



# Finance and Governance Committee

**PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND**

**Summons to attend meeting on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 5:15pm  
at the Council Offices, Market Street Carnforth**

- 19077 To receive apologies for absence
- 19078 To receive declarations of interest
- 19079 To consider Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- 19080 To consider items of urgent business
- 19081 To adjourn the meeting for a period of public discussion
- 19082 To consider Community Benefit Fund and other applications for funding/support:
  - a) Carnforth & District Bowling Club – additional information
  - b) Gummers Howe Community Centre – defibrillator
- 19083 To consider Payments list (to follow)
- 19084 To consider budget planning arrangements 2020/2021
- 19085 To consider update on Carnforth Civic Hall survey
- 19086 To consider draft Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (previously circulated)
- 19087 To consider updates on Committee activities (review of Action Plan updates)

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Robert Bailey". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

**Town Clerk**

**04 October 2019**

**28 Wilson Grove, Heysham, Morecambe, LA3 2PQ**

**Tel: 07846 256 006**

**Email: [clerk@carnforhtowncouncil.org](mailto:clerk@carnforhtowncouncil.org)**



# Finance and Governance Committee

## Minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Present:** Councillors Gardner (Chair), Branyan, Jones and Parker

**In attendance:** Bob Bailey, Town Clerk

19077 **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllrs Bromilow and Grisenthwaite

19078 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:** There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation for items on the Agenda.

19079 **Minutes of previous meeting:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2019 be approved.

19080 **Urgent Business:**

- a) **Civic Hall Options appraisal:** Cllr Grisenthwaite had provided a written report updating Members on the latest position. Following Town Council approval John Coward Associates had been formally appointed to undertake the architects survey and options appraisal. It was reported that the tender received was within the allocated budget. The architects have, however, recommended that the Town Council also commissions a specialist Mechanical & Electrical (M&E) survey of the Civic Hall's heating system (£750) and a set of detailed drawings and plans (£750). If approved this would mean additional funding of £900.

It was pointed out that the M&E survey will identify the practicalities of installing alternative forms of heating in the Civic Hall with a view to heating it more efficiently and economically. The preparation of the detailed drawings will be important for any subsequent bids for external funding to refurbish and update the Civic Hall.

Members discussed the cost and benefits of the additional pieces of work and it was then **RESOLVED** that it be recommended that the Town Council approves an additional funding of £900 from the capital expenditure budget.

- b) **Remembrance Day:** There was a discussion on the arrangements for traffic management of this years Remembrance Day parade should this be no longer be provided by the Police. It was noted that a representative from Lancashire Constabulary would be attending the next meeting of the Town Council when there will be an opportunity to debate the matter further.
- c) **Bus shelters:** Cllr Gardner commented that action needed to be taken to move forward on the acquisition of bus shelter(s) that had been budgeted for.

19081 **Public discussion:** No members of the public were present.

19082 **Accessibility Regulations 2018:** The Town Clerk reported on the requirement to meet the new accessibility requirements for public sector bodies as set out in the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#).



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Members were advised that the Town Council will be required to publish a statement on its compliance and/or actions to be taken to ensure it meets the regulations.

Cllr Branyan informed Members that he had considered the requirements and had carried out an initial assessment of the Town Council's website for compliance. It was reported that this essentially means making sure that the website can be used by as many people as possible, including those with:

- impaired vision;
- motor difficulties
- cognitive impairments or learning disabilities, and;
- deafness or impaired hearing

Common problems include websites that cannot be navigated using a keyboard, inaccessible PDF forms that cannot be read out on screen readers, and poor colour contrast that makes text difficult to read for visually impaired people.

It was noted that the Town Council's website had been designed with modern software and that the content and design is clear and simple enough to enable most people to use it without needing to make any adaptations.

What needed to be considered further is the extent to which the website supports those who do need to adapt things using specialist software such as screen reader, braille display or screen magnifier for those with impaired vision or a speech recognition software for those motor difficulties.

After some discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council's requirement to meet the new accessibility requirements for public sector bodies be noted and that further consideration given as to what actions, if any, are needed to ensure compliance with the regulations with a view to a statement being published in due course.

19083 **Community Benefit Fund:** Members considered an application that had been received from Carnforth & District Bowling Club. Questions were raised about funding already in place and the total cost of the project to replace the pavilion and provide disabled toilets. It was noted that the application did not specify an amount requested from the Community Benefit Fund.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Town Council be recommended to 'pledge' a sum of £500 subject to further information being obtained on the funding secured and still being sought.

19084 **External Audit Review:** The Town Clerk informed Members that the Government appointed external auditors had completed their review of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and had issued their report and signed certificate.

The review concluded that the Council's financial management and governance arrangements are '*in accordance with Proper Practices*' and that there are '*no matters that give cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met*'.



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The external auditors commented that the level of Reserves held should be considered when setting future precepts and it was acknowledged that the Town Council had already taken action to address this through the adoption of a Reserves Policy.

Members were advised that following the conclusion of the audit, the following actions are now required:

- Prepare a 'Notice of conclusion of audit' detailing the rights of inspection, in line with statutory requirements;
- Publish the 'Notice' along with the certified AGAR before 30<sup>th</sup> September, including publication on the Town Council's website;
- Keep copies of the AGAR available for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum;
- Ensure that the AGAR is available for public access for a period of not less than 5 years from the date of publication

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Town Council be asked to note the satisfactory conclusion of the audit for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and actions now needed to comply with the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015.

19085 **Standing Orders & Financial Regulations:** Deferred to the October meeting of the committee

19086 **Payments List:** The Town Clerk presented Members with the Payments List for September.

Members ask questions about the decision of the Asset Management Committee to purchase portable appliance testing equipment. Cllr Branyan advised that it will be used internally to test Town Council equipment, negating the cost of this being provided by external suppliers. Members were assured that the Civic Hall Manager had successfully concluded training to enable him to undertake this testing.

Members also asked questions about the income being generated by the drinks machine at the Civic Hall compared to cost. **ACTION:** Town Clerk to present a report to a meeting of the Finance & Governance Committee

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Town Council be recommended to approve all payments.

19087 **Committee updates & activities:** Members reviewed the tasks and activities on the *Action Plan* relating to this committee providing updates on progress and any issues that needed to be addressed. It was accepted that this was an efficient way of monitoring agreed actions and it was then **RESOLVED** that the *Action Plan* be updated and reported to the Town Council at the next meeting.

**The meeting closed at 6:40pm**



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