

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN SUDBURY TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 2ND May 2023 AT 6.30PM**

PRESENT: Mr N Bennett - in the Chair

Mrs J Antill
Mrs S Ayres
Mr S Hall
Ms E Murphy
Mr T Regester

Mr C Griffin - Town Clerk
Ms A Walker - RFO

1. SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Osborne. Councillor J Owen was not present, but no apologies had been received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S Ayres declared that she was a Babergh District Councillor.

3. DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS & HOSPITALITY

No gifts or hospitality were declared.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensation had been received.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 4th April 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

6. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

The actions from the previous meeting were reviewed and noted.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the water bowser had been delivered, and that Councillor S Hall had visited to commence the end of year internal control checks.

7. TO NOTE A REALLOCATION OF UP TO £19,000 FROM BUDGET LINE CC109-4001 (CENTRAL SERVICES - SALARIES) to CC109-4064 (CENTRAL SERVICES – OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES)

The Town Clerk advised that this was simply a reallocation of expenses within the same cost centre due to the temporary RFO being employed via an agency, as opposed to being employed directly by the Council.

RESOLVED

That the reallocation be noted.

8. TO APPROVE THE PROCESS OF ACTING AS BANKERS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

The Town Clerk explained that advice had been sought from NALC regarding the issue of acting as banker for community groups. The Council had agreed to holding funds for the Gainsborough Trail some years before and more recently had agreed to provide similar support for the Sudbury defibrillator campaign. In addition to these, there was now the 'Pick Up and Drop Off' scheme which provided free groceries for collection from the Town Hall. These were all of benefit to the public, but not directly funded by the Town Council, and so councillors did not have the authority to decide to spend these funds elsewhere.

Councillor S Hall declared an interest at this point as he was a signatory for funds held on behalf of the 'SudburyTeamDefib' defibrillator campaign.

Four criteria had been proposed in order to protect both the council and the schemes:

1. A description of the purpose of the fund (normally a charitable purpose or of clear benefit to the public).
2. A basic charter covering the governance of the fund.
3. A list of the people who are authorised to approve spending from the fund.
4. Instructions on what to do with the funds if the purpose ceases to exist or the authorised people were no longer involved.

The members were asked to either approve these criteria and/or suggest others, or to direct that the monies should be returned.

Some concern was raised about the amount of time involved in financial administration by the Town Council on behalf of these community groups. It was agreed that any further community benefit schemes were to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

RESOLVED

That the four criteria above be adopted for the three existing funds; however, no further community groups may be added without the prior approval of the Finance Committee.

9. REVIEW OF BANK PAYMENTS FOR MARCH 2023

Members reviewed and discussed the bank payments for the period 1st to 31st March 2023, as shown at **minute page XXX.**

One query was raised regarding the cost of skip hire and whether greater efforts to recycle market waste could remove the need for a skip on every market day. The Town Clerk

confirmed that the need for the market skip had been reviewed and that, at the present time, there was no viable alternative. However, this was under constant review. The costs of cemetery skips had been much reduced due to better control of the skips and it was hoped that these could be dispensed with completely.

RESOLVED

That the bank payments for March 2023 be noted.

10. REVIEW OF DRAFT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS FOR MARCH 2023

Members reviewed and discussed the draft income and expenditure reports for the period 1st to 31st March 2023, as shown at **minute page XXX**. The final income and expenditure reports could not be produced until the end of year closedown process had been completed.

RESOLVED

That the draft Income and Expenditure reports for March 2023 be noted.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE RFO ON FINANCIAL MATTERS, INCLUDING THE INTERNAL CONTROL REPORT AND ANY P&C

- Councillor S Hall had visited the Town Hall on 17th April to conduct the internal control checks. Some information had not been available during his visit and so he had not been able to complete all the checks. He would arrange another date to revisit and complete the Internal Control checks as soon as possible.
- The Town Clerk reported on a late invoice from Suffolk County Council for the replacement of two streetlights carried out in 2019. It was not known why the invoice had not been issued earlier, but the Town Clerk confirmed that the Leisure and Environment Committee had approved the spending in March 2019 and their minutes had been adopted by the full council in April 2019. Any unspent funding in 2019 would have been subsumed into the reserves and so the Town Clerk proposed to pay the invoice under his delegated authority in Financial Regulation 5.5(d).

RESOLVED

That the invoice for £3,830 excluding VAT for two replacement streetlights from Suffolk County Council be paid under Financial Regulation 5.5(d).

- The RFO reported that, due to staff sickness which had caused a delay in the year-end process, Rialtas were contacted to postpone the year-end closedown process. Due to a cancellation, they were able to offer a later date (Friday 5th May) which was beneficial as it meant that the whole process could now be dealt with on that day.

The business of the meeting concluded at 7.08pm.

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Chairman