

## SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Finance Full Council** meeting on **Monday 24 April 2023** at **1.00pm** in the Council Chamber.

Present: Mayor Cllr S Bell (in the Chair),  
Cllr Anscombe, Cllr Darby, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Eves, Cllr Pilcher, Cllr Scott, Cllr Skinner

Town Clerk: R Bishop

Deputy Clerk: H Carrier

Finance Officer: H Duggan

Member of public: None

### 1. **Apologies received for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Matthews, Cllr Bensley, Cllr Beech and Cllr Houghton  
Cllr Skinner arrived at 1.05pm

### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Anscombe declared an interest in Item 9.1 as a trustee and unpaid volunteer of Iceni Partnership

#### **Public Open Forum**

No public in attendance

### 3. **Urgent Items at the Chairman's Discretion**

No items highlighted in advance

### 4. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Finance Full Council meeting held on Monday 23 January 2023 and Wednesday 8 February 2023 were agreed as accurate records of the meetings and were signed by the Chairman.

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Monday 27 February 2023 were amended to show the correct time of the meeting and were then agreed as accurate records of the meetings and were then signed by the Chairman.

### 5. **Outstanding actions agreed at the last Finance meeting.**

There were no outstanding actions to be discussed from the last Finance meeting.

### 6. **To consider Financial Report, issues for consideration and updates from the RFO:**

#### 6.1 **Accounts to 31 March 2023**

##### (a) **Income & Expenditure analysis 2022-23**

It was noted the full year-end accounts and report would be presented by the Town Clerk at the Full Council meeting on 17 May 2023, after the Internal Audit was completed for the year.

**After discussion it was resolved the Town Clerk would produce a detailed report of all costings in relation to the Barn Complex, from purchase up to date, to allow the newly elected council a clear picture of the costs that had been paid so far.**

(b) Bank Reconciliation 31 March 2023

It was noted that the newly elected council would benefit from training and understanding of the council finances.

6.2 Service Level Agreement (SLA) 2023-2026 with Breckland Council for landscaping new planters in the Town Centre (HAZ Project).

It was noted the £3,300 fee for the three years of maintenance had already been received prior to 31 March 2023. It was envisaged the planters would be in situ for much longer than three years, after which the Town Council would take on the cost of maintenance from that point on.

**It was resolved to sign the proposed Service Level Agreement 2023-2026 with Breckland Council for Landscaping new planters in the Town Centre (HAZ Project).**

6.3 Gas supply quotes for Town Hall, deferred from December 2022 meeting.

**It was resolved to sign on again with E-On Next for 12 months.**

**It was resolved to undertake a review of Town Hall costings with a view to making potential savings where possible.**

6.4 NCC grass cutting SLA; previously dealt with by the HR Committee, request received via five Councillors to revisit.

**After discussion it was resolved to subcontract the NCC grass cutting programme for the summer season 2023 and to then organise a full tender for the wider grass cutting programme from October 2023.**

6.5 Tree maintenance, following works

**It was resolved to accept and progress the quote for the essential works identified in the latest tree report considered by Assets & Open Spaces Committee.**

6.6 Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas re-Deputy Mayor.

**It was resolved the Town Clerk would acknowledge the request and note the Councils interest advising more information would be needed before any commitment from the Council could be proposed.**

6.7 2022-23 External Audit from PKF Littlejohn.

The statutory dates, circulated prior to the meeting, were noted for information. The Town Clerk confirmed everything would be prepared for the May Full Council meeting to enable Councillors to sign off on the accounts.

6.8 Internal Audit visit by Auditing Solutions Ltd.

It was noted the final visit from Auditing Solution Ltd is 3 May 2023; the internal audit report needs to be signed off to complete the AGAR annual return; before the Town Council can sign everything else off at the May council meeting.

6.9 Barn Working Group following site meeting on Monday 17 April 2023.

The Deputy Clerk provided an update on the meeting and estimated quotes received for the Refurbishment Project as follows:

Lift – a review of the lift was required however there was an initial cost for a service visit.

**It was resolved to accept the quote from Stannah to make a service visit, at a cost of £490, to provide a report on the potential to repair with costings involved.**

Electricity – the emergency lighting and electrical issues were highlighted. An estimated quote had been received for £6,000.

Fire – the highlighted concerns centred around fire door replacement with an estimated quote in the region of £25,000.

It was strongly advised, as part of the Fire Assessment Review, that only a qualified company could put in new fire doors; this was not something the council could do on their own.

**After discussion it was resolved to firm up the estimated quotes and await a review of the Heads of Terms, at the May Council meeting, before a decision could be made to proceed further.**

## **7. Review of General Policies**

### 7.1 Policy (F) 001 – 009 Financial Risk Assessments

The Town Clerk advised a review of the policy was planned for the meeting however recent personal circumstances had stopped this happening.

Noted that the policies were previously up for review in July 2022 and were also highlighted as outstanding by the Internal Auditor in January 2023, they were also agreed temporarily in January 2023 at the budget meeting.

**It was resolved to review the policies in full at the May council meeting.**

### 7.2 Financial Regulations

As per item 7.1.

## **8. Next meeting**

Mon 24 July 2023

## **9. ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT (PUBLIC BODIES) 1960:**

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS following the exclusion of the public and press.

### 9.1 Assembly Rooms Insurance Claim and works in progress onsite.

An update was provided on the progress of the works onsite. It was noted that once completed the council would then look to review the past work and contractors. A further investigation is on-going for financial recovery from a third party by DAC Beachcroft.

The Mayor asked that thanks be given to Iceni Partnership for all their work in progressing this so far.

### 9.2 War Memorial

The Town Clerk provided an update on the legal issues regarding the conveying of the area surrounding the war memorial to the Town Council from Breckland Council and advised there would be legal fees due shortly of approximately £1300.

Meeting closed at 2.30pm

Chairman.....