



Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR

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Minutes of the meeting of the

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 20 March 2023, at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Cllr. Kenyon

North Ward

Cllr. C. Shepherd East Ward

Cllr. Knaggs

West Ward

Services and Contracts Manager
Responsible Finance Officer

The Town Council resolved from 20 May 2019, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, which having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF FINANCE COMMITTEE 20 MARCH 2023

The Chair proposed a late amendment and addition to Agenda 11 item Banking. This was approved.

FIN22/88 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Burgin, Lawson and Rudhall.

FIN22/89 Confirmation of the Minutes

Members authorised the Chair to sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on Monday 16 January 2023.

FIN22/90 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

Members were asked to disclose their interests in matters to be discussed whether disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interest, and to decide requests for dispensations.

There were no declarations of interest and requests for dispensations.

FIN22/91 Public Participation

Members received written representation from Evolve Penrith submitted by email from Jonathan Davies:

“At a meeting of Penrith Town Council held on the 13th of March 2023, a member of the public reading a statement disclosed they had received information provided by the council regarding the cost of the meeting that was scheduled to last for 1 hour but in reality, lasted 40 minutes costing the council £500 to hold. Can the chair confirm if this £500 cost of a single 1-hour council meetings is factually correct and if correct what the costs relate to.”

The Chair read out a verbal statement in response:

As a member of the Town Council who is not appointed to a committee, please be advised that you may attend a committee meeting as a member of the public at any time. However, Council understands that on this occasion you made written representation as a member of Evolve Penrith.

Finance Committee recognised you as a member of this Council and as such on 13 March 2023 you raised the same question of the Town Clerk.

You were sent an email on 14 March from the Town Clerk informing you of the costings of the meeting on the 13 March.

FIN22/91 Public Participation, continued

This figure was calculated from:

- Meeting venue hire - £16.00 per hour plus set up and take down.
- Staff attendance – working additional hours after normal departure time to attend meeting - £154.
- Stationery and postage - £22.96.
- Research, corresponding to emails and notice preparation - £170 for town clerk hours, DTC (RR), SCM (IP) and Legal.

The costs are estimates and are associated with additional work arising from Councillor Davies's and Councillor M. Clark's request for an extra meeting, which was not scheduled within officer normal working arrangements. The meeting cost approximately, £363.00.

As a Town Councillor you raised the following question in response to the Town Clerks response of 14 March 2023:

"Could I ask in that case for confirmation that the invalid meeting held on 11 July 2022 that was not properly convened cost the town council in excess of one can only equate £1000 to hold and then hold a second time based on the additional time for room hire staffing and printing. I query this as at the time when I asked this, I was told it was not a significant impact on the council costs."

The meeting on 10 July was not properly convened as the summons did not record the venue. This was an administrative error.

The Council rescheduled a Full Council meeting on the 18 July. The Council cannot identify how a figure of £1,000 was arrived at by Councillor Davies. The time of the meeting was 12:30. Officers worked their lunchbreak. The papers were sent out electronically. The summons was circulated. The cost of the meeting was two hours of meeting room hire and the time of the volunteer councillors who so very kindly reconvened the meeting. Total cost of the meeting £32.00.

FIN22/92 Excluded Item: Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Members considered whether any items should be considered without the press and public, pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960.

RESOLVED THAT:

No items should be considered without the presence of the press and public.

FIN22/93 Payments for Approval

- a) Members noted that prior to the meeting, Cllr. Knaggs and Cllr. Rudhall verified and confirmed that the banking transaction history for January and February 2023 reconciled and agreed with the transactions circulated with the meeting documents.

FIN22/93 Payments for Approval, continued

- b) Members were asked to agree the two Councillors to undertake the payments for approval checking for the next meeting of the Finance Committee to be held on the 24 April 2023.

RESOLVED THAT:

Cllr. C. Shepherd and Cllr. Kenyon check the payments for approval prior to the meeting of the Finance Committee on the 24 April 2023.

- c) Members considered the Monthly Report of Payments for January and February 2023.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Monthly Report of Payments for January and February 2023 be approved.

FIN22/94 Bank Reconciliation

Members considered the Bank Reconciliation for the HSBC Bank account for the period ending 31 January and 28 February 2023.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Bank Reconciliation for the HSBC Bank account for the period ending 31 January and 28 February 2023 be approved and signed by Cllr Knaggs.

FIN22/95 Budgetary Control Statement 2022/23: 28 February 2023

Members considered the Budgetary Control Statement 2022/23 Expenditure for the period to 28 February 2023.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Budgetary Control Statement 2022/23 expenditure for the period to 28 February 2023 be approved and go forward for ratification by Full Council.

FIN22/96 Internal Audit Report

Members considered the Internal Audit report for the period 01 April 2022 to 31 December 2022.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. The Internal Audit report for the period 01 April 2022 to 31 December 2022 concluded that the Council's control systems are efficient and effective and give the appropriate level of confidence, that the financial statements and reports reflect a true and accurate account of the Council's finance and governance records and the report be approved and go forward for ratification by Full Council.
- ii. The officers be thanked for their work involvement in receiving a positive audit.

FIN22/97 Annual Review of Fees and Charges 2023/24

Members considered the report setting out the Fees and Charges for the financial years 2023/24.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fees and Charges for 2023/24 financial year be approved and go forward for final ratification by Full Council.

FIN22/98 Banking

- a) Members considered the withdrawal of funds from the CCLA account to supplement the HSBC bank balance to cover payments until the 2023/24 precept is received.
- b) Members considered the withdrawal of funds from the Penrith Building Society to supplement the HSBC bank balance to cover payments until the 2023/24 precept is received.
- c) Members considered the removal of all existing Councillor signatories on the Councils accounts who are not re-elected in May.
- d) Members considered the opening of a current account with Lloyds Bank and the closure of the Council's HSBC account.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. A sum of £100,000 be transferred from the CCLA account to the HSBC account to cover payments until the 2023/24 precept is received.
- ii. A sum of £50,000 be transferred from the Penrith Building Society account to the HSBC account should logistics prevent the signing of the CCLA forms to cover payments until the 2023/24 precept is received.
- iii. Councillors who are not re-elected in May 2023 be removed as signatories on the Council's bank and investment accounts and this go forward for final ratification by Full Council.
- iv. The Council opens a new current account with the Lloyds Bank and the Council's HSBC account be closed and this go forward for final ratification by Full Council.

FIN22/99 Review of the System of Internal Control 2022/23

Members considered the report setting out a review of the Council's System of Internal Control for the current financial year 2022/23.

RESOLVED THAT:

The review of the Council's System of Internal Control for the current financial year 2022/23 be approved and go forward for final ratification by Full Council.

FIN22/100 Policy Review

Members reviewed the following of the Council's policies:

- a) Code of Conduct
- b) Dispensations Policy
- c) Flexible Working Policy
- d) Financial Regulations with associated policies

FIN22/100 Policy Review, continued

- e) Grants Scheme
- f) Partnership Protocol

RESOLVED THAT:

The following policies be approved and go forward for final ratification by Full Council.

- i. Code of Conduct
- ii. Dispensations Policy
- iii. Flexible Working Policy
- iv. Financial Regulations with associated policies
- v. Grants Scheme
- vi. Partnership Protocol

FIN22/101 Scheme of Delegation and Communities Committee Draft Terms of Reference

Members considered the draft Terms of Reference for the Communities Committee and the changes to the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

RESOLVED THAT:

The draft Terms of Reference for the Communities Committee and the Scheme of Delegation be approved and go forward for final ratification by Full Council.

FIN22/101 Community Services Officer – ILCA Award

Members noted that the Council's Community Services Officer has passed The Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) course and noted his pay would increase by one spinal column point backdated to the date of passing the ILCA course.

FIN22/102 Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled for **Monday 24 April 2023** at **Penrith Town Council Office, Board Room, Unit 1, Church House** at **4.00pm**.

PART II PRIVATE SECTION

There are no further items in this part of the agenda.

CHAIR:

DATE:

**FOR ATTENTION FOR ALL
MEMBERS OF FINANCE COMMITTEE
AND FOR INFORMATION TO THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Access to Information

Copies of the agenda are available for members of the public to inspect prior to the meeting. Agenda and Part I reports are available on the Town Council website: www.penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

Background Papers

Requests for the background papers to the Part I reports, excluding those papers that contain exempt information, can be made to the Town Clerk via office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk.