

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting for Bishop Auckland Town Council

Held on 28 September 2021 at 5.00pm,

At BATC Offices, Kingsway Bishop Auckland.

In attendance: Cllrs D Wilson (Chair), K Eliot, M Siddle, L Brownson and L Chappell,

Also Present: Sarah Harris, Town Clerk

FC.12/21 **Apologies for absence** –_apologies for absence were received from Cllr J Blackburn.

FC.13/21 No Declarations of interest were made.

FC.14/21 No public were in attendance

FC.15/21 **Report of Town Clerk -**

FC.15.1/21 Town Council Insurance 2021-22

The third year and final year of the Council's Insurance deal was due to renew on the 20 September. However due to changes in insurance and general premium increases the existing provider were unable to honour the deal. The original deal was agreed before the Kingsway building was purchased, but it did include cover. the broker had been trying to find alternatives to enable them to honour the deal however, therefore the Clerk sought alternative quotations from other providers. All providers recommended having the Kingsway building valued to ensure adequate cover is in place.

Due to the timescales only two quotes were received. Both significantly higher than the previous deal. Insurance across the sector has increased substantially in the last 12 months.

The previous deal was circa £1000 per year for public liability, fidelity and employers liability plus buildings and contents. Due to timescales that Chair of Finance and the Mayor took the decision of which provider to go with, to ensure that the council remained insured. The new provider has a very comprehensive cover, including contractor cover, and key personnel cover, which the previous policy did not. The new cover costs £2,855.52 per annum and again is a three year deal to maximise cost savings.

Resolved: That Members agreed the right decision had been made by the Chair of Finance and the Mayor and they felt satisfied that appropriate levels of insurance are now in place.

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That it would be recommended to Full Council that a valuation on the Kingsway premises should be undertaken to ensure that the insurance is to the correct level.

FC.15.2/21 Budget Reports

The new reports on budget monitoring from the new finance system were presented to Members. Both the Monthly and Q1 and Q2 reports were presented.

Resolved: That the monthly and Q1 & Q2 budget reports were accepted and that the new format of reports are easy to interpret.

FC.16/21 Audit 2020-21

FC.16.1/21 External Audit Completion – The Certified audit for 2020-21 has been returned by the External Auditor Mazars to the Council on the 7 September 2021. The audit raised some areas for minor improvement.

- *The internal control objective (F), 'petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for', was ticked 'yes' by the internal auditor when no petty cash was held by the Council. The box should have been ticked 'not covered' or N/A and an explanation provided if no petty cash held. In future, the Council should ensure the annual return is accurate and complete.*

Resolved: That to mitigate this happening again the future, the audit return would be triple checked and consideration of whom to appoint as internal auditor to be considered at full council taking this issue onboard.

- *The Council discussed the budget monitoring reports in detail including reasons for significant variances and the projected outturn but the minutes were too brief to demonstrate this consideration and the report itself did not show the forecast outturn. In future, the Council should ensure that the minutes fully record the discussion of budget monitoring reports or the reports are expanded to include commentary on significant variances and forecast outturn. Although the Council provided explanations for all significant variances the reasons given for unusual income or expenditure in a particular year often did not include values so it was not possible to determine if the variance was sufficiently explained from the information submitted for audit. In future, all explanations provided on the variance analysis should be quantified.*

Resolved: That the identified governance issues has been resolved as the monthly Finance Committee meetings have been reinstated now that the regulations allow face to face meetings again. The committee are receiving monthly and quarterly reports. At the June Council meeting it was agreed that the minutes of the meetings for 2020-21 be amended to include the payment lists, this has been done, and is now standard practice for each meeting. The payments list have also been updated to include a notes section to specify any additional information.

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Resolved: To accept the Completed AGAR section 1, 2 and 3.

FC.16.2/21 Internal Audit recommendations progress update. The internal audit recommendation action plan was presented to Members, with updates on actions.

Resolved: Members noted the report and action plan and agreed to have another update in a couple of months.

FC17/21 Authorisation of Cheques and Payments for 13.07.2021-27.09.2021 were presented for authorisation. The two following payments were also considered.

Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Amount £	Authorised By	Notes
Cheque	Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway	Corporate Sponsorship for 2021/22	£50.00		To discuss and agree to annual sponsorship
EP	Wave	Water: Woodhouse Close 10/06/21 - 09/09/21	£1,001.14		Usage is much higher than normal, bill will be queried.
Total:			£1,051.14		

Resolved: That the payments be authorised and payment issued, as per the payments listed in Appendix one.

That members requested investigation into the cost of water at woodhouse close, as this was much higher, and information provided at the next meeting on the outcome of the discussions.

That Corporate membership for 2021-22 for Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway was agreed.

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Appendix one – Monthly Payments and Payments for authorisation 13.07.2021 – 27.09.2021

Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Amount £	Authorised By	Notes
2097	Evolve Group Ltd.	Kingsway: Telephone & Broadband - July 2021	£218.29	By Council for Financial Regulation No 5.6	Charge for 2 FTTC Broadband lines, are both to be utilised going forward? Charged @ £55 p/m
2097	Evolve Group Ltd.	Kingsway: Telephone & Broadband - August 2021	£218.29		Charge for 2 FTTC Broadband lines, are both to be utilised going forward? Charged @ £55 p/m
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DD	Telefonica UK Ltd. (O2 / Ariel Direct)	Mobile Phones 24/08/21 - 23/09/21	£83.95		
2103	Corona Energy	Kingsway: Gas July 2021 - August 2021	£49.28		
DD	British Gas	Electricity: Skate Park 22/07/21 - 22/08/21	£8.15		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Broken Banks 10/06/21-09/08/21	£92.16		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Edge Hill 01/06/21 - 31/08/21	£40.68		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Tindale Crescent 10/06/21-09/09/21	£123.04		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Pollards 10/06/21-09/09/21	£236.29		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Kingsway 16/06/21 – 15/09/21	£55.06		
EP	Salaries, Superannuation	August 2021	£4,924.86		
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Salaries	August 2021	£927.58		
EP	D.C.C. Pension Scheme	August 2021	£1,586.31		
EP	Members Allowances	August 2021	£373.34		
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Members Allowance	August 2021	£29.40		
EP	Twinkle Cleaning Services	Kingsway: Cleaning 7th, 13th 21st and 27th August 2021 - 3 Hour Sessions	£168.00		
DD	Grenke Leasing Ltd.	Photocopier Lease 01/10/21-31/12/21	£107.98		
DD	O2 (Telefonica Ltd.)	Mobile Phones 24/09/21-23/10/21	£85.87		
DD	British Gas	Electricity: Skate Park 22/08/21-22/09/22	£9.06		
2119	Corona Energy Retail 2 Limited	Kingsway: Gas August 2021 – September 2021	£47.23	By Council for Financial Regulation No 5.6	
EP	Salaries, Superannuation	September 2021	£3,451.48		
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Salaries	September 2021	£1,087.62		
EP	D.C.C. Pension Scheme	September 2021	£1,092.85		
EP	Members Allowances	September 2021	£373.77		
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Members Allowance	September 2021	£29.60		
DD	British Gas	Electricity: Skate Park 22/07/21 - 22/08/21	£8.15		
DD	Public Works Loan Board	Repayment 01/10/21 - 31/03/22	£4,151.01		
2059	Durham County Council	1x Office 365 Subscription - 1 Year	£185.30		Queried with DCC - Should this be for 4 licences or included with our IT System Support SLA (see below). Paid as this was in the Final Reminder stage.
DC	ASDA	Biscuits, Coffee, Sugar and Squash - NHS Day	£111.02		
EP	Amazon Business	17" Laptop Bag	£25.99		
2095	National Chrysanthemum Society	UK Society Affiliation and 2x Certificate of Merits	£26.00		For horticulture show
2096	Astral Fire and Security Ltd.	Fee for Fire Risk Assessment (Kingsway)	£430.80		

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2098	South Durham Enterprise Agency	Contracted Support Arrangements - July 2021	£1,052.94		
EP	Post Office Ltd.	24x 1st Class Stamps, 50x 2nd Class Stamps	£53.40		
EP	Vinovium Associates Ltd.	Kingsway: Key-holding Services - July 2021	£111.60		Overdue and paid electronically
2099	County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)	2x Internal Controls and Year End Accounts Training Sessions	£120.00		
2100	Industry Logic Ltd. (Mainteam)	Asbestos Removal - Pollards Allotment	£1,008.00		
DC	Screwfix Direct	10M Ethernet Cable (Printer)	£5.69		
DC	Wilko	AA Batteries, Picture Hooks and Gorilla Glue	£23.60		
2101	Durham County Council	Contribution towards Town Hall Summer Programme 2021	£2,000.00		
2102	Durham County Council	Web Hosting and Support 01/04/21 - 31/03/22	£747.56		
2104	Total Business Group	Printing Costs: August 2021	£12.00		
2105	Vinovium Associates Ltd.	Kingsway: Key-holding Services - August 2021	£111.60		
2106	Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre	Community Fund Grant - Repairs to van	£344.24		
2107	Furniture@Work Ltd.	6x Grey Oak Tables for Meeting Room	£1,492.56		
2108	Cash	Prize Money and Judging Fees for Horticultural Show 2021	£1,315.00		£1095 cash Prizes £210 Judges, Photographer, Tractor Display etc. £10 Float
2109	Mazars LLP	External Audit of 2020/21 Accounts	£720.00		
EP	Amazon Business	Private Parking Sign - Carpark	£2.19		
DC	Home Bargains - TJ Morris Ltd.	6x 36" Garden Scarecrow - Horticultural Show 2021	£10.14		For the horticulture show
2110	County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)	Good Councillor Guides 11 @ £3 per copy 33.00 Good Employer Guides 11 @ £3 per copy £33.00 Transparency guides 11 @ £3 per copy £33.00	£99.00		For the new term of office packs
2111	Durham County Council	IT System Support SLA & Antivirus Service 01/04/21 - 31/03/22	£760.51		Queried with DCC Asked for breakdown of what this SLA includes.
2112	Total Business Group	Outstanding invoices from March 2021	£175.01		Queried if this is the case, as these are from 6 months ago. Invoices hadn't been received before now at the Council.
2113	Parkinsons Removals	Assembly of Office Furniture	150.00		Agreed by Chair of Finance and Chair of Accommodation
2114	Furniture@Work Ltd.	4x4 charcoal conference chairs	£470.88		
EP	Fire Parts	6 Fire Extinguishers and 3 floor stands	£493.50		Electronic Payment Requested - this missed the July List and is overdue
2115	Cre8tive Graphics	Town Council Polo Shirts for Horticultural Show 2021	£25.20		
2116	Came and Company – Hiscox	Town Council Insurance 21/09/21-20/09/22	£2,855.52		For premium renewal on 00:01hrs on 21 st sept – see TC report.
2117	Total Business Group	Printing Costs: September 2021	£28.56		
2118	Total Business Group	Photocopier Relocated to Reception	£108.00		Agreed by Chair of Finance and Chair of Accommodation
2120	Parkinson's Removals & House Clearance	Assemble Office Furniture for Meeting Room and relocate existing Office Desks	£150.00		
2121	Durham County Council	HR Advice and Guidance Services: May - August 2021	£840.00		
2122	Jeff Dobson - Marquee Hire Specialist	65x 6ft Trestle Tables for Horticultural Show 2021	£305.40		
2123	The Durham Dales Event Services Ltd.	Event Support and Setup for Horticultural Show 2021	£468.00		
Total:			£36,636.80		

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