



## Morecambe Town Council

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Proper Officer: Mr Luke Trevaskis

### **Minutes of Finance and Governance Committee Meeting of Morecambe Town Council held at Morecambe Town Hall at 6.00pm on the tenth day of October 2024**

**Present:** Cllrs B Cooper (Chair), J Ainscough, M Bottoms, J Goodrich, D Whitaker, G Knight

**In attendance:** Luke Trevaskis, Joel Turner, Peter Fisher, Helen Freeborough

**Press:** None

**Public:** None

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 022 – Apologies**

Received from Cllrs J Pilling and L Bradbury

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 023 – Declarations of Interests**

Cllrs J Ainscough, M Bottoms and B Cooper declared an interest as a Councillor of Lancaster City Council.

Cllr D Whittaker declared an interest as an employee of Lancashire County Council.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 024 – Minutes**

The minutes of the last Finance Committee meeting were approved and signed by the Committee Chairperson Cllr B Cooper.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 025 – Public participation**

None

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 026 – Quarter 2 Finances**

Members were asked to review and accept 2024/25 Quarter 2 account summary and bank reconciliation. The Committee accepted the financial update.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 027 – Payment Testing**

In order 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 payments - checking bank details on invoices correspond to processed payments and ensuring that all transactions have

followed the correct authorisation process for approval by full council or a duly delegated officer or committee.

All payments with 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.

Members accepted the payment testing.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 028 – 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 that quarterly.

The Committee was asked to consider the list, which has been published on the authority's website to payments over £500.00 made during Q2 (01/07/2024 - 30/09/2024).

Members accepted the list.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 029 – Asset register update**

Members accepted the new asset register figure for Quarter 2.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 030 – Financial Regulations**

The Committee was asked 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.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 031 – Budget Survey**

Members were asked to consider the proposed budget survey prior to distribution. Following discussion, it was agreed to delegate the budget survey to officers.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 032 – 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. Whilst this has been a low sum it goes against the principles that local authorities should not be charged VAT. It is recommended that the Council submits a formal complaint to HMRC to investigate this matter further.

Committee approved that the Council submit a formal complaint.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 033 – Future Financial Research**

Finance Officer presented a report to Members about how Morecambe Town Council's current present compares to similar sized authorities across England.

Members noted the report.

#### **Minute FG2024/25 - 034 – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

The committee passed 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 of the proceedings'.

#### **Minute 2024/25 - 035 – Future Proofing Finances**

Members received a presentation from Finance Officer regarding long term sustainability to assist in future budget considerations for FY 2025/26 and beyond.

Finance Officer was asked to carry out further financial modelling using different scenarios.

Cllr B Cooper thanked the Finance Officer for the modelling work undertaken.