

## **CHARD TOWN COUNCIL**

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP 01460 239567 www.chard.gov.uk Mayor: Clir Martin Carnell Town Clerk: Paul Russell

# **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 commencing at 7.00pm in The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP.

**PRESENT:** Cllr J Kenton (Chair), Cllr Baker, Cllr A Kenton and Cllr Richter.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Democratic Services Officer and Grants Officer

#### **Public Participation Time:**

No members of the public were present. One matter was raised.

## 2022/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Hassan (Illness), Town Clerk (Illness), Cllr Hawkes (Work). Cllr Bulmer was not present.

## 2022/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made:

- Cllr Baker: Town Team, SSDC Portfolio holder;
- Cllr Brown: Town team;
- Cllr Carnell: SSDC;
- Cllr J Kenton: SSDC, Town Team.

## 2022/14 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

This item was withdrawn as there were no Confidential Items to consider.

#### 2022/15 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Proposed: Cllr J KentonSeconded: Cllr BakerFor: 3Abstentions: 2 (not in attendance)

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on Tuesday 31st May 2022 be agreed and signed as a correct record after making one amendment as follows:

The Public Participation minute reflected that there were no members of the public present and the comment was made by ClIr Eggins, who was present as a member of the public as he was not a member of the Finance & Audit Committee.

#### 2022/16 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The following update was provided by the DSO: The Mayor's bank account with HSBC has been closed for the following reasons:

- The nearest HSBC branch was in Taunton;
- HSBC had started to apply a £5 monthly charge.

It was noted that Lloyds Bank could provide a community account free of charge. Best practice required a separate Mayoral account for any funds raised for Mayoral charities.

## 2022/17 APPOINTMENT OF TASK & FINISH GROUPS

Committee considered setting up a Policy Review Task & Finish Group.

Proposed: Cllr Baker	Seconded: Cllr Carnell
Unanimous	

#### **RESOLVED:**

- To appoint a Policy Review Task & Finish Group;
- That Cllr Baker, Cllr J Kenton and Cllr Richter be appointed to sit on it.

The Grants Officer would organise the first meeting.

### 022/18 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- (a) **First Quarter Financial Report –** Committee noted the First Quarter Financial Report. The following issues were raised:
  - The various coding issues be resolved and amended;
  - Concern was expressed that the new energy prices obtained were high and should be reviewed bearing in mind the planned investment in additional solar panels and battery storage;
  - That support be requested to maximise reduce energy costs;
  - That the Guildhall Bar Franchise status be reviewed;

Proposed: Cllr Baker Unanimous Seconded: Cllr Brown

**RESOLVED** that the Officers undertake further research into potential energy efficiencies and improvements for the Guildhall.

#### Signing off the monthly financial records:

Proposed: Cllr A Kenton	Seconded: Cllr Baker
Unanimous	

#### RESOLVED

- To appoint Cllr Richter and Cllr Brown to sign off the monthly bank reconciliations up until October 2022;
- That two other Councillors be appointed to sign off the monthly bank reconciliations from November onwards at the next Finance & Audit Committee meeting to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

(b) Internal Audit Report – Committee noted the Internal Audit report for 2021/22 and the Internal Audit programme for 2022/23.

Committee deferred consideration of the 2021/22 Action Plan until its next meeting to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

(c) Change of Banking Provider – Committee considered the report and recommendation to move the Town Council's banking arrangements.

Proposed: Cllr Baker Unanimous Seconded Cllr A Brown

**RESOLVED** to switch the Town Council's bank account from the Co-op Bank to Lloyds Bank.

(d) Signing Off Accounts – Committee considered the appointment of two members to sign off the monthly accounting statements.

Proposed: Cllr J Kenton	Seconded: Cllr Baker
Unanimous	

**RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Brown and Cllr Richter to sign off the monthly accounting statements up to October 2022 and to review this at its next meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

(e) Annual Civic Awards Policy – Committee considered the development of an Annual Civic Awards policy.

Proposed: Cllr Richter Unanimous Seconded: Cllr Brown

Carnell

**RESOLVED** to agree to assign the development of a Civic Awards Policy to the Policy Review Task & Finish Group and request that a policy os developed as a priority.

(f) Training – Committee considered the request from the Town Clerk to attend the annual SLCC National Conference on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022. The Cost would be £385 + VAT and would be funded from cost code 101/4008.

Proposed: Cllr Baker	Seconded: Cllr
Unanimous	

## RESOLVED

- That the Town Clerk be given permission to attendance the National Conference;
- That feedback from the event be shared with all Members at the Full Council meeting to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022;
- That Chairmanship training for all Councillors be arranged.

## 2022/19 GRANT SUB-COMMITTEE

(a) **Grant Applications –** Committee noted the Grants Sub-Committee report and recommendations.

Proposed: Cllr Richter Unanimous Seconded Cllr Carnell

**RESOLVED** that the following grants be awarded:

- The Hub South Chard: Awarded a grant of £1,000;
- Inner Wheel Club of Chard: Awarded a grant of £465;
- Nightingale: Awarded a grant of £750 subject to the conditions agreed.

#### 2022/20 COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) Action Plan Report Committee noted the Action Plan report but agreed to defer identifying Committee priorities until it was clarified which items would be the responsibility of the Finance & Audit Committee.
- (b) MTIG/Climate Change Project Plan Update Committee received the update on the progress of the various projects being undertaken.

#### 2022/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- (a) Committee noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee would be held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022 in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP commencing at 7pm.
- (b) Committee agreed to include the following items on the next agenda:
  - An update on accounting codes;
  - Appointment of signatories to sign off the monthly Bank Reconciliations.

#### 2022/22 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

There were no confidential items to consider.

There being no other business the Chair thanked committee members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20.01.

CHAIR:

DATE: