

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

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Clerk: Katherine Doughty



Minutes of Finance and Audit Committee Meeting held on Monday 13th January 2025 at 7.00pm in the Jubilee Room, Pump House, Faringdon

Members Present: Cllr.Leniec (Chair)
Cllr.Boulton
Cllr.Castle
Cllr.Farmer
Cllr.Morgan
Cllr.Webb
Cllr.Wild

In attendance: Katherine Doughty, Town Clerk
Margaret Nairne, Town Clerk's Assistant

In attendance online: Cllr. Finn

1/1/25 Apologies for Absence:
Cllr. Finn, Cllr. Ford

2/1/25 Minutes and notes of meetings
It was PROPOSED that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 28th October 2024 be signed as a correct record. This was SECONDED and RESOLVED.

3/1/25 Declarations of Interest & requests for dispensations
9/1/25 iv. Cllr. Castle declared an interest in the grant application for The Place as a council-appointed Trustee and refrained from the resolution.

4/1/25 Public Speaking and Question Time
None

It was PROPOSED that item 9/1/25 be brought forward to enable a member of the public to speak. This was SECONDED and RESOLVED.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS: At the conclusion of this part of the agenda, the Chairman PROPOSED that, considering the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, the public, press and broadcast media should be excluded for the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. This was SECONDED and RESOLVED.

5/1/25 Staffing
a) and b) Members NOTED the Staffing Report.
i. Leisure Services Assistant/Caretaker
It was RESOLVED to approve the job description and Salary Calculation Point (SCP) range 5 to 12 for advertisement and commencement immediately.

- ii. Finance Assistant & Civic Officer
Cllr. Lenic PROPOSED, Cllr Castle SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to approve the job description, SCP range 13-17 and for the current Bookings Officer/Civic Secretary to expand their role to this appointment with effect from 26 March. Clerk is to book training and software changes from 1 April.
 - iii. Deputy Clerk
Cllr. Lenic PROPOSED, Cllr Castle SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to approve the job description, SCP range 29-32 and for the role to be advertised internally only, with the post to commence from 26 March.
 - iv. Line Management
It was RESOLVED that the Facilities Officer line-manage the Facilities Manager. In recognition of the additional responsibilities, they will progress to the next salary band and 1 SCP increase in pay, with the post to commence from 26 March.
- c) Members NOTED a summary of staff appraisals.
 - d) Cllr. Lenic PROPOSED, Cllr. Webb SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to approve an incremental rise in staff salary calculation points with effect from the new financial year.
 - e) Members NOTED the changes to staff contracts for flexible working arrangements which they PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve as follows:-
Facilities Officer: PROPOSED Cllr.Leniec, SECONDED Cllr. Wild.
Activities Officer/Office Manager: PROPOSED Cllr. Leniec; SECONDED Cllr. Castle.

The meeting was re-opened to the public and press.

6/1/25 Items for information only to include:

- a) Members NOTED investment and Interest updates.
- b) Members NOTED the Action List.
- c) Westmill Solar investment – Reinvested 5-year bond of £2500 undertaken.

7/1/25 Information Centre

Members received and NOTED the third quarter report which showed a small drop in visitor numbers for 2024 compared to 2023.

8/1/25 Facilities Committee

- a) 5/4/24 Corn Exchange insurance
Cllr. Leniec PROPOSED, Cllr. Farmer SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to accept a quote from Abbey Electrical for urgent fixed electrical installation repairs as part of Aviva's requirements for £2831.81 to be paid from the Asset Maintenance Fund.
- b) 6/4/24 Asbestos
Cllr. Leniec PROPOSED, Cllr. Wild SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to accept the quote from Amiantus (excluding the Old Town Hall as this has already been surveyed) for £1470 to be paid from the Asset Maintenance Fund.
- c) Cllr. Leniec PROPOSED, Cllr. Wild SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to approve spending £1000 following the quote for 12 x fire extinguishers as per recent Pyrotec report to be paid from the Asset Maintenance Fund.

9/1/25 Grants Sub-Committee

Members NOTED minutes, reports and recommendations of the Grants Sub-committee including any decisions taken under delegated authority.

b) Members considered the following grant requests for the 2025.26 financial year from:-

- (i) Faringdon Folly Fest: Cllr. Leniec PROPOSED, Cllr. Castle SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to approve a grant of £4,000 plus hire fees.
- (ii) Faringdon Community College: £1,000. Members agreed to encourage the college to approach the Faringdon United Charity in the first instance.
- (iii) Oxfordshire Play Association: £1,500. Cllr. Castle PROPOSED, Cllr. Farmer SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to approve a grant of £1,500 to be paid from the Youth Grants budget.
- (iv) The Place: £32,500 which includes rent of £7,000. Cllr. Castle declared an interest in this item as as Trustee of The Place.
Cllr. Wild PROPOSED, Cllr. Farmer SECONDED and it was RESOLVED to approve the grant.

10/1/25 Finance Reports and Precept 2025.26

a) Office & Establishment

- (i) Members NOTED a financial report 2024.25.
- (ii) Members considered a draft revenue budget for Office & Establishment of £502,355 which includes a Grants budget of £52,930 for RECOMMENDATION to Full Council for 2025.26.
- (iii) No capital expenditure was recommended for 2025.26.

b) Faringdon Information Centre

- (i) Members NOTED a financial report 2024.25.
- (ii) Members considered a draft revenue budget for Faringdon Information Centre of -£623 for RECOMMENDATION to Full Council for 2025.26.
- (iii) No capital expenditure was recommended for 2025.26.

c) Direct Council Expenditure

- (i) Members NOTED a financial report 2024.25.
- (ii) Members considered a draft revenue budget for Direct Council of £14,648 for RECOMMENDATION to Full Council for 2025.26.
- (iii) No capital expenditure was recommended for 2025.26.

d) Facilities Committee

- (i) Members NOTED a financial report 2024.25.
- (ii) Members considered a draft revenue budget for Facilities totalling £52,181 for RECOMMENDATION to Full Council for 2025.26.
- (iii) Members considered and RECOMMENDED capital expenditure of £54,707 for 2025.26.

e) Community & Partnerships Committee

- (i) Members NOTED a financial report 2024.25.
- (ii) Members considered a draft revenue budget for Community & Partnerships totalling £10,673 for RECOMMENDATION to Full Council for 2025.26.
- (iii) No capital expenditure was recommended for 2025.26.

11/1/25 Precept/Budget Request

Members considered the precept/budget for RECOMMENDATION to Full Council.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr. Leniec, SECONDED by Cllr. Castle and RESOLVED that a total DRAFT precept request of £579,233 be RECOMMENDED for consideration at the next Full Council meeting. This constitutes an increase as follows:

Annual increase for band D = £6.79

Weekly increase = 13p (4.26%)

Band D total £166.22

12/1/25 To receive full summary including notification of balances

Members received and NOTED a full summary including notification of balances.

13/1/25 Faringdon Town Council Risk Assessment 2024.25

Members approved a Risk Assessment covering internal controls and governance matters, agreeing that in clause 51 “Manager and Town Clerk carry out periodic checks” should be changed to “quarterly checks”.

14/1/25 Internal Interim Audit 2024.25

Members NOTED the Interim Audit report. Clerk is to check whether admin only access is available with the bank and add items raised to the Risk Assessment.

15/1/25 Financial Regulations

Members considered and PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to adopt the updated NALC Financial Regulations.

In order to complete the meeting business, it was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders as the length of the meeting had exceeded 2 hours.

16/1/25 Harassment and Bullying Policy

Members considered and PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the policy. A Risk Assessment will be worked on and considered at a future meeting.

17/1/25 Agenda Items

Members considered items for the next agenda. It was felt that discussions regarding projects and Earmarked Reserves would be beneficial. The Clerk suggested this could be done informally initially.

Meeting closed at: 9.15pm