



AYLESBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday 28 September 2022 at 7pm
in the Town Hall, Aylesbury**

Present: Cllr A Christensen
Cllr T Dixon
Cllr P Koya
Cllr R Lloyd
Cllr A Sherwell

Officers present: Keith Gray (Town Clerk)
Judith Priest (Deputy Town Clerk)

No members of the public were present

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7pm.

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive and note apologies for absence

Resolved: That the following apologies for absence be received and unanimously agreed: Cllr R King (prior commitment), Cllr N Mehta (prior commitment)

2. Declarations of Interest

To declare any personal or prejudicial interests

No declarations made and no dispensations requested.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 15 June 2022

To agree and sign as a true record the Minutes of 15 June 2022.

Resolved: That the minutes of 15 June 2022 be accepted and signed as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

Officers are to report on any matters arising from the Minutes of the above meeting or on actions taken.

No matters raised by the Town Clerk and no questions or matters raised by Members.

5. Budget Monitoring and Cash Books

To consider the cash books and bank reconciliation for Month 5 (August 2022) and to review the budgetary position to Month 5 (August 2022) and report to Town Council, as appropriate.

Cllr Sherwell asked the following questions and was advised by the Town Clerk accordingly.

Allotment income is only showing at 1% at present, is there are particular reason for this?

Allotment renewal rents are due 1 September each year, hence the percentage showing low in month 5. The income will be reflected in the income line in month 6 and 7 in the budget monitoring report.

Postage is at 62% - does this mean there may be an overspend?

There is a possibility of an overspend. The budget was not increased for 2022/2023 and remained the same for the last couple of years, but due to price increases of postage as well as another increase this year, we will need to consider this budget line carefully for 2023/24.

Transfers to/from EMR is ten times budget, what does it mean and why?

A system error happened whilst processing transactions and needed to be rectified by the software company but was not completed before the August 2022 reports where due to be issued. This has now been rectified and will show clear on the September 2022 budget monitoring report.

Income from sale of electric - is this an annual or semi-annual charge?

The income is semi-annual charge, meter readings were submitted 29 July 2022 and income should be received September or October 2022.

Bourg Walk Salting - why is it showing £778 income in a budget that runs from 1 April to 31 August?

When we prepare the budget for the following year, we have no guarantee from Buckinghamshire Council that we will be given the contract for salting the Bourg Walk Bridge from October to March hence the budget showing £0.

The £778 is income from BC for salting the bridge in February 2022, which was paid in the new financial year in April 2022.

Equipment Lease Rental - how are we managing this budget line?

This is for equipment only for Devolved Services works from Buckinghamshire Council including the work we do for several other councils.

The leasing costs of the equipment has risen by 34.4% per month compared to 2021/2022.

The Devolved Services budget covers the expenditure to ensure there is no overspend.

How is overtime accounted for/managed?

Overtime is managed and authorised by the managers of each department, if, and when required and then authorised by the Town Clerk. The overtime tends to be in relation to any weekend grave digging (costs recovered from the funeral charge) as well as overtime for salting Bourg Walk (costs recovered from Buckinghamshire Council) or for overtime on events such as road closures, taking and removing equipment, Friarage Road grass cutting has to be done early (6am) 3-4 staff as we have to adhere to road safety and BC policy on managing work on a busy road (claimed from Devolved Services money). Flood Defences for the Willow Estate we also claim back.

Resolved: It was agreed, unanimously, that Month 5 (August 2022) accounts as presented be duly accepted.

6. Reserve Levels

To review the Council's general reserves. Councillors have been referred to the monthly finance report and earmarked reserves report.

Councillors discussed the general reserves levels and if a policy should be implemented that outlines at what level the general reserves should be at all times or if it should remain flexible but in line with the recommendation of having at least 3 months of operating costs in the general reserves.

Resolved: Councillors unanimously agreed that they are comfortable with the current levels of general reserves and to keep the reserve level flexible but in line with recommendation of having at least 3 months of operating costs in the general reserves.

7. Corporate Bank Charge Card

To sign up to the Lloyds Bank Corporate Charge Card at an annual cost of £32 per card, to assist with the expense management process, while providing financial and administrative efficiencies and transparencies

Proposed Cllr Dixon, seconded by Cllr Lloyd

Resolved: Councillors unanimously agreed to proceed with the arrangement of a corporate charge cars for the Senior Management Team, Play Centre Manager and Finance Officer.

8. Energy Purchasing Agreements

To receive an update from the Town Clerk on the Council’s current energy purchasing arrangements.

The Council has signed up to a contract for gas and electricity until June 2025.

Cllr Sherwell asked if it may be worth exploring to get Parish and Town Councils to get together to purchase electricity and gas as a conglomerate to achieve great purchasing power.

9. Date of Next Meeting

To note the date of the next meeting is scheduled for 7pm on Wednesday 9 November 2022 in the Council Chamber.

Meeting closed at 7.28pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairman