

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE** HELD AT
NEWTON'S PLACE, 43 WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT ON
WEDNESDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors C Parker (Chairperson) Presiding
D Corney-Walker (Vice Chairperson)

Councillors P Bullivant D Howe
C Bunday (Mayor) A Jones
A Hall M Joyce
M Hocking M Ryan

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

Also in attendance: Three representatives of St Mary's Church Tower Swift
project.
A representative of Citizens Advice Teignbridge.
A representative of the Newton Abbot Centre Association.

257. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors K Crout, L Sheffield, R Hayes, C Jenks, R Hall and Phil Rowe - Town Clerk, Sally Henley - Town Development Manager.

258. INTERESTS

Councillors P Bullivant, A Hall and M Hocking declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6, Grant applications, as they are Trustees of Newton Abbot Community Transport Association. They advised they will not participate in the discussion or voting. In addition,

Councillor C Bunday declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6, Grant applications, as she is a Trustee of the Courtenay Centre and will not participate in the discussion or voting.

259. MINUTES

- a) The minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee held on 29th June were received and signed as a correct record.
- b) The minutes of the Special Meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee held on 5th October 2022 were received and signed as a correct record.

260. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

Chairman initials.....

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

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Planning Forum held on 27th July 2022, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor Mike Hocking, were received and approved.

262. **GRANT APPLICATION REQUEST**

The Chairperson invited Members to consider applications for grants, a summary of which had been previously circulated. The Committee received the following grant applications for consideration:

a) Citizens Advice Teignbridge

The Chairperson invited the representative of Citizens Advice Teignbridge to give a brief presentation to Members on the work of the organisation. Following the presentation Members discussed the grant application and asked the representative what impact the current cost-of-living crisis has had on the service. Arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the grant application of £5,500 for Citizens Advice Teignbridge be hereby approved.

b) Newton Abbot Centre Association

The Chairperson invited the representative of the Newton Abbot Centre Association to give a brief presentation to Members on the work of the organisation. The representative advised the grant would be used to facilitate a notice board outside the Courtenay Centre, adjacent to the Community Fridge to signpost people to other support, including Warm Hubs, Food Banks and Citizens Advice Teignbridge. It was noted the Community Fridge is very busy. Members considered the application and arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the grant application of £1,000 for the Newton Abbot Centre Association be hereby approved.

Councillor C Bunday having declared a personal interest on the application for the Newton Abbot Centre Association abstained from discussions and voting thereon.

Councillor M Hocking also abstained from voting.

c) St Mary's Wolborough Church Tower Swift Project

The Chairperson invited representatives of the St Mary's Wolborough Church Tower Swift project to give a brief presentation to Members on the work of the organisation. The representative advised the grant would be used to purchase materials required for the construction and fitting of swift boxes to provide nesting sites for swifts which are an endangered bird and an important part of our biodiversity. Members considered the application and arising from the discussions, it was:

Chairman initials.....

RESOLVED that the grant application of £300 for the St Mary's Wolborough Tower Swift project be hereby approved.

d) Newton Abbot Community Transport Association

There were no representatives of the organisation present. Members considered the application form and noted the funds are required to assist with increasing running costs including fuel, insurance, vehicle maintenance, driver training, DBS checks and office costs. Members recognised the valuable work the charity provides to the residents of Newton Abbot and surrounding parishes. Arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the grant application of £5,000 for the Newton Abbot Community Transport Association be hereby approved.

Councillor P Bullivant, A Hall and M Hocking having declared personal interests on the application for the Newton Abbot Community Transport Association abstained from the discussions and voting thereon.

e) Kingscarse League of Friends

There were no representatives of the organisation present. Members considered the application form and noted the funds are required to assist with supporting the continuation of the weekly writing group. Members considered the application and arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the grant application of £250 for the Kingscarse League of Friends be hereby approved.

f) Newton Abbot District Society of Arts

There were no representatives of the organisation present. Members considered the application form and noted the funds are required to support the 2022/23 season of events. Councillors M Hocking, C Parker and P Bullivant advised that as District Councillors they have previously supported the group with donations from their Councillor Community Funds and therefore would abstain from voting. Members considered the application and arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the grant application of £600 for the Newton Abbot District Society of Arts be hereby approved.

Councillors P Bullivant, C Parker and M Hocking having declared personal interests on the application for the Newton Abbot District Society of Arts abstained from the discussions and voting thereon.

263. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Chairperson, Councillor C Parker reminded Members that the Council had previously reviewed and adopted its Financial Regulations in March 2022 (Minute number 22/03(375a)) and that the Council's Financial Regulations reflected approved practices. Due to concerns raised by Councillor Bullivant, following allegations made by a whistle blower, Councillor Bullivant had expressed concerns that the Council had

Chairman initials.....

not adopted the NALC Model Financial Regulations. To alleviate these concerns the RFO had spent a considerable amount of time creating a comparison report, circulated at the meeting, outlining the differences between the NALC Model guidance and the NATC Financial Regulations. Councillor C Parker thanked the RFO for the extensive time she had taken to produce the detailed comparison report.

Councillor P Bullivant accepted the justification and ratification provided by the RFO and stated that the Financial Regulations were not the basis of the claims made by the Whistle blower.

The Chairperson reminded Members that the Council had recently resolved not to take any further action regarding the Whistle blowers' allegations (Minute number 22/10(203)). Councillor Bullivant confirmed that he wished to move on from the subject.

The RFO suggested the inclusion of the CCLA within the NATC Financial Regulations, page 14, appendix A, item 3c: UK local authority stocks, bonds and CCLA. In addition, an item should be included to confirm that interest is regularly transferred back to the fund.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Council's current Financial Regulations, as adopted in March 2022 be hereby, approved and adopted subject to the inclusion of the word CCLA on page 14, item 3c and confirmation that interest is regularly transferred back to the fund.

264. **SEED FUND**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Seed Fund panel had convened to consider two applications for the Grow Your Own Ideas Seed Fund:

a). Kings Care League of Friends had requested £500 towards providing a series of slow cooker classes. At the end of the course attendees would be provided with a slow cooker. The panel had considered the application and were aware of another organisation providing similar courses within Newton Abbot. Concerns were raised about whether the courses outlined by Kingscare would be based in Newton Abbot. The panel's recommendation was to award £250 to fund one pilot session within Newton Abbot. To further support the project, it was suggested that the group were offered room hire within Newton's Place to run the session, or as an alternative the group should be advised to contact the Courtenay Centre.

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 Kings Care League of Friends to enable them to run one slow cooker session in Newton Abbot and if required, the use of a suitable space within Newton's Place.

Chairman initials.....

b). Wolborough Primary School had requested between £245 and £400 to support a project for the children to produce and sell postcards to raise funds for the School and if successful the Museum. The Panel agreed the project does not meet the criteria of the seed fund. The Panel's recommendation was that funding should not be awarded to the school, the Panel agreed the project should be supported in other ways and suggested providing resources, including support from the Community Engagement Officer and Museum.

Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED that the Town Council declines the application from Wolborough Primary School to the Seed Fund and offers alternative support through the Community Engagement Officer and Museum.

265. **INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

The Chairperson advised that no questions have been received prior to the meeting.

a) Income and expenditure statements

The Committee received the Income and Expenditure Statements for June, July, August and September 2022 (previously circulated). The Chairperson invited questions from Members, no further clarification was sought in relation to expenditure during the period 1st June to 30th September 2022.

Chairman initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

30th June 2022

Opening Balance	£ 517,802.95
Misc. Income	£ 21,407.64
Total Income	£ 539,210.59
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 104,802.99
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 104,802.99

BALANCE as of 30th June 2022 **£ 434,407.60**
Business Call & Current Account:

Balances as of 30th June 2022

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 434,307.60
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 434,607.60

Total: **£434,607.60**

Chairman initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

31ST AUGUST 2022

Opening Balance	<u>£ 323,274.47</u>
VAT return 1 st QTR	£ 21,934.89
Misc. Income	£ 10,696.29
Total Income	£ 355,905.65

LESS:

Expenditure	£ 55,829.75
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TOTAL EXPENDITURE **£ 55,829.75**

BALANCE as of 31st August 2022 **£ 300,075.90**
Business Call & Current Account:

Balances as of 31st August 2022

Current Account	£ <u>101.00</u>
Business Call Account	£ <u>299,974.90</u>
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 300,275.90

Total: £ 300,275.90

Chairman initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

30TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Opening Balance	£ 300,075.90
2 nd tranche of Precept	£ 541,000.00
Misc. Income	£ 12,932.42
Total Income	£ 854,008.32
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 155,117.71
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 155,117.71
BALANCE as of 30th September 2022 Business Call & Current Account:	£ 698,890.61

Balances as of 30th September 2022

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 698,790.61
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 699,090.61

Total: £ 699,090.61

Balance of CCLA fund at 30th September

£418,263.00

The Chairperson invited further comment on the statements and reports.

Accordingly, it was

Chairman initials.....

RESOLVED that the statements of income and expenditure for the period 1st June to 30th September 2022 as submitted to the Committee be hereby approved and signed by the Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee.

- b) Financial Budget Comparison for the period from 1st April 2022 to 30th September 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 1st April – 30th September 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 1st April – 30th September 2022, be hereby approved and signed by the Chairperson of the F&A committee.

- c) The Chairperson advised that the following budget requests for the year 2023/24 had been received from the Council's committees. Members were advised that the Strategic Planning Forum would be considering these requests at its next meeting. Members raised concerns that the current rate of inflation would have a considerable effect on the budget and must be considered carefully to avoid a substantial increase.

- i. Community & Engagement Group – Newton in Bloom
TBC due to situation with floral contractor. Referred to SPF will review.
- ii. Community & Engagement Group – Museum.
£32,800 + inflation*
- iii. Events Sub-Committee
£22,000 + inflation**
- iv. Community and Heritage TBC
- v. Policy and Resources TBC

* Balance from Community & Engagement Group – Museum Budget 2022/23 to be carried forward to 2023/24

** Balance from Events Sub-Committee Budget 2022/23 to be carried forward to 2023/24

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the proposed committee budgets for the period 2023/24 be hereby noted.

Chairman initials.....

266. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised the tax base for the 2023/24 precept calculation had been received from Teignbridge District Council and will be considered by the Strategic Planning Forum.

267. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be Wednesday 11th January 2023.

Meeting closed at 20:05

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

Chairman initials.....