

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE,  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD ON  
TUESDAY 19th JULY 2022, STARTING AT 6.00 P.M.

Councillors:

D Crawford, C Harvey, J James (Chair), B Tullett (Vice Chair), R Brame

Officers:

A Yorke (Deputy Town Clerk and Finance Officer), K Robinson (Committee Clerk)

**MINUTES**

208/22	<u>DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS</u> None.
209/22	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> None.
210/22	<u>MINUTES</u> <b>RESOLVED: The minutes of the committee meeting held on 24th May 2022 which were received by Full Council on 31st May 2022, are a true record and signed/initialled by the Chairman.</b>
211/22	<u>CONTRACTS UPDATE</u> The schedule of contracts which had been circulated with the agenda was noted.
212/22	<u>COMMITTEE FINANCIAL DECISIONS</u> The schedule of Financial Decisions which had been circulated with the agenda was noted with an amendment of the date headings March 22 and April 22.
213/22	<u>APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS</u> The Chair asked Committee Members to receive and approve the attached listings of payments made since the last meeting. These listings had been circulated to Committee Members and after a discussion:  Councillor B Tullett proposed and Councillor C Harvey seconded:  <b>RESOLVED: The Council approves the making of the payments in Attachment A-E in the supporting papers that were distributed with the Agenda.</b>
214/22	<u>FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2022</u> The Financial Report for the three months ended 30th June 2022 which was circulated with the agenda was discussed. The Chair and Finance Officer explained the reason why income was lower than budgeted; Cemetery income to be investigated due to adverse variances; Allotment overspend due to pest control; Venues and Communications overspend due to no stocktaking meaning that unsold stock still included in purchases.

	<p>Councillor D Crawford proposed and Councillor C Harvey seconded:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: The Committee noted the Financial Report for the three months ended 30th June 2022.</b></p>
215/22	<p><u>FINANCIAL AND BUDGET TIMETABLES</u></p> <p>The Chair asked the Committee to review the Financial Timetable for the 2022/23 financial year as well as the Budget Timetable for preparing the 2023/24 budget and after a discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. VAT issues that still need to be resolved,</li> <li>2. The need to develop a long-term budgeting framework.</li> </ol> <p>Councillor R Brame proposed and Councillor B Tullett seconded:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: The Council approves the Financial and Budget Timetables that were distributed with the Agenda.</b></p>
216/22	<p><u>TRANSPARENCY CODE CHECKLIST</u></p> <p>The Chair asked the Committee to review the 2021/22 Transparency Code Checklist which had been circulated with the Agenda, plus review and approve the 2022/23 checklist.</p> <p>The Finance Officer reported that the 2021/22 checklist, despite indicating that there were outstanding tasks, should show that all tasks were completed.</p> <p>Councillor C Harvey proposed and Councillor D Crawford seconded:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: The Committee noted the progress in completing the 2021/22 checklist and approves the 2022/23 checklist that was distributed with the Agenda.</b></p>
217/22	<p><u>REQUEST BY COMMERCIAL TENANT TO TERMINATE TENANCY BY MUTUAL CONSENT</u></p> <p>The Chair and Finance Officer reported on a request by a commercial tenant to surrender their lease by mutual consent. After discussing the merits of this approach to the Council and the tenant, the Committee recommended that the following principles be adopted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The tenant pays all outstanding rental up to the date of early termination of the lease agreement.</li> <li>2. A termination date be mutually agreed that will be outside the tenancy agreement but will prevent the tenant accumulating additional rent.</li> <li>3. The premises are left in a good condition by the tenant.</li> </ol> <p>Councillor R Brame proposed and Councillor B Tullett seconded:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The Committee consider the request to terminate the existing tenancy by mutual consent on the conditions set out above.</b></li> <li>2. <b>The Committee accepts the principles that have been adopted for terminating the lease by mutual consent.</b></li> </ol>

	<p><b>3. The Committee request that a draft mutual consent policy framework be tabled at the next Finance Committee for review and approval. This policy would then be recommended to Council.</b></p>
218/22	<p><u>UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE FINANCE OFFICER'S PROJECTS</u>  The Finance Officer reported on the document that was circulated with the Agenda informing the Committee on the status of the various projects that were included.</p> <p>The update was noted.</p>
219/22	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE</u>  The Finance Officer reported that the external auditor is reviewing the Council's Annual Governance And Accountability Return (AGAR).</p> <p>Update was noted.</p>
220/22	<p><u>COMMITTEE OFFICERS UPDATE</u>  The Finance Officer reported that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interviews are imminent for the vacant Finance Officer role.</li> <li>2. The AGAR and the Exercising of Public Rights had been put on the Council's noticeboard. The website had also been updated with the AGAR and other documents required by legislation.</li> </ol> <p>The update was noted.</p>
221/22	<p><u>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</u>  The Chair requested that the promotion of the Exercising of Public Rights be added to the Council's social media platforms.</p> <p><b>Action Point:</b> The Finance Officer to orchestrate.</p>

Chairman