

Clerk's report and item information for Full Council meeting 7th January 2025

Clerk's report:

1. **IT Update** – All council files will go over to the cloud the weekend of the 17th January 2025.
2. **Castle Point Local Plan** – The Clerk has replied to Castle Point and has written to Southend City Council.

Item 9. Committee Membership

Cllr P Barber has put forward the following motion:

When electing Committee memberships annually in May, every Councillor shall be given the opportunity to serve on two committees before any Councillor be allowed to join a third or fourth committee. This principal must also be followed when adding new Committee members throughout the year.

Reason for Motion:

This is intended to ensure that Councillors have every opportunity to get involved at Committee level (if they want to).

Item 10. Political Party Membership

Cllr P Barber has put forward the following motion:

Motion: Councillors will voluntarily supply details to the Town Clerk of any Political Party memberships by 31st January 2025. The LTC website Councillor profile pages will be updated to show any memberships to a Political Party. Any new Councillor in the future will be asked to volunteer this information when joining the Council.

When forming Committee memberships annually in May, weight shall be given (where possible) to ensuring the Committees have a balanced representation from the various Political Parties and Independents serving as Councillors. This principal must also be followed when adding new Committee members throughout the year.

Reason for Motion:-

Ideally the working of a Town/Parish council should be free from Party Politics but, unfortunately, we have all seen in the press this past year that this is not the case in Leigh-on-Sea. It is also reasonable to believe that Councillors will not leave their Party values at the door when debating and voting on council business. Therefore, for transparency to all residents, I am proposing that ALL Councillors should volunteer to declare any Political Party memberships to the Town Clerk by 31st January 2025 and the LTC website updated accordingly. This will help us ensure the make-up of the Committees is not dominated by one Political Party and have a balanced representation.

The motion will only work if we have 100% buy-in from ALL Councillors

Item 11. Financial Regulations

The Clerk has circulated the recommended Financial Regulations from the Finance and Governance Committee for adoption. However, the Clerk would like to ask the Council to consider upping the limit for the Finance and Governance Committee spend to £10,000. The reason for this is as Full Council does not meet every month and if we have invoices that are above the committee limit of £5,000, we would have to convene an extra ordinary meeting of the Full Council every time we need something paid that is over £5,000. The Inland Revenue (staff tax and NI) and the staff pension invoices can be over the limit of £5,000.

Item 12 AGAR 2023/24

The Clerk has circulated the already submitted Part 1 of the AGAR for discussion and decision as to whether to amend it and resubmit to the external auditors.

Item 13 Internal Auditors Report

Although this report went to the Finance and Governance Committee in August 2024 it should have come to Full Council. Therefore, the Clerk has recirculated for the Council to note and agree.

Item 14 Bank Mandate

At the Finance and Governance Committee meeting on 3rd December 2024 it was agreed to add the following Cllrs: P Barber, Dr D Bowry, C Mulroney and C Willoughby. The Clerk asks for Full Council to agree and ratify this.

Item 15 Risk Assessment Schedule

The Clerk has circulated the slightly amended schedule for ratification. Things in yellow have been slightly changed.

Item 16 Asset Register

The Clerk has circulated the updated asset register for ratification.

Item 17 Financial Transactions

The Clerk has circulated the income and expenditure reports along with the invoices for December 2024 for agreement to be paid.

Item 18. Financial Review

The Clerk has circulated the bank reconciliations for November 2024 for the Council to agree. The December bank reconciliations unfortunately will not be available for this month.

The Clerk has circulated the budget comparison report showing the budget that was set, income received, and expenditure up to the end of December.

Item 19 Direct Debits

The Council has the following direct debits set up and the Clerk asks for Council to agree the continuation of these:

- Anglia Water Business (Wave) - water company – 4 accounts and amounts vary monthly.
- Biffa Waste Service - rubbish collection – 2 accounts £169.30 and £381.60 Monthly
- BT - Phones and Internet – 3 accounts – amounts vary monthly
- CF Corp Finance – Photocopier lease - £692.20 Quarterly
- Francotyp – Franking machine – 2 accounts - £50 lease quarterly and varying amounts for postage as and when.
- Global Payments – card machine costs – varies monthly
- HMRC – VAT – varies and can be quarterly.
- ICO (Information Commission's Office) - £35 – yearly
- Southend City Council - £193 – rates
- SSE Energy Supply – Electric last payment will be in January 2025 amounts varied throughout the year
- Wessex Leasing – Handdryers £138.53 – Quarterly
- British Gas – Gas at community Centre and Electric at Strand Wharf and Skate Park – monthly and varies
- E.ON next – electric at Community Centre – monthly varies

There are the monthly salary payments which are paid on or near the 24th of each month.

The Clerk would also like to set up a direct debit for ICE which is the IT support and emails.

The Clerk asks the Council to re approve the above direct debits and agree with the setting up of a direct debit for ICE.

Item 20 CIL

At the Community and Culture committee meeting on 10th December 2024 it was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the whole cost for the library gardens is paid for by CIL. This would amount to £8,000 instead of £5,000.

The Clerk has also circulated the report sent to SCC showing the Council's outstanding CIL monies.

The Clerk asks the Council to agree the additional spending and approve the outstanding amount of CIL.

Item 21 Paddling Pool

The Clerk has not received the information from the city council and therefore this item will be deferred to a later date.