



Morecambe Town Council

Morecambe Town Hall,
Marine Road
Morecambe
Lancashire
LA4 5AF

www.morecambe.gov.uk

4th October 2024

To: Members of Morecambe Town Council Finance and Governance Committee - Cllr Brett Cooper (Chairman), Cllr Clark Kent, Cllr Martin Bottoms, Cllr Geoff Knight, Cllr Lee Bradbury, Cllr Joanne Ainscough, Cllr John Goodrich, Cllr David Whitaker, Cllr Jim Pilling

Dear Councillor,

Dated this 4th day of October 2024, you are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Morecambe Town Council's Finance and Governance Committee to be held at 18:00 on the tenth day of October 2024.

The meeting will be held in Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road East, Morecambe, LA4 5AF to transact business on the agenda.

Your sincerely,

Mr L Trevaskis

Proper Officer

Agenda

- 1) Apologies - to receive apologies for absence.
- 2) Declarations of Interests - to note declarations of members' interests.
- 3) Minutes - to consider the minutes of the last meeting.
- 4) Public Participation - to adjourn the meeting for a period of public discussion.
- 5) Quarter 2 Finances
To review and accept 2024/25 Quarter 2 account summary and bank reconciliation.
- 6) Payment Testing
To comply with its Terms of Reference, the Finance Committee must satisfy itself that it is monitoring the Council's overall compliance with its Finance Regulations to ensure the sound and open governance of financial matters and actions taken in the name of the Council. In line with this ongoing scrutiny, officers invited two members to undertake sample testing for Q2 - checking bank details on invoices correspond to processed payments, and that all transactions have followed the correct authorisation process for approval by full council or a duly delegated officer or committee. All payments within the sample (approximately 10% of all transactions within the period) have been checked by two signatories (JT and/or LT and Cllr J Pilling.)

The payments in the tested sample are: 140, 143, 144, 145, 151, 157, 158, 159, 177, 180, 190, 200, 212, 227, 233, 238, 244, 249, 258, 260
- 7) Payments Exceeding £500.00 - Q2
In order to comply with the Transparency Code, the Council is required to publish a list of payments exceeding £500.00, no less than quarterly. The Committee is asked to consider the list, which has been published on the authority's website for payments over £500.00 made during Q2 (01/07/2024 - 30/09/2024)
- 8) Asset Register Update
To accept the new asset register figure for Quarter 2.
- 9) Financial Regulations

To consider and approve the following amendments to the Financial Regulations.

6.17. Any Debit, Credit or Charge Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Proper Officer [and the RFO] ~~and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,000.00 £2,500.00 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.~~

Note: the use of a credit card is simply a payment method, with individual upper limit thresholds and delegations already approved by the Council for officers. Some flexibility is required, as certain suppliers only accept payments via card rather than bank transfer. It is recommended that no upper limit be set on the card itself, as it serves merely as a tool to complete payments to suppliers where costs have already been approved or delegated. This ensures payments can be made within practical timeframes, supporting the efficient operational delivery of services.

10) Budget Survey

To consider the proposed budget survey prior to distribution. It is hoped this survey will assist in the shaping of next year's budget (FY 2025/26).

11) Reclaiming VAT

In recent years HMRC has decided not to permit the Council to reclaim VAT on council expenditure incurred by employees on behalf of the organisation (where only a card payment facility has been available). While this sum has been low (£526.16), it still goes against the principles that local authorities should not be charged VAT, it also doesn't align to NALC's Legal Topic Notice 32 (Section 49) on the same. It is recommended that the Council submits a formal complaint to HMRC to investigate this matter further.

12) Future Financial Research

To note the report presented and how Morecambe Town Council's current precept compares to similar sized authorities across England.

13) Exclusion of the Press and Public

(Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Section 1)

The Council is recommended to pass the following recommendation in relation to the following items:

“That, in accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.”

14) Future-Proofing our Finances

To receive a presentation from officers regarding long-term financial sustainability to assist in future budget considerations for FY 2025/26 and beyond.