in favour and one abstention.</p> <p>Resolved: the reviewed Virtual Meeting Policy was approved and adopted with one amendment.</p> <p>Cllr Lugg proposed that the Financial Regulations be approved and adopted, seconded by Cllr Hanson Graham, four in favour with one abstention.</p> <p>Resolved: the Financial Regulation were approved and adopted.</p>
<p>368</p>	<p>Annual Subscriptions</p> <p>Cllr Cordery proposed that, due to the time, Standing Order 3x be suspended, seconded by Cllr Miller and agreed by all.</p> <p>Cllr Lugg left the meeting due to technical wifi difficulties.</p> <p>Resolved: Standing Order 3x was suspended.</p> <p>The proposed annual subscriptions 2022 provided for the budgeting process was noted. It was agreed that subscriptions for the next financial year were to be reviewed by the Committee as part of the budget process by November 2021.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Natural Environment Committee would review its subscriptions at its next meeting.</p>
<p>369</p>	<p>Asset Register</p> <p>The Clerk informed the meeting that a full review of the Council’s assets would be undertaken when the new accounting software was operational.</p> <p>The Asset Register was noted.</p>

<p>370</p>	<p>Insurance</p> <p>See 365 – Insurance fidelity Guarantee review.</p> <p>The Clerk advised the Committee that relevant Council assets should be valued every three to five years. Members believed the last time assets were valued were in 2017. The Clerk confirmed she had obtained a quote from a recommended valuer that would undertake a valuation of Council’s assets at a cost of approximately £3,200. Cllr Cordery proposed to accept the quote from the recommended contractor, seconded by Cllr Robinson and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved: a valuation of Council’s assets was to be undertaken by a recommended contractor at a cost of approximately £3,500.</p> <p>Council’s current insurance schedule was noted by the Committee.</p>
<p>371</p>	<p>Date of next meeting and close of meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the officers present for their work in presenting the various reports to the Committee and closed the meeting at 9.13pm. The date of the next meeting was noted as 12 April 2021.</p>