



Garstang Town Council

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Garstang Scout and Guide

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Finance Committee Meeting, 23rd April 2024 Minutes

Minutes of the Finance and Amenities Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on Tuesday 23 April 2024, 7.30pm.

Present

Chairman: Councillor Atkinson

Councillors present: Atkinson, Allan

Councillors Pearson and Halford (ex-officio members)

Also present: Town Clerk/RFO Edwina Parry and one member of the public.

045(2023-24) Apologies for Absence

None

046(2023-24) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

055(2023-24) Councillor Atkinson declared that he would not be voting on item 11 - Grant policy review. He reported that it could be perceived by members of the public, that he had an 'other interest' as he is a member of the Garstang Community Sports Club.

047(2023-24) Public Participation

The member of the public did not wish to speak..

048(2023-24) Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 9 January 2024

A copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 9/1/2024 had been circulated.

Resolved: The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 9/1/2024 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

049(2023-24) Receipts and payments account year end 2023/24 (Q4)

The Committee were asked to approve:

- i) year-end Q4 receipts and payment that includes a comparison with budget and
- ii) approve the bank reconciliation at 31 March 2024.

Resolved: The Committee approved year end Q4 receipts and payments and the Chair signed a copy of the approved bank reconciliation at 31 March 2024

050(2023-24) The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24, RFO

The Committee noted that the following:

that the Annual Governance and Accountability is made up of three parts pages 3 to 6:

a) The Annual Internal Audit Report must be completed by the authority's internal auditor. The Council's internal auditor for year end 2024 is Rachel Pearson, Account-ant Yorkshire Limited, who will undertake the internal audit commencing 8 May 2024.

The authority should receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.

b) Sections 1 and 2 are to be completed and approved by the authority (at the latest 17 June 2024).

c) Section 3 is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.

The RFO had circulated:

- i) draft section 2, for comment
- ii) 20240331 Receipts and Payments account
- iii) Reserves balance (RFO note minute 167(2023-24) - transfers of end of year underspends not yet complete).

Resolved: The Committee noted the circulated reports; no questions were raised.

051(2023-24) Changes to EMR, Councillor Atkinson

The Chair of Finance proposed that the following changes be put forward to Full Council for approval (Financial Regulations 4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process).

That the remaining funds in Emergency Plan and Youth Council Funds EMRs be transferred to the Community Engagement EMR.

Resolved: The Committee recommended to Full Council that the remaining funds in Emergency Plan and Youth Council Funds EMRs be transferred to the Community Engagement EMR.

052(2023-24) 85,000 limit – Review of bank accounts

The RFO recommended, to the Committee, that in order to adhere to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limit of £85,000, that the Committee review the bank accounts.

Resolved: The Committee approved that £40,000 is transferred from the Unity account into the Nationwide account.

053(2023-24) Risk Register, quarterly review, RFO

The Committee noted the outstanding Minute 09(2023-24) Risk Register. The Committee reviewed the Full Council risk register that the RFO had tabled.

Resolved: The Committee included an additional point at number 5 and then approved the register. The Committee **further resolved** to recommend to Full Council that the Full Council risk register be approved.

054(2023-24) Asset Register, RFO

The asset register had been circulated to the Committee.

Resolved: The Committee approved the asset register to 31 March 2024.

055(2023-24) Grant policy review, RFO

The Deputy Chairman, Councillor Allan, chaired this item.
Further to Full Council 15/4/2024, minute 283(2023-24), the Committee reviewed the changes to the Grant policy.

Resolved:

The Committee reviewed and approved the changes to the Grant policy made by the RFO and recommended that Full Council adopt the revised policy at the next meeting on 20/05/2024.

056(2023-24) Wyre Council precept notification, RFO

Further to Full Council minute 254(2023-24), the Committee were asked to consider and approve the timeline in order to meet deadline date of 17 December 2024 of informing the precept figure to Wyre Council.

Resolved: The Committee included an extra Finance Committee meeting on 5th November 2024. The Committee **further resolved** to approve the timeline detailed below.

Town Council notify Wyre Council of precept figure	17 December 2024
Town Council meeting to recommend precept figure & recommend budget	16 December 2024
Tax base figure received from Wyre Council	6 December 2024
Full Council consider recommended 2 nd draft budget figure & precept from Finance & Amenities Committee	18 November 2024
Finance & Amenities Committee meet to consider to consider 2 nd draft budget and precept.	5 November 2024
Full Council consider 1 st draft of budget	21 October 2024
Finance & Amenities Committee meet to consider budget	Tuesday 1 or 8 October 2024 (date to be delegated to RFO)
Full Council to consider objectives for the year ahead (2025/2026) to enable budget preparations to be made.	16 September 2024

057(2023-24) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was **resolved** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information.

The member of the public left the meeting.

058(2023-24) Scout & Guide Hut tenancy agreement, RFO

The RFO reported that she had sought advice and clarification from SLCC to explain point 2.9.

The advice detailed that

‘what the clause intends is that no lease or hiring shall be for more than two consecutive days in one period. This does not prevent a hire one day a month, but is designed to prevent "block" bookings for instance a hiring for an entire week as this prevents other use by the community and can, in exceptional circumstances, give rise to legal rights in the property.

Resolved: The Committee agreed that the Scout Management Committee could allow the hire out of the hut, to community groups as per clause 2.9 as advised and verified by the SLCC legal advisor:

‘what the clause intends is that no lease or hiring shall be for more than two consecutive days in one period. This does not prevent a hire one day a month, but is designed to prevent "block" bookings for instance a hiring for an entire week as this prevents other use by the community and can, in exceptional circumstances, give rise to legal rights in the property’.

The Committee **further resolved** that the resolution be relayed to the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the Scout Hut Management team and that an informal meeting be offered to them. This would enable the RFO and Chair/Deputy Chair of Finance to have a catch up with them to listen to what plans they have and how the criteria of point 2.9 and other applicable clauses relating to hire would work in practical terms.

059(2023-24) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Re-admission of the Press and Public

The Committee **resolved** that the confidential business having been concluded, the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

060(2023-24) Date of next meeting

To be determined at Annual Town Council Meeting 2024.

The meeting finished at: 8.21pm

For Information Only

061(2023-24) Clerk's Report

a) Lancashire County Pension Employer Rates 2024/25

The future service rate in respect of the above named organisation, effective from 1 April 2024 – 31st March 2025, is 25.5%.

Please ensure that the new rate is brought to the attention of the appropriate person/s within the organisation and is applied to their payroll from the effective date.

b) Outstanding/In Progress Minutes Log

The Clerk has collated an outstanding/in progress minutes log for information for Councillors reference. The log will be circulated quarterly by the Clerk.