

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE** HELD AT  
NEWTON'S PLACE, 43 WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT ON  
**WEDNESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2022** AT 7.00 P.M.

**PRESENT:** Councillors C Parker (Chairperson) Presiding

Councillors	C Bunday (Mayor)	R Jenks
	A Hall	A Jones
	M Hocking	M Joyce
	D Howe	M Ryan
	C Jenks	L Sheffield (Deputy Mayor)

Officers in Attendance: Phil Rowe – Town Clerk  
Sam Scott - Deputy Town Clerk and RFO  
Sally Henley – Town Development Manager  
Linda McGuirk - Principal Administrator

**104. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 2022/23**

Nominations were received for Councillors P Bullivant and C Parker for the election of the Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee for the year 2022/2023.

Following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Colin Parker be elected Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee for the year 2022/2023

**105. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors David Corney-Walker, Karen Crout and Ryan Hall.

*Councillors P Bullivant and R Hayes did not attend.*

**106. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 2022/23**

Nominations were received for the appointment of the Vice Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee for the year 2022/2023.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that Councillor David Corney-Walker be elected Vice Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee for the year 2022/2023

*Cllr D Howe abstained from voting*

**107. INTERESTS**

None.

Chairman initials.....

108. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022 were received and signed as a correct record subject to a minor amendment to Minute number 22/02(397):

*That Councillors agree that the sum of £8,000 is committed to the Grow Your Ideas fund in the financial year 2022/23. A maximum of £500 **per application**.*

109. **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee gave due consideration to the Terms of Reference for the Finance and Audit Committee, circulated prior to the meeting.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference for the Finance and Audit Committee be hereby, approved and adopted subject to a minor amendment.

*Cllrs C and R Jenks abstained from voting.*

110. **SUB COMMITTEES/ WORKING PARTIES/ FORUMS**

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Planning Forum held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor Mike Hocking, were received and approved.

*Cllrs C and R Jenks abstained from voting.*

The Town Clerk asked for clarification from Cllrs C and R Jenks about why they continued to abstain from voting on statutory governance documents and reminded members of their duty to review the governance policies of the Council. Cllr C Jenks explained that it was his personal choice.

111. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

112. **FUNDING APPLICATION REQUEST**

Members considered a request for funding received on behalf of Green Futures Newton Abbot to support their ongoing environmental improvements in the town.

Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** that the Town Council hereby grant £500 to Green Futures, Newton Abbot towards environmental improvements in the town.

*Councillor M Hocking abstained from voting.*

Chairman initials.....

### 113. SEED FUND

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that an application to the Grow Your Own Ideas seed fund had been received from Transition Town for £250 towards the creation and installation of interpretation/information signage along the River Lemon.

Members were advised that the awarding panel had convened by email and agreed to approve the application in principle. It was noted that Transition Town had intended to create and produce laminated signs, the awarding panel were concerned regarding the longevity of the signs and the potential for them to deteriorate, possibly causing an environmental issue. The panel stipulated that the funding should be used to engage the services of a local professional designer so that more robust and suitable signs are produced.

Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** that the Town Council hereby ratifies the decision of the Grow Your Own Ideas panel to award £250 from the Seed Fund budget to Transition Town to engage the services of a professional designer to create interpretation/information signage.

It was recognised there is likely to be a shortfall in funding to produce professional information boards. The group will be advised that it could submit a request to the Council's Grants Scheme for consideration.

### 114. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The Chairperson advised that several questions had been asked prior to the meeting, the Deputy Town Clerk has responded to the questions by email and circulated the response to all Members for information.

#### a) Income and expenditure statements

The Committee received the Income and Expenditure Statements for the period 1<sup>st</sup> February to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 (previously circulated). The Chairperson invited further questions from Members, no further clarification was sought in relation to expenditure during the period 1<sup>st</sup> February to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022.

Chairman initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>£ 301,922.44</b>
Misc. Income	£ 16,594.05
VAT return for 3 <sup>rd</sup> QTR	£ 12,702.05
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 331,218.54</b>

**LESS:**

Expenditure £ 73,543.21

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE £ 257,675.33**

**BALANCE as of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 £ 257,675.33**  
**Business Call & Current Account:**

Balances as of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Current Account £ 100.00

Business Call Account £ 257,575.33

Petty Cash Account £ 200.00

**Total Cash in hand at bank £ 257,875.33**

**Total: £257,875.33**

Chairman initials.....



NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

30<sup>th</sup> April 2022

<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>£ 212,075.74</b>
Misc. Income	£ 15,651.83
First tranche of precept	£ 538,746.45
First instalment of CIL	£ 44,262.43
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 810,736.45</b>

**LESS:**

Expenditure	£ 156,681.16
Transfer of CIL to CCLA fund	£ 44,263.00

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE** £ 200,944.16

**BALANCE as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022** £ 609,792.29  
**Business Call & Current Account:**

Balances as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 609,692.29
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00

**Total Cash in hand at bank** £ 609,992.29

**Total:** £609,992.29

Chairman initials.....

**NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL**

**INTERNAL AUDIT**

**31<sup>st</sup> May 2022**

<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>£ 609,792.29</b>
Misc. Income	£ 38,667.63
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 648,459.92</b>

**LESS:**

Expenditure	£ 130,656.97
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<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£ 130,656.97</b>
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**BALANCE as of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022** **£ 517,802.95**  
**Business Call & Current Account:**

Balances as of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

Current Account	£ 110.00
Business Call Account	£ 517,692.95
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
<b>Total Cash in hand at bank</b>	<b>£ 518,002.95</b>

**Total: £518,002.95**

Chairman initials.....

The Chairperson invited further comment on the statements and reports.

It was noted that the grant funding received towards the Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) had been described as Speedwatch, it was agreed to amend the description to reflect the VAS purchase.

Members discussed the allocation of the expenditure for the flagpole brackets £3,555.00 and the installation of the flag poles £3,125.00.

Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED**

(a) that the expenditure for the flagpole brackets (£3,555.00) and the Installation of the flag poles (£3,125.00) be funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies.

(b) that the statements of income and expenditure for the period February to May 2022 as submitted to the Committee be hereby approved and signed by the Chairman of the Finance and Audit Committee.

*Cllrs C & R Jenks abstained from voting on (b) above.*

b) Financial Budget Comparison for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

The Chairperson referred to the Financial Budget Comparison summary and report which detailed Income and Expenditure for the Finance and Audit Committee for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 (previously circulated). The Chairperson invited questions from Councillors. Following a brief discussion among Members, accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Financial Budget Comparison Summary for the Finance and Audit Committee for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022, be hereby noted.

*Cllrs C & R Jenks abstained from voting.*

c) Internal Audit Report 2021/22

Cllr R Jenks asked the Chairperson if he, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee, had raised any issues with the Internal Auditor?

The Chairperson advised that as he had not been provided with any evidence to contradict the work of the Council or its Internal Auditor, nor did he know any details of a reported whistle-blower's allegations. Therefore, he would not raise any concerns and expressed his implicit trust in the Town Clerk as the Council's Proper Officer and the Deputy Town Clerk and RFO.

The Town Clerk informed Members that as Proper Officer of the Council neither he nor the RFO knew why the AGAR was not adopted and expressed disappointment

Chairman initials.....



that the governance of the Council had been ignored which demonstrated the Members lack of trust in both the RFO, Proper Officer and independent internal auditor. Members were reminded that the on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022 the Council had reviewed the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which outlined the procedure for managing a whistle-blower, this has been ignored without sanction.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that the only persons with authority to interrogate the Council's financial data are the Proper Officer, RFO, Internal Auditor and External Auditor.

Members were reminded that as the deadline for submission of the AGAR was the 30<sup>th</sup> June, the RFO has applied for an extension to the deadline. It was noted the External Auditors Report will state the Council did not meet this statutory deadline.

The Town Clerk summarised the disastrous effect the situation has had on the morale of the Council staff and the trust between the staff and the Council.

Councillors proposed and seconded that the Council notes the recommendations contained within the Internal Auditors Report.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Council Meeting to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022 approves the **Final Internal Audit Report 2021/22**.

*Cllrs A Hall, C Jenks and R Jenks abstained from voting.*

d) Precept payment comparison

Members noted the precept payments received by Town and Parish Councils across Teignbridge.

115. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

a) Bradley Lane bus route consultation

The Town Clerk informed members that Teignbridge District Council have notified the Council of a public consultation on the implementation of a new bus route via Bradley Lane. Representatives of Teignbridge District Council will attend the Full Council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> July to present the proposal to the Council.

Members asked the Clerk to find out prior to the presentation whether any existing bus routes will be affected as part of the proposal.

b) Green Futures Eco Hub

Members were informed that Green Futures in conjunction with the Allotment Association and the Community Garden Group were planning to build an Eco Hub on the Community Garden with support from the developer of the Bradley Lane area.

Chairman initials.....

A detailed report will be provided for consideration at the Full Council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> July seeking the Council's support in principle.

c) Insurance Policy

The Deputy Clerk (RFO) advised Members that the insurance renewal for the year 2022/23 has been received in the last two days and included a 42% increase in the premium on the previous year due to the volatile state of the insurance market. Members were advised the cost of insurance will be over the budgeted amount for the year and that it was an unavoidable situation.

The RFO confirmed that due to the current insurance policy expiring on the 1<sup>st</sup> July a decision had been made to proceed with the insurance quote provided by the broker as the Council cannot lawfully operate without a valid insurance policy in place.

It was noted that as part of the policy the insurers are looking at the flood risk element of the policy for the Vicary Mill Leat, Town Quay and Newton's Place.

**116. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022.

Meeting closed at 19:50

Chairman.....Date.....

Chairman initials.....