

**MINUTES of the FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE meeting held at
Felixstowe Town Hall on Wednesday 23 October 2019 at 7.30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr M Richardson (Vice-Chairman) Cllr D Savage
 Cllr S Bird Cllr A Smith

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
 Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)

279. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

280. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from **Cllr N Barber, Cllr M Deacon, Cllr S Gallant, Cllr S Wiles and Cllr K Williams.**

281. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as a Member of Suffolk Coastal District Council)
Cllr S Bird	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as a Member of Suffolk County Council)

As no Pecuniary declarations were made, there were no requests for dispensation.

282. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee Meeting held on 17 July 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

283. BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

Committee received the budget monitoring report to 30 September 2019. A report of any variance to budget estimates for the period greater than 10% or £500 was considered.

RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report to 30 September 2019 be approved, with no other action required at this time.

284. QUARTERLY BANK RECONCILIATION

Cllr D Savage, as the Council's nominated Quarterly Bank Reconciliation Signatory (*Min# 15 2019/20 refers*), gave verbal confirmation that the reconciliation between the bank statement and Omega accounts had been carried out and signed to confirm the amounts agree.

It was RESOLVED to note that the quarterly bank reconciliation between for the period 1 April – 30 September 2019 had been carried out by Cllr D Savage.

285. INTERNAL AUDIT – INTERIM REPORT

Committee noted the recommendations from the Internal Auditor's Interim report and were pleased to note that the recommendations regarding the reconciliation confirmation and the update of the website had been resolved.

Members agreed that it would be appropriate to appoint an independent trustee to the Mayor of Felixstowe Charity Fund to avoid the situation whereby all trustees were from the Town Council.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the report of the Internal Auditor and actions taken be noted; and,**
- ii. an independent trustee for the Mayor of Felixstowe Charity Fund be sought.**

286. COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Committee discussed the report on Community Presentations at Council meetings. Members agreed that it would be useful to receive a regular (up to 10 minute) presentation from community organisations the Council may not traditionally have had engagement with, providing they were relevant to Felixstowe. Invitations could be made in consultation with the Mayor. Members felt that subjects should be broad reaching, under the theme of "Focus on Felixstowe". There would be no question and answer sessions as part of the presentation. However, it was proposed that this be the first item on the agenda in order that the following item 'Public Question Time' could enable members of the public to ask any questions if so wished.

It was RESOLVED that a recommendation be made to Council to replace the practice of holding a Moment of Reflection prior to Council meetings with a regular first item on the agenda, Focus on Felixstowe, to allow regular (up to 10 minute) presentation from community organisations.

287. LGBCE CONSULTATION ON SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL DIVISIONS

Cllr A Smith gave a verbal presentation on the favoured option for the LGBCE consultation on Suffolk County Council divisions and provided a useful map and

breakdown of statistics. Committee thanked Cllr Smith for providing the synopsis and for the work involved in getting to this stage. Members requested that a summary report be provided to Council in November with the draft consultation submission as an appendix for approval.

It was RESOLVED that a draft response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's consultation on division arrangements for Suffolk County Council be brought to Council in November for formal approval.

288. BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2024

Members were asked to consider aspirations for Council for the four-year span 2020-2024 within the scope of the Finance and Governance Committee. The Clerk reminded members that two workshops had been arranged in November to discuss the four questions that formed the public consultation that was currently running, with a closing date of 31 October.

Members agreed the importance of ensuring that the staffing structure and required budget be in place to carry forward any aims and aspirations of the Business Plan for the next four years. Members would also welcome any opportunities to further the apprenticeship scheme. A member of the Climate Emergency Working Group reminded the Committee that any ideas should be in line with Council's aspiration to seek to be Carbon Neutral by 2030. The ideas will form part of the workshops and with results from the public consultation, Schools, and Youth Forum will be assessed and help form the business plan in readiness for a first draft to go back to Committee in December.

It was RESOLVED that in these aspirations be considered in the scope of the Finance & Governance Committee for the Business Plan 2020-24.

289. EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT CONSULTATION

Committee considered the report on the East Suffolk Council Tax Support Consultation.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk responds to the East Suffolk Council Tax Support consultation to confirm that Council was pleased to support the proposals, believing them to be a sensible approach to providing greater certainty to people claiming Universal Credit.

290. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP WORKSHOPS

Committee considered the report on the forthcoming Community Partnership Workshops.

It was RESOLVED to nominate Cllr M Richardson and Cllr A Smith as Felixstowe Town Council Representatives to attend the East Suffolk Council's Community Partnership Workshop on 7 November 2019

291. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Committee considered amended Financial Regulations based on the NALC (National Association of Local Councils) Model template, which were issued in August 2019.

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Following a discussion on the relevance of some of the Model regulations to Council's own audited and approved practices; for example the Model's rule governing whether cheques could be signed prior to formal meetings, it was agreed that the Regulations should be amended to reflect local practice, in compliance with statutory rules and guidance, and presented to Council for adoption in due course.

It was RESOLVED that a new set of Financial Regulations should be drafted, informed by the latest NALC Model and in accordance with assured local practice, and presented to Council for adoption in due course.

292. CHRISTMAS CAR PARKING

Committee considered the report on Christmas Car Parking and were pleased to note the offer from East Suffolk Council to suspend parking charges in its car parks for up to 8 hours. The car parks that would benefit the Town Centre would be Crescent Road, Highfield Road and Ranelagh Road car parks.

It was RESOLVED to request that East Suffolk Council suspend parking charges for 4 hours for the Christmas light switch on event on Saturday 30 November and for 4 hours on the day of the Ice Rink opening on Friday 20 December.

293. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.41pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 11 December 2019 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____