



Garstang Town Council

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Garstang Scout and Guide

Headquarters

Kepple Lane

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PR3 1PB

Finance Committee Meeting, 8th October 2024 Agenda

FAO Finance and Amenities Committee

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Finance and Amenities Committee to consider the items detailed on the attached agenda.

The meeting will be held at Garstang library,

Windsor Road, Garstang, PR3 1EX

on Tuesday, 8 October 2024 at **7.00pm**.

Members of the public and press are invited to attend the meeting

Please contact the Clerk by 13.00, Tuesday, 8 October 2024, to express your interest in attending the meeting.

Recording of Public Council Meetings

Please be aware that the public meeting may be recorded for the accuracy of the minutes.

As per standing orders 12g; for any meeting that has been recorded the recording will be kept for a period of 6 months after the minutes have been approved as accurate before the recording is deleted.

E Parry

Town Clerk

3rd October 2024

Agenda

1) **Apologies for Absence**

2) **Declaration of Interests and Dispensations**

3) **Public Participation**

The Chairman will ask Councillors to agree to adjourn the meeting to allow non-Councillors to speak and will ask Councillors to agree to reconvene the meeting on the conclusion of the public participation.

4) **Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 24 July 2024 – for decision**

Councillors are asked to approve, as a correct record, the [minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 24/07/2024](#) (circulated on Teams).

5) **Receipts and payments account year end 2024/25 (Q2) – for decision**

The Committee are asked to approve:

- i) [Q2 receipts and payments](#) that includes a comparison with budget (assessed via Scribe and Teams) and
- ii) approve the [bank reconciliation at 30 September 2024](#) (assessed via Scribe and Teams).

Councillors are asked to note Financial regulations

6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.

6) **Review of income streams as per financial regs, RFO – for decision**

The Town Council's financial regulations state:

13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually by the Finance Committee at October's meeting as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council. Councillors are asked to consider the fees, as detailed below and make any recommendations for the Full Council to approve.

a) Allotments rent

The RFO is advising that a review will take place, once the allotments have been cleared and new plots marked out.

b) Scout Hut rent

Currently the rent is £60 (approved Full Council 106 (2019-20)). The tenancy agreement states that the rent is to be reviewed every 5 year period. Next review May 2025.

7) **Appointment of Internal auditor, RFO – for decision**

The RFO has received a quotation from Account-ant (Yorkshire) Limited, who carried out the internal audit for year-end 2024.

Recommendation to the Committee:

That the Committee approve that Account-ant (Yorkshire) Limited carry out the Internal Audit for year end 2025 at a cost of £307.50 (net of VAT) as per [quote QU-0237](#).

([Committee Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation](#) allows the Committee to make this appointment)

8) **Review of Reserves policy, RFO – for decision**

As part of the budget review and good practice, the Committee are asked to review the [Council's Reserve policy](#).

Reference - To assist the review, [reference Clerk's guidance](#) and [JPAG 2024 practitioners' guide](#). [The JPAG reference in the policy will be updated.]

Recommendation to the Committee:

The Committee are asked to make recommendations, for Full Council to approve at their next meeting on 21/10/2024.

9) **Full Council Risk register, Clerk – for decision**

The Council approved the [risk register](#) at the Town Council meeting on 20 May 2024, minute 305(2023-24).

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

- i) Point 2 Legal / H&S Failure to comply with requirements for operational legal and safety compliance.

Risk Assessments prepared for all assets and professional companies appointed to undertake compliance evaluations where needed.

RFO response: Complete outstanding risk assessments relating to Lengthsman's position. High priority for October, due to imminent starting date of new Lengthsman.

ii) Points

27 H&S Risks arising from Lone Working

Lone working minimised where possible, lone working policy and procedures adopted.

28 H&S Workplace hazards Risk assessments undertaken for all assets and communicated to staff.

29 H&S Inappropriate workplace set up results in injury. Regular assessments of suitability of equipment.

RFO response: Action points 27-29 relating to Lengthsman's position. High priority for October, due to imminent starting date of new Lengthsman.

iii) Risk to consider from Chair of Committee, Councillor Atkinson

Risk of Christmas lights receipts, from other partnership income streams, not being sufficient to cover annual costs.

10) **Asset Register, RFO – for decision**

Councillors are asked to approve the [asset register to 30 September 2024](#). No items have been added for Q2.

Background 9/7/2024, Finance & Amenities Committee minute 011(2024-25) Asset Register

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.

11) **Budget 2025/26, RFO and Councillor Atkinson – for decision**
(All supporting papers can be accessed via Scribe and Teams).

Background Information

Reference The [Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners’ Guide March 2024 section 5.25 – 5.28](#)

The Town Council’s budget is comprised of its anticipated revenue expenditure for the year, based on the annual running costs and what information the RFO has received from Councillors about any new projects which need to be included. This sits alongside decisions by the Council on reserve levels.

The Town Council’s principal income is derived from its precept. The precept is calculated as follows:

- The Tax base is calculated each year after receipt from the Valuation Office of the latest Valuation list.
- A “tax base” is the number of Band D equivalent dwellings in a local authority area. To calculate the tax base for an area, the number of dwellings in each council tax band is adjusted to take account of any discounts, premiums or exemptions.
- The Tax base figure will be sent out to Parish & Town Council’s on Friday 6th December 2024. The Town Council will then be able to use this information to calculate the Band D equivalent, by taking the precept requirement divided by the tax base.

In the Appendix, Councillors will find the draft budget timetable.

Members have been circulated a draft budget to consider alongside the current position of the Councils reserves and overall finances. .It is a working paper and is expected that the Committee will work through the codes line by line

The precept has been set at zero to highlight the shortfall.

In terms of Band D equivalent this would need to be determined following receipt of the Tax Base from Wyre Council. The historical precept figures are detailed below.

	2023/24	2024/25
Precept	£114,188	£139,325

	2023/24	2024/25
Tax base	1,883.41	1,955.04
Band D Equivalent	£60.63	£71.26
Change on Previous Year	£7.84	£10.63
% Change on Previous Year	14.85%	17.53%

Committee members have been provided with the following reports:

- i) **Forecast report 2024/25 ([summary](#) and [monthly](#))**
- ii) **[Draft budget 2025/26](#)**
- iii) **[Budget notes](#)**
- iv) **[Current reserves balance](#)—earmarked reserves and general reserves**

Points for consideration are as follows:

- a) It is anticipated that Committee members will go through the draft budget paper line by line to review the budget for each code and agree upon any revisions.

All Councillors should be aware of Financial regulations 6.4

- b) **Project Fund Requests and EMRs**

16/9/2024 Full Council; 078(2024-25) Precept/Budget 2025/2026, Councillor Atkinson and RFO

The Chair of the Finance & Amenities Committee, Councillor Atkinson, reported that the Finance Committee will meet on 8 October 2024 to discuss the budget for 2025/2026. Councillors were asked to provide the RFO with projects and associated finance requirements/budgets (based on estimates obtained), at the meeting so that they could be included in next year's precept.

Resolved: Councillor Halford put forward the VE celebration event for May 2025. Councillor Webster put forward Christmas Lights and the associated switch on event. Councillor Allan put forward Remembrance Sunday and the NW Stages car rally.

Proposal: Committee members are asked to review the budget for 2024/2025 and recommend the draft budget for Full Council's, consideration on 21 October 2024 and review EMR's.

(Financial Regulations 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or Finance committee).

- 12) **Outstanding/In Progress Minutes Log, RFO – for decision**

The Clerk has collated an outstanding/in progress minutes log; [23 24](#) and [24 25](#) for Councillors reference. The outstanding list of Amenities tasks are detailed on the log. Are there any additional tasks to be added?

The log will be circulated quarterly by the Clerk.

13)

Date of next meeting

29 October 2024.

Appendix

Budget 2025/26 Timeline

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 budget	29 October 2024
Full Council consider 1 st draft of budget	21 October 2024
Finance & Amenities Committee meet to consider budget	8 October 2024
Full Council to consider objectives for the year ahead (2025/2026) to enable budget preparations to be made.	16 September 2024