

## Finance Committee

14 February 2023

5.00pm Town Council Offices, Kingsway, Bishop Auckland

**Present:** Cllr D Wilson (Chair), Cllr M Harker, Cllr K Lawson, Cllr A Zair and Cllr S Zair

**Also Present:** Sarah Harris, Town Clerk and Vicki Booth Deputy Town Clerk

**FC031/22 Apologies for absence** – Were received from Cllr J Blackburn he had prior work commitments.

**FC032/22 Declarations of interest** – No Declarations were made from Councillors. The Clerk made a declaration that her Children are involved in the organisation of which the application in item 6j refers to.

**Resolved:** that the Clerks involvement was noted.

**FC033/22 Minutes of the meetings** of 14 December 2022, 03 January 2023 and 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 were presented.

**Resolved:** That the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meetings. The Chair then signed the minutes.

**FC034/22 Matters Arising from the minutes.** The clerk updated the members that from the 03 January minutes DCC had confirmed that no further Community Wifi Payment would be sought.

That following the 25<sup>th</sup> January that the Chair and Clerk had met with the new Auditor buy way of introduction and everything will be in place for the audit process.

**Resolved:** that the updates were noted, and the Members were pleased that the £1533 saving was being achieved from the Community WiFi.

**FC033/22 Public Participation** - To hear from any members of the public subject to Public Participation Policy<sup>1</sup>. - No members of the public were present

**FC034/22 -Report of the Town Clerk –**

**FC034.1/22 -Account Balances were presented:**

Lloyds Current account	£2583.79
Lloyds – deposit account	£57,297.39
Darlington Building Society	£80,054.98
Nationwide	£85,029.85
Santander	£85,000.00
<u>North East Credit Union</u>	<u>£85,085.00</u>
<u>Total in Banks</u>	<u>£395,051.01</u>

**Resolved:** that the balances be noted.

<sup>1</sup> The policy is available on the website at <https://bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk/council/constitution-and-policies/>

**FC034.2/22 -Q3 reports – Year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022** The Clerk presented three different styles of report. One included payments, one included payments and transfers and one include A summary. (see file copy) the Clerk went through the notes on the summary report.

**Resolved:** that the members noted the reports, and requested that in the future just the summary report be presented, with an overall summary sheet for the Cost Centres, and the previous year's spends. A version of this to the end of Feb is to be brought to the next meeting.

**FC034.3/22 -Bank Reconciliation** – the Bank Reconciliations were presented.

**Resolved:** that the members noted the Bank reconciliations and the Chair signed them.

**FC034.4/22 -Additional Bank Accounts and Signatories update** – the Clerk advised that the Addition of Cllr A Zair to the Bank Accounts has been slow progress, with forms only just being received from Darlington Building Society and NE Credit Union. This should be resolved by the next meeting.

The NatWest account which had previously agreed had increased in to 1.61% AER, the Clerk was in the process of setting this up.

The Clerk advised that another account or savings module is needed due to the amount in accounts, as the precept is due to arrive in April and this will need to go between two accounts. A discussion on alternative options was had.

**Resolved:** That Members noted the challenge in adding signatories.  
That they recommend to full council that an additional signatory be identified.  
That the NatWest account be opened.  
That another option be brought to full council for a second account.

**FC034.5/22 -Asset Register** The Clerk advised that the asset register had been updated to reflect the purchase of the Members Tablets and some additional storage furniture (see file copy). The Register had listed an old digital camera, which no longer works so the Clerk Sought disposal.

**Resolved:** that the Members noted that changes and agreed the removal of the digital camera, and its appropriate disposal. That they also noted the disposal as previously agreed of the desk top machines.

**FC034.6/22 -Car Park Update and potential Public Works Loan Board** The Clerk verbally updated that the Car Park was out for Tender. one contractor had requested a site visit and there had been some questions via the portal. The evaluation process is due to take place next week. A PWLB could be applied for but until we are aware of total costs this couldn't be pursued, this would also need to be a full council decision.

**Resolved:** that the Chair of Finance and Chair of Accommodation be involved in the Tender Evaluation process. That the Clerk add the PWLB and Car park to the next Council meeting.

**FC034.7/22 -Allotment Association Payments 2022-23** – A report (see file) was presented which detailed that a historic arrangement in the past had the Council make a 5% payment of all allotment rent paid per site to any associations on that site for their support. Whilst the council were reviewing the association arrangements it was felt as a gesture of good will that the historic arrangement be honoured until the formal agreements are decided upon.

**Resolved:** that the 5% payment of £109.85, £248.85 and £249.06 be paid over, with the note that the amounts would be reviewed as part of the association agreement reviews that the Allotment and Environment Committee are developing.

**FC034.8/22 -Authorisation of Cheques and payments** – Payments were presented (see appendix1).

**Resolved:** that the payments be approved and made.

#### **FC034.9/22 -Contracts and Quotes**

**FC034.9i/22 -Festive Lights Update** – An update on the potential to add additional festive lights to Cockton Hill road as an extension of the current lights (as it borders Henknowle and Cockton Hill wards) and Woodhouse Close was presented (see file copy) whilst this has been planned for Christmas 2022 there had been delays with the sourcing of costs etc which meant it hadn't been viable.

**Resolved:** that the cost of in excess of £23,000 plus VAT felt excessive to members in the current climate.

That the Clerk is to see confirmation that if the Council were to purchase the price and gift them to DCC with no further on costs and report back to the Committee, like had been done with the previous town ones, as this may make it feel more financially viable.

**FC034.9ii/22 -Photocopier** – new quotations for a replacement photocopier were provided to members as the current copier is getting old and regularly breaking down (see copy of File).

**Resolved:** that the option of a refurbished machine at a cost of approx. £198.79 per quarter under Quotation A be taken, as this will make over £200 per year in savings. The Clerk is tasked with getting the machine into place as soon as possible.

**FC034.9iii/22 -Kingsway Emergency Lighting & LED Replacement Lighting** – Three quotations were presented to ensure that the Emergency lighting in Kingsway is up to standard, as currently they are still below standard which is a health and safety risk. (see copy of file for quotes)

**Resolved:** that the option of Quotation A be taken at a cost of £2993.05 plus VAT as this will ensure health and safety but also make savings in the long term with LED lights being more energy efficient. The Clerk is tasked with getting the works done as quickly as possible.

**FC034.9iv/22 -Kingsway upgrade of intruder alarm and Smoke Detection System/Alarm** Three quotations were presented as the Intruder alarm and original fire panel are now obsolete. The fire panel does not have attached detectors just a manual sounder. Therefore a risk to health and safety. (see copy of file for quotes)

**Resolved:** that the option of Quotation B for both items be taken at a cost of £1055.00 plus VAT for the intruder alarm. £6642.10 plus VAT for the Fire detection system for L1 protection. The Clerk is tasked with getting the works done as quickly as possible.

**FC034.9v/22 -Telephone and Broadband** – a report was presented that detailed how the costs for Broadband and telephone costs had been reduced from £3,318 plus calls inc vat to £1710.72 inclusive of calls and vat. This was for a 12 month contract.

**Resolved:** that members noted the significant saving, and thanked the Clerk. They agreed to enter into the new contract. However, they asked what the saving would be if the contract was to be a three year deal, and to report back to Full Council for agreement as a larger saving could possibly be made.

**FC034.10/22 -Community Fund Donations and Funding requests** - a request to provide a grant of £500 towards the cost of new first team pitch rugby posts for Bishop Auckland Rugby club had been received. The Members view the club a good community asset which is well used.

**Resolved:** That the grant be awarded and only paid inline with the policy which is upon receipt of invoices for the completed works.

**FC034.11/22 -Correspondence** - Two items were presented:

**FC034.11i/22 Local Government Pension Scheme** – the Council had been notified of a 0.5% increase in employers contribution for LGPS. (See copy of correspondence in the file).

**FC034.11ii/22 S137 - SECTION 137 EXPENDITURE: LIMIT FOR 2023-2024** - **The council has been notified that the appropriate sum for the purpose of section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for parish and town councils in England for 2023-24 is £9.93.**

This is the amount as a result from increasing the amount of £8.82 for 2022-2023 by the percentage increase in the retail index between September 2021 and September 2022, in accordance with Schedule 12B to the 1972 Act. This represents a 12.5% increase over last year's figure. This is to be taken into account for any section 137 expenditure for 23/24. This is based on per head of electorate, for the following years it has been:

May 2016	Mar 2018	Jan 2020	Feb-21	Mar-22
12,226	12,223	12,220	12,136	11,900

The March 2023 figures have been requested, but based upon March 2022 data the section 137 amount would be £118,762.

**Resolved:** that both items of correspondence were noted.

**Appendix 1 - Monthly Payments & Payments for Authorisation – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Ref	Supplier	Detail	Net	VAT	Gross	Notes
<b>Allotments (power to provide allotments Smallholding and Allotments Act 1908 S 23, 26 and 42)</b>						
2252	A. Breeze Pest Control Ltd.	6 Months Pest Control at Tindale Crescent and Woodhouse Close Allotments	£750.00	£150.00	£900.00	
DC	Post Office Ltd.	Special Delivery by 1pm Letter - Allotment Document Pack & 1x 2nd Class Stamp	£9.63		£9.63	
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Mill Race/West Mills 09/10/22-09/01/23	£101.77		£101.77	
<b>Events – Remembrance and Christmas Town (LGA 1972 S 145 – Provision of entertainment of the arts including festivals and celebrations)</b>						
EP	Chris Dakers	Vocal Performances at Bishop Auckland Christmas Town, 18th and 20th December 2022	£400.00		£400.00	
2254	Durham County Council	Contribution towards Food Festival Schools Outreach 2022	£2,000.00		£2,000.00	
<b>Mayoral Activities (LGA 1972 S 145 – Provision of entertainment of the arts including festivals and celebrations)</b>						
EP	Amazon Business	4x Raffle Ticket Books	£5.68	£1.12	£6.80	
EP	Amazon Business	LED Bottle Lights with Cork (20 Pack)	£9.98	£2.00	£11.98	
<b>Member/Staff Training (Power – Local Government Act 1972 )</b>						
2251	County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)	2x Essential Councillor Training Session and 1x Chairmanship Training Session	£40.00		£40.00	Councillor Training - Councillors Eliot, Siddle and Balmer-Howieson Chairmanship Training - Councillor Eliot
2251	County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)	3x Allotment Training Sessions	£90.00		£90.00	Training for Town Clerk, Admin Assistant and Councillor Eliot

**Ongoing Contracts and Obligations – (Power – Local Government Act 1972 )**

DD	Grenke Leasing Ltd.	Photocopier Lease 01/01/23-31/03/23	£89.91	£17.98	£107.89	Council Financial Regulation 5.6 list of going contracts and obligations.
DD	EDF Energy	Skatepark: Electricity 01/12/22-31/12/22	£23.40	£1.17	£24.57	
DD	EDF Energy	Kingsway: Electricity 01/11/22-30/11/22	£104.66	£5.23	£109.89	
DD	EDF Energy	Skatepark: Electricity 01/01/23-31/01/23	£22.79	£1.14	£23.93	
DD	O2 (Telefonica Ltd.)	Mobile Phones 24/12/22-23/01/23	£71.01	£14.20	£85.21	
DD	O2 (Telefonica Ltd.)	Mobile Phones 24/01/23-23/02/23	£70.44	£14.09	£84.53	
EP	Vinovium Associates Ltd.	Kingsway: Keyholding Services - December 2022	£93.00	£18.60	£111.60	
EP	Evolve Group Ltd.	Kingsway: Telephone & Broadband - January 2023	£118.80	£23.76	£142.56	
EP	Corona Energy Retail 2 Limited	Kingsway: Gas December 2022 - January 2023	£582.62	£116.52	£699.14	
EP	Twinkle Cleaning Services	Office Cleaning (17.5hrs) - December 2022	£210.00		£210.00	
DC	HomeShred UK	Delivery of 10 Secure Paper Waste Bags (Additional order)	£22.49	£4.50	£26.99	
DC	HomeShred UK	Collection of 10 EcoShred Secure Paper Waste Bags	£62.49	£12.50	£74.99	
EP	Salaries, Superannuation	January 2023	£6,042.32		£6,042.32	
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Salaries	January 2023	£2,070.29		£2,070.29	
EP	D.C.C. Pension Scheme	January 2023	£1,941.53		£1,941.53	
EP	Members Allowances	January 2023	£393.31		£393.31	
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Members Allowance	January 2023	£83.60		£83.60	

EP	Anderson & Co. Accountancy & Taxation	Payroll Services: October - December 2022	£210.00	£42.00	£252.00	
2253	Total Business Group	Printing Costs: December 2022	£36.87	£7.37	£44.24	
2253	Total Business Group	Printing Costs: January 2023	£55.10	£11.02	£66.12	
2254	Durham County Council	Room Hire at Town Hall - What's Next: Bishop Auckland Regeneration Meeting, 16th January 2023	£157.50		£157.50	
EP	SLCC Enterprises	SLCC Membership Renewal 2023/24	£296.00		£296.00	
2255	Durham County Council	Small Society Lotteries Licence 04/02/23-03/02/24	£20.00		£20.00	Covered by the Gambling Act 2005 S88, 252
DD	Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)	GDPR/Data Protection Renewal 17/03/23-16/03/24	£35.00		£35.00	
<b>Furniture/Fixtures (Power: Public Health Act 1936)</b>						
DC	British Heart Foundation / BHF Shops Ltd.	Large Decorative Clock for Meeting Room	£15.00		£15.00	
EP	Amazon Business	2x Vinsetto 2 Tier Locking Storage Cabinets	£143.86	£28.78	£172.64	
DC	The Works Stores Ltd.	3x Magnetic White Boards (60cm x 40cm) and 2x A4 Document Cases	£19.17	£3.83	£23.00	
EP	Amazon Business	Yaheetech Heavy Duty Metal Shelving Unit	£79.57	£15.92	£95.49	
<b>Car park – (Power: Road traffic regulation Act 1984 S57 &amp; S59)</b>						
2255	Durham County Council	Design for Car Park Layout and 2. No Trial Holes to inform the Design	£4,750.00	£950.00	£5,700.00	
<b>Stationery (Power – Local Government Act 1972)</b>						
EP	Amazon Business	4x Boxes of A4 Copier Paper (5 Reams per Box)	£79.96	£16.00	£95.96	
EP	Amazon Business	Small Command Hooks with Adhesive Strips, White	£5.91	£1.18	£7.09	
EP	Amazon Business	Sticky Notes, Yellow (12 Pack)	£5.82	£1.17	£6.99	

EP	Amazon Business	Foolscap Folders, Manilla (50 Pack)	£10.82	£2.17	£12.99	
EP	Amazon Business	5 Star 2 Piece Filing Clip (50 Pack)	£5.41	£1.08	£6.49	
EP	Amazon Business	Pukka A4 Ring Binders, Black (10 Pack)	£17.49	£3.50	£20.99	
EP	Amazon Business	Q-Connect A4 Lever Arch Files, Black (10 Pack)	£17.70	£3.54	£21.24	
EP	Amazon Business	10x A4 Subject Dividers, 5 Parts	£4.20	£0.80	£5.00	
EP	Amazon Business	Foolscap Filing Cabinet Suspension Folders, Green (50 Pack)	£21.41	£4.28	£25.69	
<b>Other Consumables (Power – LGA 1972 S144)</b>						
EP	Amazon Business	Sirius Centrefeed 2 Ply Blue Roll (6 Pack)	£8.53	£1.71	£10.24	
EP	Amazon Business	Safe Hands Non-fragranced Liquid Soap, 5 Litre	£20.82	£4.17	£24.99	
EP	Amazon Business	McK Lords Concentrated Washing Up Liquid, 5 Litre	£7.49	£1.50	£8.99	
EP	Amazon Business	2x Scott Essential V-Fold Paper Hand Towels (12 Clips)	£56.68	£11.34	£68.02	
EP	Amazon Business	2x White Toilet Rolls (72 Pack)	£50.00	£10.00	£60.00	
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>£21,540.03</b>	<b>£1,504.17</b>	<b>£23,044.20</b>	