



# Garstang Town Council

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## Finance & Amenities Committee Meeting, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 Minutes

Minutes of the Finance & Amenities Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024, 7.00pm.

### Present

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

Also present: Town Clerk/RFO Edwina Parry.

### 001(2024-25) Appointment of Chair

**Resolved:** Councillor Atkinson was appointed Chair of the Finance & Amenities Committee.

### 002(2024-25) Appointment of Deputy Chair

**Resolved:** Councillor Pearson was appointed Deputy Chair of the Finance & Amenities Committee.

### 003(2024-25) Apologies for Absence

Councillors Allan and Webster (ex-officio member)

### 004(2024-25) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

No declarations of interest were received.

### 005(2024-25) Public Participation

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

### 006(2024-25) Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 23 April 2024

A copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 23 April 2024 had been circulated.

**Resolved:** The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 23 April 2024 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

### 007(2024-25) Receipts and payments account year end 2024/25 (Q1)

The Committee was asked to approve:

- i) Q1 receipts and payments that includes a comparison with budget and
- ii) approve the bank reconciliation at 30 June 2024.

**Resolved:** The Committee approved year end Q1 receipts and payments and the Chair signed a copy of the approved bank reconciliation at 30 June 2024.

The Committee noted that it was likely that there would be a forthcoming recommendation to Full Council that monies are transferred from code 7 Lengthsman's staff cost to code 68 staff contingency. This was to cover the interim agreement of appointing a contractor to carry out some of the Lengthsman's duties, whilst the position is vacant.

#### **008(2024-25) NALC Financial Regulations**

The Committee noted that the NALC Model Financial Regulations have had a significant review and re-write. The Clerk reported that it was not an updated or tweaked document but a specifically commissioned new 'template' document.

The Committee were asked to review the model, respond to comments raised by the Clerk and make a recommendation to Full Council that the Council adopts the new reviewed Financial Regulations.

As background reference, the Clerk had circulated the current approved Financial regulations and a document that compares the two versions of the Financial regulations documents to see how they differ.

**Resolved:** The Committee worked through the model regulations, discussing comments raised by the Clerk. The Clerk was asked to consider the following 2 points.

- i) Check that the current delegations at point 4.1 are carried over into the new model.
- ii) Check the regulation about seeking 3 quotes and how a Council approved supplier list would work in with the regulations (an approved supplier list is being considered).

In addition the Committee welcomed proposed point 7.5 whereby there was scope for an authorised signatory to set up payments on behalf of the service administrator where there is a prolonged absence of the administrator.

The Committee **further resolved** that when the above points had been considered, that the new Financial Regulations go forward to Full Council for approval.

#### **009(2024-25) Report from Internal Auditor**

The Clerk reported that 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. The Committee considered the Internal Audit report and understood that there were minor points to consider.

**Resolved:** The Committee noted:

- i) the legislation which is laid out in the "Yellow" Arnold Clark book that states allotments must have a minimum payment term of 40 days. There are other regulations that may also need to be reviewed in this section relating to allotments.
- ii) It is recommended in the JPAG 2024 the Council implements a 3 year plan.
- iii) This Council's Accounts and Governance are extremely well maintained. It has been a joy to Audit. The Committee congratulated the Clerk for her work on the Town Council's accounts.

#### **010(2024-25) Full Council Risk register, Clerk**

The Clerk brought the Committee's attention to the following risks which fall under the remit of the Finance Committee:

i) 6 Financial Banking failure  
RFO response: Payment of LITE invoice expected in Q2, which will reduce balance.

ii) 10 Operational / Financial Failure to manage the operation of transferred assets  
RFO response: Not applicable to Q1.

iii) 13 Financial Risk to public from Trees

In Q1 Clerk received correspondence from:

- a. Burrells garage reported 25/06/2024, Issue of overhanging branches from Kepple Lane Park. Clerk followed up with Wyre Council, not within scope of maintenance contract. The Town Council will have to investigate issue.
- b. Councillor Webster reported 02/07/2024, overhanging trees over footway on Moss Lane with the boundary of Moss Lane Park. Clerk following up with Wyre Council. It may be the same outcome as above point.
- iv) 15,16 & 21 had been covered elsewhere on the agenda.
- v) 30 not applicable in Q1.

**Resolved:** The Committee discussed that points 6,10,15,16,21 and 30 had been addressed and no further action was required.

The Committee **further resolved** point 13 - Risk to public from Trees to approve the Clerk's recommendation that the Clerk, along with a Committee member, meet contractors and seeks quotations to address the issues.

#### **011(2024-25) Asset Register**

Councillors considered the asset register to 30 June 2024. It was noted that no items have been added for Q1. The Clerk is advising that a minimum value of £250.00 should be agreed to fulfil the paragraph 5.59 of Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) 2024 edition. The insurance value excess figure for Property Damage is £250.00.

**Resolved:** The Committee approved the Asset register. The Committee choose a minimum value of £250 to be the value figure of when assets should be added to the asset register. The rational for this figure was that the insurance value excess figure for Property Damage is £250.00. This figure was to be reviewed annually at July's meeting.

#### **012(2024-25) Amenity issues raised by member of public**

The Committee was asked to comment on the following 2 issues.

- 1) The exit from Moss lane park onto Church street is too narrow. I have struggled to get our wheelchair through there and I have also witnessed other people (on mobility scooters) struggle to navigate through it. As it is next to Abbeyfield House (people on said scooters), this exit either needs to be made bigger or the barrier removed entirely.
- 2) On Hudson Park, between the rugby and cricket pitches there is a path running up/down to Millenium Green which is (just about) suitable for wheelchair access, but the other side (cricket pitch side under the old rail bridge) the access is poor and not conducive for wheelchair access.

The Clerk had contacted Alison Boden, Wyre Council who has responded that she is following up land ownership and responsibility for footpaths around Garstang flood gates and UU building.

**Resolved:** The Committee agreed that the pedestrian exit from Moss lane park onto Church street is too narrow. The Clerk was asked to seek advice from Wyre Council about options to resolve the issue. Due to the outstanding tasks on the minute log, this was not considered as one of the top priorities of the Council. The Committee agreed that issues relating to Hudson Park should be addressed to Alison Boden, who was kindly following up the issue. The Clerk was asked to update the member of the public.

**013(2024-25) Outstanding/In Progress Minutes Log**

The Committee noted the outstanding list of Amenities tasks detailed on the log.

**Resolved:** The minute resolutions from the evenings meeting to be added.

**014(2024-25) Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 7.00pm, 8 October 2024.

**The meeting finished at: 7.50pm**