

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee held in the Committee Room at Town Hall on Monday 25th March 2024 at 6pm.

PRESENT: Richard Stubbings
Barry Darch
Christine Wheeler (Chair)
Chris Greenhill

IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Cunningham (Town Clerk)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 0

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Smith, Chidley, Birrell and Hill. Cllr Lahin was not present.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest or any requests for the granting of dispensations in relation to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda

There were none.

3. To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 26th February 2024

RESOLVED To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 26th February 2024.

4. To receive an update from Town Clerk on the action points from the last meeting

Town Clerk confirmed that all the actions from the previous meeting had been initiated, except the closure of the Co-op bank accounts. He gave councillors an update that Zurich had declined to add cover for the electricity supply to the marsh pump and that he was still negotiating with Zurich concerning cover for the two play parks.

5. To consider the council's councillor allowance and to make a recommendation to full council

Councillors noted the report from Town Clerk. They agreed that the Chair should report this back to full council.

Signed:..... 22nd April 2024
Finance & Governance Committee Chair

6. To review Financial & Governance Risk Assessment

Councillors noted the revised document. They requested two further changes to the section on Staff to add the following text: add to end of last sentence “as well as any interim ad hoc arrangements”; add as separate sentence at end: A councillor can act as Proper Officer of the council in the absence of a Clerk or Locum.

Cllr Stubbings proposed that the document as amended be recommended to full council for approval. This was seconded by Cllr Greenhill, a vote was taken which was in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To approve the Financial & Governance Risk Assessment as amended.

7. To consider Mayoral Expenses Policy

Councillors considered the revised document.

Cllr Stubbings proposed that the document be recommended to full council for approval. This was seconded by Cllr Darch, a vote was taken which was in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To approve the Mayoral Expenses Policy.

8. To consider draft Memorandum of Understanding between council and Beccles Townlands Charity Trust

Councillors discussed the document. Cllr Darch noted that such a memorandum is not a legal document. Cllr Stubbings requested two changes to the text: Section 2: replace ‘best’ with ‘reasonable’; Section 3: remove text ‘which both parties have already agreed to contribute to’. He proposed that the document as amended be recommended to full council for approval. This was seconded by Cllr Greenhill, a vote was taken which was in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To approve the Memorandum of Understanding as revised.

9. To consider decision making relationship between councillors and Town Clerk

Chair noted that this item had been requested by Cllr Chidley. Cllr Stubbings noted the need for clear delegation of responsibility to Town Clerk, e.g., appointment of Ranger. Town Clerk noted that such delegation for the appointment of staff is included in the Personnel Committee’s Terms of Reference. It was noted that working parties need to elect a Chair so that it is clear who has a casting vote in the event of a tied vote. Town Clerk was asked to check the standing orders regarding working parties to ensure that this was covered.

Signed:..... 22nd April 2024
Finance & Governance Committee Chair

10. To consider how to deal with new projects which are not included in Strategic Plan

Councillors considered the suggested procedure drafted by Town Clerk. They agreed to add in a criterion of 'ensuring that there is sufficient budget' and also that Finance & Governance should make a recommendation to full council, rather than making the actual decision.

Cllr Stubbings proposed that the document as amended above be recommended to full council for approval. This was seconded by Chair, a vote was taken which was in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To approve the revised procedure for dealing with new projects which are not included in the Strategic Plan.

11. Date of Next Meeting

This was agreed as Monday 22nd April 2024 at 6pm.

Meeting closed at 6.28pm.

ACTION POINTS

Agenda Item	What?	By Whom?	By When?
5	Report back on councillor allowances to full council	Chair	For full council 7 th May meeting
6	Amend Financial & Governance Risk Assessment and add to full council agenda	Town Clerk	For full council 7 th May meeting
8	Amend Memorandum of Understanding and add to full council agenda	Town Clerk	For full council 7 th May meeting
9	Investigate procedure for working parties in Standing Orders	Town Clerk	Before next meeting of committee
10	Amend procedure for managing new	Town Clerk	For full council 7 th May meeting

Signed:..... 22nd April 2024
Finance & Governance Committee Chair

	projects and add to full council agenda		
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Signed:..... 22nd April 2024
Finance & Governance Committee Chair