

FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held at Folkestone Town Council Offices, Town Hall, 1-2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone on Thursday, 17 October 2024 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Belinda Walker, Jackie Meade, Connor McConville (Chair), Adrian Lockwood, Bridget Chapman, Laura Davison, Christine Dickinson, Kieran Leigh and Peter Gane.

ABSENT: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Toni Brenchley – Town Clerk
Roland Domingo – Finance Officer

1690. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillors Nicola Keen and Tim Prater.

RESOLVED: To approve apologies from Councillor Nicola Keen and Tim Prater.

Proposed: Councillor Jackie Meade

Seconded: Councillor Kieran Leigh

Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab:0

1691. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

1692. MINUTES

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 22 August 2024 and authorised the Chair to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 22 August 2024 be signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Christine Dickinson

Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade

Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1693. WARD GRANTS

The Committee was asked to approve the Ward Grants list provided.

Organisation Name	Project Name	Requested Amount	Supported by
Beton Collectiv CIC	Poets' Corner Multilingual Poetathon at Kollektiv	£150.00	Cllr A Akuffo Kelly
Folkestone Festivals	Summer Season of Bands at the Bandstand 2025	£250.00	Cllr T Prater

Folkestone Festivals	Multi-Cultural Weekend 2025	£250.00	Cllr A Akuffo Kelly
Folkestone Festivals	Summer Season of Bands at the Bandstand 2025	£250.00	Cllr Liz McShane
Touchbase Care	Touchbase Community Christmas Celebration	£350.00	Cllr A Akuffo Kelly
Touchbase Care	Touchbase Community Christmas Celebration	£300.00	Cllr L McGirr
Folkestone Festivals	Multi-Cultural Weekend 2025	£300.00	Cllr A Lockwood
Strange Cargo	Thirty Rugs	£500.00	Cllr Jane Darling

RESOLVED: To award the organisations with the ward grant amounts listed.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
 Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade
 Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1694. WARD GRANT BALANCES

The Committee noted the Ward Grant balances as at 17 October 2024.

1695. RESOLUTIONS FROM COMMITTEES

The Committee received and noted the resolutions of the Climate & Environment Committee on the 8 October 2024, minute numbers 117, 118, 120. The Committee also received and noted the resolution from the Community Services Committee held on the 15 October 2024, minute number 1289.

1696. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Committee considered the schedule of payments made between 1 August 2024 to 30 September 2024.

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for the period between 1 August 2024 to 30 September 2024 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
 Seconded: Councillor Connor McConville
 Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1697. SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS

The Committee considered the schedule of receipts made between 1 August 2024 to 30 September 2024.

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Receipts for the period 1 August 2024 to 30 September 2024 be accepted.

Proposed: Councillor Jackie Meade
 Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane
 Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1698. BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2024/25

The statement of the Town Council's provisional expenditure/income and earmarked reserves up to the 30 September 2024 was received by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Budget Monitoring Statement to 30 September 2024 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor Laura Davison
Seconded: Councillor Bridget Chapman
Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1699. BANK RECONCILIATION

The bank reconciliation statement as at 30 September 2024 was noted by the Committee.

1700. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Committee was asked to reappoint the current internal auditor, Mulberry & Co and enter into a three-year contract from 2024/25 to conduct the mid-term and year-end accounts.

RESOLVED: To appoint Mulberry & Co as the internal auditor to audit the mid-term and year-end accounts for a three-year fixed contract commencing in the 2024/25 financial year.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade
Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1701. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24

For the Committee's information, the external auditor, Forvis Mazars LLP, has approved the Folkestone Town Council Accounts and Annual Return for 2023/24 without qualification. Public notification is attached and has been posted on the Town Council's website.

RESOLVED: The Committee recorded its thanks to the Finance Officer for the successful completion of the Accounts and Annual Return for 2023/24.

Proposed: Councillor Jackie Meade
Seconded: Councillor Bridget Chapman
Voting: F: 9, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1702. POTENTIAL GROWTH ITEMS/CORPORATE PLAN

The Committee was asked to consider proposals for possible growth items and non-recurring revenue expenditure for projects and initiatives in the next financial year. Following the FTC Corporate Plan Public Consultation, members were also asked to consider the comments and areas highlighted from the consultation.

There were no proposals for growth items put forward at this stage.

Town Clerk to prepare a report for 12 December F&GP meeting to include further details for each growth item proposed by Community Services and

Climate and Environment Committees. All Councillors be asked to submit any other growth items, along with detailed information on their proposal, for inclusion in this report.

Councillor Laura Davison left the meeting at this juncture.

1703. BUDGET 2025/26

The Committee noted the draft 2025/26 annual budget, growth items from committees.

1704. TOWN HALL BUILDING MAINTENANCE UPDATE

The Town Clerk provided an update to the Committee on the progress of the Town Hall building repairs.

External Fire Escape

Planning permission has been granted, Martello Building Consultancy are now in the process of preparing a technical package including costs.

Flagpole

One quote received for £4,886 but does not include the entrance hatch to access the roof. Town Clerk to draft a report to explore the options and costings.

Lightning Protection

Two quotes have been received for the supply and installation of the lightning conductor, both quotes including multiple costs 'subject to'. The Town Clerk recommended to seek technical advice and possibly going into tendering process to ensure requirements for the Town Hall is stated and providing an agreed cost.

Radon

Town Clerk informed the Committee that the Council has entered into three-year contract with Aurora Health Physics Services Ltd, to undertake annual site visits, providing RPA advice and compliance report for a three-year fixed term. The Town Clerk also covered the cost per year.

Front Window Display

Vandalism was caused to the front window display of the Town Hall causing window cracks. The damage has been reported to the Police. three quotes for the repairs and the Town Clerk recommended not to go through the insurance claim to avoid impact on the increase of insurance premiums.

Resolved: Town Clerk to seek technical advice for the requirements for the supply and installation of the lightning conductor and creation of a specification for tenders.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane

Seconded: Councillor Christine Dickinson

Voting: F: 8, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

Resolved: To approve the Town Clerk’s decision (under Financial Regulation 4.5, extreme risk to the delivery of Council services) to instruct Aurora Health Physics Services Ltd to undertake an annual site visit, providing RPA advice and compliance report for a three-year fixed term, first-year cost of £8,971, second and third year at £4,997 plus 5% price increase per year.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade
Voting: F: 8, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

Resolved: That quote of £1,085 plus VAT be accepted from AW Glass & Glazing for the repairs of the front window display.

Proposed: Councillor Kieran Leigh
Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade
Voting: F: 8, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1705. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

12 December 2024 at 7.00pm

The meeting concluded at 7:44pm

Chair.....

Date.....