

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee  
held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 19 June 2024**

**Present** Councillor G Ward (Chair)  
Councillors S Abbott, J Brook, A Brown and T Ellis.

**In Attendance** Councillor A White  
Mrs K Gilby (Finance and Planning Officer)  
D Martin (Chief Executive)

**F&A 01/24 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors H Belcher OBE, R Hopkinson and A Jones.

**F&A 02/24 Public Question Time and Petitions**

Representatives of three organisations attended the meeting in person and asked the Committee to support their grant applications.

**F&A 03/24 Declarations of Interest**

To receive any Declaration(s) of Interest under Corsham Town Council's Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

There were none.

**F&A 04/24 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Finance and Administration Committee meeting held on 17 April 2024**

There were no matters arising.

**F&A 05/24 Grant Applications (Second Round)**

Three grant applications were considered.

**Resolved**

That Company for Christmas be awarded £500 towards meals and gifts for local residents who do not see friends or family on Christmas Day.

That Corsham Twinning Association be awarded £750 towards the twinning trip from Jargeau to Corsham, including presentation dinner, sporting event and sightseeing trip.

That 1<sup>st</sup> Neston and Box Scout Group be awarded £750 from earmarked reserves towards the purchase of new climbing and camping equipment.

**F&A 06/24 Detailed Income and Expenditure Accounts (including the Town Hall)**

The Committee reviewed and noted the Income and Expenditure Accounts, Financial Report and the breakdown of Earmarked Reserves.

**F&A 07/24 ICT – Infrastructure Refresh Proposal**

Much of the Town Council's IT infrastructure, originally supplied in 2017, was at the end of its useful life and beginning to become unreliable. The Council's IT provider, Excalibur, had suggested a solution to ensure our IT was fit for purpose for the next five to seven years. This involved replacing the onsite server and cloud server, Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) solution, switches and backup, along with the software. Laptops and PCs were usually replaced as and when needed with typically one or two being replaced annually from within existing budgets.

Excalibur had quoted just under £12,000+VAT for the new equipment, licences and installation. This could be funded from Reserves.

**Resolved**

- i) To delegate the renewal of the IT infrastructure to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair of the Committee.
- ii) That an earmarked reserve be established in future years for IT equipment replacement.

**F&A 08/24 Review of Financial Regulations**

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) had recently published an updated Model Financial Regulations template. The previous template was produced in 2019 and the Regulations adopted by the Town Council in January 2020. The Chief Executive/RFO and Head of Finance and Administration had adapted the new Model template to suit the Town Council's needs.

**Resolved**

- i) To recommend to the Full Council that the revised Financial Regulations be approved.
- ii) To remind Councillors at the appropriate Council meeting that any Councillor with Council Tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept.

## **F&A 09/24 Review of Banking Arrangements**

One of the Corsham Climate Action Plan actions was to divest investments in fossil fuels by moving away from the poorer performing banks. Environmental considerations were also set out in the Council's Investment Strategy and Policy adopted in March 2024. Officers had been exploring suitable alternatives to Santander and Lloyds banks which did not score particularly well regarding fossil fuel investments. Santander was the worst of the two. CCLA Investment Management, where the majority of the Town Council's money was held, had a good track record for ethical investment.

Hundreds of local councils were now using Unity Trust Bank (<https://www.unity.co.uk/>) which scored well on the Green Bank website (<https://bank.green/>). The bank had good security, liquidity and yield. It was therefore recommended that the Town Council sets up an account with Unity Trust Bank and closes its Santander account during 2024/25. Once an account with Unity Trust Bank was up and running, it was recommended that Officers explore changing the current account from Lloyds Bank to Unity Trust Bank. This would be more complex due to the number of transactions, suppliers and signatories etc.

### **Resolved**

- i) To approve the move from Santander to Unity Trust Bank in 2024/25.
- ii) That Officers continue to explore moving the Council's current account from Lloyds Bank.

## **F&A 10/24 Draft Neurodiversity Policy**

As part of the Town Council's commitment to providing an inclusive working environment and the Strategic Plan priority of community wellbeing, a neurodiversity policy had been drafted for consideration. The policy was fully supported.

### **Resolved**

That the Draft Neurodiversity Policy be approved.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and closed at 8.03pm. There were four members of the public present at the start of the meeting and none at the end.

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CHAIR

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DATE