



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

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Chair: Cllr Bernard Arscott | **Vice Chair:** Cllr Carole Mulroney

Town Clerk: Clare Milligan



Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee Meeting

The Committee met at 8.31pm on Tuesday 4th February 2025 in Room 7, Leigh Community Centre, 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-On- Sea, Essex, SS9 1SP.

Chair: Councillor B Arscott

Present: Councillors J Lloyd, C Mulroney, J Suttling and C Willoughby.

In attendance: The Town Clerk – Clare Milligan, Cllrs P Barber, K Evans and P Wexham and 5 members of the public.

FG001-25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and agreed for Cllr Dr D Bowry. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr C Mulroney and agreed unanimously. It was noted that Cllr C Watt was absent.

FG002-25 Declarations of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registrable Non-Pecuniary Interests.

FG003-25 Public Participation

One member of the public spoke regarding item 13 looking at Safeguarding. They made suggestions for the Council policy on safeguarding and advised of certain changes in the law. The member of public was thanked for her input and advised it will all be taken into consideration when the safeguarding item was being discussed.

FG004-25 Minutes

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on the 3rd December 2024 be approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr C Willoughby and agreed unanimously.

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on the 10th December 2024 be approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr C Mulroney and agreed unanimously.

FG005-25 Clerk's Report

- 1) AGAR – The Clerk advised that 3 of the 4 residents who had made an objection to the external auditor had withdrawn their objections. The one remaining objector had withdrawn some points but kept in 3 which the Clerk had replied to the external auditor about, ccing the resident, to give explanations. The Clerk is now awaiting a reply.
- 2) Emergency Community Fund policy will be brought to a later meeting.
- 3) Tender for Christmas Lights – The Clerk had met with Cllrs C Mulroney and P Gilson. The tender will be written and brought to Full Council for agreement.
- 4) IT Hardware investigation – The tracing of the wiring etc had taken place and the new wiring will be installed later in February.
- 5) Gas and Electricity contracts – These have been agreed and commenced.
- 6) Draft Budget – The budget was taken to Full Council on 7th January 2025 and agreed.

The Clerk has sent the paperwork to Southend City Council.

FG006-25 Financial Transactions

The Clerk went through the income and expenditure for the month of January 2025. All payments for January 2025 were approved. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr C Willoughby and agreed unanimously.

It was agreed to sign up for the Gold support with Edge for the end of year process at a cost of £420. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr J Suttling and agreed unanimously.

The quote for Biffa to remove the old cooker and two fridges at a cost of £453.50 was agreed. Proposed by Cllr C Willoughby, seconded by Cllr J Suttling and agreed unanimously.

FG007-25 Financial Review

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliations for December 2024 and January 2025 and both were agreed. Proposed by Cllr C Willoughby, seconded by Cllr J Suttling and agreed unanimously.

The Clerk had circulated the budget comparison report showing what had been spent, the income in that month along with a running balance for the year and what percentage was still left in the budget. The report was agreed. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr C Willoughby and agreed unanimously. Cllr C Willoughby asked whether the Clerk was concerned about the income for the year. The Clerk had no concerns as the comparison from last year's income to the current income was comparable. The Library line was commented on and the Clerk advised it was the cost for the Mosaic Garden. The Clerk was asked if the Council was being charged for the hire of the hall and shown in the budget. The Clerk advised it was not being charged as she felt this would be false accounting and she felt uncomfortable in doing so. The Clerk will be taking this under advisement from the Internal Auditor. The Clerk was asked about some overspends and asked if she could produce a report on them. The Clerk agreed that she would undertake this for the budget year 2025/26. The license line was questioned and the Clerk advised this was due to the PPR/PLS license for the premises and also Christmas lighting.

The Clerk had circulated a cashflow report and advised that this will continue for the new financial year. The Clerk was asked to separate the CCLA amount from the bank amounts going forward.

FG008-25 Earmarked Reserves

The Clerk had circulated the up-to-date earmarked reserves report showing what would be in reserves at the start of the financial year 2025/26. The report was agreed. Proposed by Cllr C Willoughby, seconded by Cllr C Mulroney and agreed unanimously.

FG009-25 Fees for Hall Hire and External Facilities hire for 2025/26

This item was withdrawn as it was agreed to increase the fees in August 2024.

FG010-25 Café and Bar Income

This item was deferred as the information was not yet available. The Clerk will set up a working group meeting.

FG011-25 Grants

The Clerk had circulated the grant application received from Leigh-on-Sea SEND Families Support Group for £265. It was agreed to accept the grant application for the sum of £265 with the Clerk adding to that amount the hall hire fee increase. Proposed by Cllr C Willoughby, seconded by Cllr B Arscott and agreed unanimously.

FG012-25 Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England Consultation.

The committee worked through all the questions on the consultation looking at Cllr C Willoughby's suggested replies. All answers were agreed, and the Clerk will now submit the replies. Proposed by Cllr C Willoughby, seconded by Cllr C Mulroney and agreed unanimously.

FG013-25 Policies

The Clerk had circulated the paper on safeguarding from Cllr C Willoughby. An in-depth discussion took place, and various suggestions were put forward. It was agreed that this was a far larger project than could be agreed at the meeting and it was agreed that Cllr C Willoughby would get together a couple of Councillors and a member of the public who had safeguarding knowledge to look at this further to be brought back to the Full Council meeting in March 2025.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.46pm.

Chair:.....

Date:.....