

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE** HELD AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT ON **WEDNESDAY 10th JANUARY 2024** AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillor C Parker (Chairperson) Presiding

Councillors	B Bailey	A Gibbs
	P Bullivant	M Joyce
	L Cooke	M Ryan
	D Corney-Walker	C Davieson
	A Hall	L Wood

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

By invitation: 1 x Representative of the Community Advice Support Service (CASS)

349. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Sally Henley – Town Development Manager and Nigel Canham Communications Advisor.

350. **INTERESTS**

Councillor M Ryan declared an interest in agenda item 6 - Recommendations from the Staffing Sub Committee as he is related to a member of staff.

351. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee held on 1st November 2023 were received and signed as a correct record.

352. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

353. **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The Chairperson advised there are no funds left in the 2023/24 grant budget. It was suggested that a virement of funds could be made between budget headings, if Councillors agreed to support the grant applications.

a) Community Advice Support Service (CASS)

The Chairperson welcomed the representative of CASS to the meeting and invited them to give a short presentation to members. Members considered the grant application received from CASS.

Chairperson initials.....

b) Newton Abbot Scouts and Guides

Members considered the grant application received from Newton Abbot Scouts and Guides.

Members discussed the grants process and agreed it would be beneficial to consider grants twice annually rather than on an ad hoc basis.

RESOLVED

- a) that a virement of £2,000 from the Facilities Maintenance budget to the Grants budget be approved.
- b) that the Town Council hereby grants £1,000 to the Community Advice Support Service.
- c) that the Town Council hereby grants £1,000 to Newton Abbot Scouts and Guides.
- d) that the Town Council will consider grant applications in May and November annually.

Members requested that successful grant applicants report back to the Council following receipt of their award.

354. **SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Strategic Planning Forum** held on 8th November 2023 as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor A Hall, were received and approved; and
- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Strategic Planning Forum** held on 22nd November 2023 as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor A Hall, were received and approved.

355. **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE**

Members considered recommendations received from the Staffing Sub-Committee meeting held on the 6th December 2023, minute number 23/12(S08). Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the recommendations received from the Staffing Sub-Committee, Minute number 23/12(S08), be hereby approved as set out:

that the Finance & Audit Committee be requested to approve the following:-

- i. the salaries of the Curator, Curatorial Assistant and Admin Assistant Museum each be increased by one SCP from 1st April 2024;
- ii. the Events Co-ordinator hours be increased by 76 hours per annum on a flexible basis, the hours must be office based;
- iii. the hours of an existing Facilities Maintenance Officer be increased from 30 per week to 37 hours per week, from 1st April 2024.

Chairperson initials.....

Cllr M Ryan, having declared an interest abstained from discussion and voting.

356. BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2024/25

The Chairperson shared a recent article with members, published by the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) entitled 'Rethinking precepts: Striking a balance in challenging times, previously circulated.

The Chairperson advised members that the RFO had produced additional supporting information providing a clear explanation of proposed budgetary increases for the financial year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 and those arising in the current year, tabled at the meeting.

Members discussed in detail two of the proposed areas for an increase:

- The necessity to increase the Events Sub-Committee budget to allow for additional safety measures such as additional security staff and formal road closures to be implemented due to the popularity of the Christmas events.
- The lease of the Citymaster 1650, the Town Clerk reported that the Facilities Maintenance Team had recently trialled the machine. Two videos were displayed on the screen showing the team clearing weeds along Chercombe Valley Road.

Members discussed the Draft Budget 2024/25 report (circulated prior to the meeting). Arising from detailed discussions it was

RESOLVED that the Council at its meeting to be held on 24th January 2024 be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt a Precept in the sum of **£1,594,558** for the year 2024/25 representing an *increase* of £31.62 p.a. or 0.61p per week (representing an annual payment of £181.88 / £15.16 per month / £3.50p per week) or 21.04% for a Band D property in Newton Abbot and that Teignbridge District Council be requested to collect on the Town Council's behalf the sum of **£1,594,558**.

357. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

a) INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENTS

The Committee received the Income and Expenditure Statements for the period October to December 2023 (previously circulated). The Chairperson invited questions from Members who sought clarification on a few items in relation to expenditure during the period.

Members discussed costs associated with the catering kiosk located on the Town Quay. It was agreed that the Council should review the current licence agreement. Arising from discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the statements of income and expenditure for the months October, November and December 2023 as submitted to the Committee be hereby approved and signed by the Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee.

Chairperson initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

31st October 2023

Opening Balance	£ 806,411.98
Misc. Income	£ 31,615.90
CIL	£ 43,296.85
VAT Return – 2 nd QTR	£ 19,837.31
Total Income	£ 901,162.04
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 105,284.88
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 105,284.88
BALANCE as of 31st October 2023 Business Call & Current Account:	£ 795,877.16

Balances as of 31st October 2023

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 795,777.16
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 796,077.16

Total: £796,077.16

Balance of CCLA fund at 31st October 2023

£434,696.00

Chairperson initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

30th November 2023

Opening Balance	£ 795,877.16
Misc. Income	£ 15,203.43
Total Income	£ 811,080.59
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 155,110.23
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 655,970.36
BALANCE as of 30th November 2023 Business Call & Current Account:	£ 655,970.36

Balances as of 30th November 2023

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 655,870.36
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 656,170.36

Total: £656,170.36

Balance of CCLA fund at 30th November 2023

£434,696.00

Chairperson initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

31st December 2023

Opening Balance	£ 655,970.36
Misc. Income	£ 13,683.89
Total Income	£ 669,654.25
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 112,087.71
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 112,087.71
BALANCE as of 31st December 2023 Business Call & Current Account:	£ 557,566.54

Balances as of 31st December 2023

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 557,466.54
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£

Total: £557,766.54

Balance of CCLA fund at 31st December 2023

£434,696.00

Chairperson initials.....

b) FINANCIAL BUDGET COMPARISON

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 1st April 2023 to 31st December 2023. (previously circulated). The Chairperson noted that there had been no questions in advance but 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 1st April 2023 to 31st December 2023, be hereby approved and signed by the Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee.

358. BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY

Members discussed the nomination for Buckingham Palace Garden Party 2024.

Following a brief discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be authorised to resubmit Councillor David Corney-Walker as the Town Council’s nominee eligible to attend a Buckingham Palace Garden Party and for his name to be put forward to DALC to be included in their selection process.

359. LATE CORRESPONDENCE

None.

360. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be Wednesday 21st February 2024.

Meeting closed at 20:30 hrs.

Chairperson.....Date.....

Chairperson initials.....