



Garstang Town Council

Town Clerk: Mrs E Parry
Tel: 07592 792 801
Email: clerk@garstangtowncouncil.gov.uk
Web: www.garstangtowncouncil.gov.uk

Garstang Scout and Guide
Headquarters
Kepple Lane
Garstang
PR3 1PB

Finance and Amenities Committee Meeting, 11th July 2023 Minutes

Minutes of the Finance and Amenities Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on 11 July 2023, 7.30pm.

Present

Chairman: Councillor Atkinson
Councillors present: Atkinson
Councillors Halford and Pearson (ex-officio members)

Also present: Town Clerk/RFO Edwina Parry and one member of the public,
Councillor Rogers

Councillor Dyer was not present

01(2023-24) Appointment of Chairman

The Committee were asked to appoint a Chairman and, if they choose a Deputy Chairman of the Committee.

Resolved: Councillor Atkinson was elected Chairman of the Finance and Amenities Committee. The Committee **further resolved** to appoint a Deputy-Chairman at the next meeting in October 2023.

02(2023-24) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Allan

03(2023-24) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

No declarations of interest were received.

04(2023-24) Public Participation

The meeting was adjourned to allow members of the public to speak.

The member of the public did not wish to speak.

The meeting was reconvened.

05(2023-24) Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 18 April 2023

A copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 18 April 2023 had been circulated.

Resolved: The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 18 April 2023 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

06(2023-24) Receipts and payments account year 2023/24 (Q1)

The Chairman reported that the RFO had entered all accounts data for Q1 (1/4/2023 – 30/6/2023) onto the new accounts package, Scribe.

The RFO has set up 'read only' accounts for members of the Finance Committee, so that the accounts can be viewed.

- a) Councillors were asked to determine which reports they wish the RFO to compile going forwards at Committee meetings. Example reports had been circulated. Scribe had also offered a live training session for Councillors on using Scribe and reports. The RFO advised Councillors need to be mindful of financial regulations: 4.8 and standing orders 17c).

Resolved: The Committee resolved that the summary and receipts report and the bank reconciliation report are circulated for Committee meetings.

These 2 reports to be signed off by the Committee and circulated to Full Council at the next available meeting. The RFO was asked to circulate the Bank reconciliation for Q1 after the meeting. The Committee agreed that as the invoices were now added onto Scribe, invoices were no longer required to be placed on Teams for the Finance Committee. The Committee **further resolved** that Full Council councillors would have read only access to Scribe and that for August's meeting going forward, Full Council would be able to access Scribe to view the invoices. The RFO will run a report for Full Council meeting detailing 'Payments (Awaiting Authorisation) List'

- b) Councillors were asked to review the EMR headings and make a recommendation to Full Council as per 4.9 Financial regulations. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process (explanation note about EMR totals on teams).

Resolved: The Chair explained that the former accounting system (Rialtas) allowed the accounts to have a negative cost centres. As part of the transition to Scribe, there is approximately £1,000 which has been taken out of general reserves; (£27,000 had been added to Ear Marked Reserves 'Reserves' over the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 financial years. The Committee agreed to make this 'calculation transfer' to enable Scribe to be accountable compatible.

The Committee **further resolved** the following transfers of EMR to be approved at August's Full Council meeting

Ear marked reserve	Value	Action
EMR Queen's Platinum Jubilee	£203.70	Transfer to general reserves
Young Mayor charity monies	£662.20	To be transferred to Garstang in Bloom monies (minute reference 08(2020-21)Young Mayor Declan report; 4th November 2020 Minutes

07(2023-24) Bank verifications; review of 2.2 Financial regulations

The Town Council has now moved over to Scribe accounts, (whereby Councillors have 'read only' access) and the Unity bank account, whereby authorised signatory Cllrs, approve and have access to view payments.

The RFO is asking the Committee to review Financial regulations 2.2 and, if choose to amend, make a recommendation to Full Council.

2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported in the first instance to the Finance Committee, if there are any exceptions, these are to be reported to the council.

Resolved: The Committee agreed that a non-Unity Trust Bank approved signatory member sign a verification form confirming that they have reviewed the reconciliations and the original bank statements (via Teams). To report the amendment to 2.2 Financial regulations to August's Full Council meeting.

08(2023-24) Report from Internal Auditor

As part of the AGAR external audit checklist the Town Council needs to have taken 'appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.' To warrant a positive response to this assertion, the authority needs to have considered all matters brought to its attention by its external auditor and internal audit and taken corrective action as appropriate.

Resolved: The Committee noted that there were no recommendations to enact. The report was accepted.

09(2023-24) Risk Register, quarterly review

Resolved: That the Chair of Finance Committee, Councillor Rogers and the RFO sit together and review the risk register and what can be done to improve it. The Committee **further resolved** that the risk register is circulated to the Personnel Committee and that the Committee are asked to review the Personnel Committee specific risks.

010(2023-24) Asset Register

Resolved: The Committee noted that the Asset register had not been updated since 1 April 2023. The Committee agreed that the additional Mayoral chain is added onto the register and that the Committee notes the Asset register will be superseded, by using the [Asset register within Scribe](#).

011(2023-24) Amenities

To pursue outstanding issues with council amenities, committee will review the current issues, and make changes to the outstanding issues as appropriate.

Kepple Lane Park

Issue	Update and Proposal
-------	---------------------

<p>Trim Trail Gym Instruction Sign has been damaged.</p>	<p>Wyre Council have the sign and are looking at ways for this to be fixed, although have said it doesn't seem as straightforward as it seems.</p> <p><u>Councillor Atkinson to liaise with Wyre and will either come back to Committee or use financial regulations 4.1 if required.</u></p> <p>18/4/2023 Update Councillor Atkinson to liaise with Wyre</p> <p>11/7/2023 The RFO was asked to follow up with Wyre Council.</p>
<p>The chain and handle on one of the spinner arms has come off.</p>	<p>Wyre have no other concerns regarding this equipment.</p> <p>Wyre are getting the costs for the replacement part and will let the Town Council know once they have received these.</p> <p><u>Councillor Atkinson to liaise with Wyre and will either come back to Committee or use Financial regulations 4.1 if required.</u></p> <p>18/4/2023 Update Councillor Atkinson reported that he thought this had been fixed, but would report back if it wasn't.</p> <p>11/7/2023 completed.</p>
<p>The musical panel in the children's play area is broken.</p>	<p>The supplier of the panel does not have any replacement parts for this item.</p> <p>Some time ago Wyre enquired about replacement and the cost was £1500, albeit the cost has likely increased since that quote.</p> <p><u>Councillor Atkinson looks at alternative solutions/replacement items and reports back to Committee with a proposal.</u></p> <p>18/4/2023 Update Councillor Atkinson reported that the price for the part had increased to £3,600. No plans to replace at the moment.</p> <p>11/7/2023 Remove, no further action to be taken as the purchase does not provide value for money.</p>
<p>Matting under the spinner is in a poor condition.</p>	<p>Some time ago there was discussion with Wyre Council around replacing the grass and matting under the spinner.</p>

	<p>Wyre advise that the grass matting surface in place is not suitable for this type of equipment with forced movement, and reinstating the status quo would only lead to it being in the same condition in a matter of weeks.</p> <p>The Lengthsman has been asked on his thoughts for possible solutions.</p> <p><u>Councillor Atkinson and Allan to investigate alternative solutions and bring a proposal back to Committee to improve the spinner ground surface before next summer.</u></p> <p>18/4/2023 Update Councillor Atkinson reported that Garden Inspirations were providing a contact that may be able to provide a quote. Councillor Allan was also researching a supplier. The RFO was asked to check the SLCC supplier list for any suitable contacts. Once information had been received, formal quotes would be sought.</p> <p>11/7/2023 Councillor Atkinson suggested that Spring 2024 it is reseeded. Make an enquiry with Councillor John Ibison.</p>
<p>Kepple Lane Park Car Park</p>	<p>The Scout and Guide Building Management Committee has reported a Health and Safety concern regarding an old tree bed on Kepple Lane Park Car Park. Councillors should note that there is a notice displayed on the car park, articulating that cars are parked on the car park at their own risk.</p> <p>Completed by Lengthsman. The Committee passed on their thanks to the Lengthsman.</p>

Moss Lane Park

Issue	Update and Proposal
<p>Broken Arm of the new Goal Posts</p>	<p>One of the arms on the new goal posts has been broken.</p> <p>The arm has been removed by Wyre Council, and is not repairable.</p> <p><u>Councillor Atkinson arranges for another arm to be ordered from the supplier, and the arms only be put up for the Children’s Festival to prevent further damage.</u></p>

	<p>18/4/2023 Update Councillor Atkinson reported that the arm needs to be mended before the Children's Festival.</p> <p>11/7/2023 Councillor Atkinson to check if the arm can be removed.</p>
Tree issue	<p>The Committee is asked how it wishes to address the issue raised by a resident (communication circulated on teams)</p> <p>Resolved: That the RFO acknowledged the email from the resident. That the Council make contact with Treeco, about the issues raised and if required, communicate back to the resident (possibly with a site meeting).</p> <p>The Clerk provided a verbal update at the meeting. Based on advice from the tree surveyor and the tree contractor no further action to be taken. If there is specific evidence of damage to your property, please send photographs to the Town Council.</p>
'Wonky donkey' replacement	<p>Councillor Halford raised a question about the outgoing Mayor's charity, whereby he was fundraising for a replacement 'wonky donkey' to replace the old one at Moss Lane Park. Councillor Atkinson agreed that he would follow up with outgoing Councillor Leech.</p>

012(2023-24) Standing item: outstanding resolutions for information

013(2023-24) Key Holders Register, Councillor Atkinson

The key holders register is nearing completion. The Clerk updated the list with the Lengthsman on 22/6/2023

014(2023-24) 23(2022-23) Financial Regulations

Resolved: Following the council's interim financial operating arrangements [079(2022-23)], it is resolved that the council needs to amend its financial regulations. Finance Committee asks the Chair of Finance and the RFO to bring forward an amendment to financial regulations which would allow for council's financial business to still be transacted in the absence of the RFO,

015(2023-24) Date of next meeting

31 October 2023, [approved by Full Council](#)