

Telephone: 01394 282086
Fax: 01394 285920
email: enquiries@felixstowe.gov.uk

9 am to 4 pm Mondays to Fridays



TOWN HALL
FELIXSTOWE
SUFFOLK
IP11 2AG

TO ALL TOWN COUNCILLORS

Cllr M Jepson (Mayor of Felixstowe)
Cllr S Harkin (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr D Aitchison
Cllr N Barber
Cllr S Bird
Cllr S Bennett
Cllr M Deacon
Cllr S Gallant

Cllr T Green
Cllr M Morris
Cllr G Newman
Cllr M Richardson
Cllr D Savage
Cllr A Smith
Cllr S Wiles
Cllr K Williams

You are hereby summoned to attend the **ORDINARY** meeting of the **FELIXSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL** to be held **ONLINE** on **Wednesday 10 June 2020** at **7.30pm**.

Public Attendance

Online meetings of the Town Council and its Committees are open to the press and public who are welcome to attend join via Zoom. Members of the public are invited to make representations or put questions to the Council during the public session.

To join the meeting please follow this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87878734022>

Alternatively, you may join via the meeting ID 878 7873 4022 or over the telephone by calling 0131 460 1196.

Our online meeting guidance can be found here: <https://www.felixstowe.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Remote-Meeting-Guidelines.pdf>

Council has a duty to pay due regard to preventing crime and disorder and to conserve biodiversity in its decision-making and Members are reminded to consider the Council's commitment to climate action.

Ash Tadjrishi
Town Clerk
5 June 2020

Moment of Reflection: Mr Graham Page, Felixstowe Citizens' Advice

A G E N D A

- 1. Public Question Time**
Up to 15 minutes is set aside to allow members of the public (up to one minute each) to make representations or put questions to the Council on any matter relating to the town of Felixstowe.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
To receive apologies for absence.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations from Members on matters in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.
- 4. Questions to the Mayor**
For the Mayor to respond to questions from Members, in accordance with Standing Order 25.
- 5. Confirmation of Council Minutes**
To confirm the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Wednesday 20 May 2020 as a true record. **(Pages 4-11)**
- 6. Mayor's Announcements**
To receive such communications as the Mayor may wish to lay before Council. **(Page 12)**
- 7. Minutes of Committee Meetings**
To receive and adopt the minutes of the following meetings:
 - a) Planning & Environment Committee 27 May 2020 **(Pages 13-17)**
 - b) Finance & Governance Committee 27 May 2020 **(Pages 18-21)**
- 8. Reports from Members appointed to Outside Bodies**
Members appointed to represent the Town Council on outside bodies who wish to present a report to Council are requested to provide a written report to the Clerk at least two days prior to the meeting.
- 9. Welcome to Inspector Soraya Francis**
To welcome and introduce Soraya Francis, South East Locality Acting Inspector.
- 10. Felixstowe Forward Report**
To consider the report of the Felixstowe Forward Change Director. **(Page 22 & Appendix A)**

- 11. Reopening High Streets Safely Fund**
To consider a draft action plan for Felixstowe developed in consultation with local businesses. **(Pages 23 & Appendix B)**
- 12. Internal Audit Report: Full Year 2019/20**
To receive the final report of the Internal Auditor for 2019/20 and consider any recommendations therein. **(Pages 24 & Appendix C)**
- 13. Annual Governance Statement and Annual Return 2019-20**
To approve the Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Annual Return for 2019-20, along with any supporting documents, and to authorise the Mayor to sign the return on behalf of the Town Council. **(Pages 25-30 & Appendix D)**
- 14. IT Systems and Support**
To consider the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee concerning the upgrading of Council's IT hardware and support in response to increased need and mobile working arrangements. **(Pages 31-32)**
- 15. Statement of Internal Control 2020/21**
To approve the Statement of Internal Control for the year ending 31 March 2021 as recommended by the of the Finance & Governance Committee and. **(Page 33 & Appendix E)**
- 16. Review of Internal Audit Effectiveness**
To consider the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee and review the effectiveness of Council internal audit arrangements. **(Pages 34-36)**
- 17. Accounts for Payment**
To confirm and approve the payments of accounts since the previous meeting as follows: *Note: schedules at Appendix F have been signed off electronically by two signatories in the interim and will be presented to again Council once physically signed.* **(Schedules attached at Appendix F)**

Date	Voucher Nos.	Total Payment
15/05/2020	46 – 64	£13,148.49
31/05/2020	65 - 83	£42,168.58
	TOTAL	£ 55,317.07

- 18. Closure**
To close proceedings and note that the next Ordinary Council Meeting will be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8 July 2020.

AGENDA ITEM 5: CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

MINUTES of the **ANNUAL COUNCIL** meeting held **ONLINE** on **Wednesday 20 May 2020** at **7pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Nick Barber (Retiring Mayor) Cllr S Harkin
Cllr Mark Jepson (Retiring Deputy Mayor) Cllr G Newman
Cllr D Aitchison Cllr M Morris
Cllr S Bennett Cllr M Richardson
Cllr S Bird Cllr D Savage
Cllr M Deacon Cllr A Smith
Cllr S Gallant Cllr S Wiles
Cllr T Green Cllr K Williams

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
Mrs L Monsen (Mayor's Secretary)
Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)
Mrs S Faversham (Business Services Officer)
Mrs S Morrison (Planning Administration Assistant)
Mr S Congi (Apprentice)

IN ATTENDANCE: Bürgermeisterin of Wesel, Ulrike Westkamp
Ms Helen Greengrass, Felixstowe Forward Change Director
29 Members of the Public.

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

The meeting was preceded with a moment of reflection delivered by Rev. Andrew Dotchin, St Johns Church, Felixstowe.

1. ELECTION OF MAYOR

Mayor, Cllr Nick Barber, in the chair.

It was proposed by Cllr Stuart Bird, seconded by Cllr Mick Richardson, that Cllr Mark Jepson be elected as Mayor of Felixstowe for the ensuing Municipal Year.

RESOLVED that Cllr Mark Jepson be elected Mayor of Felixstowe for the Municipal Year 2020-21.

Cllr Jepson was invested with the Mayor's Chain of Office and duly read out and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Mayor, Cllr Mark Jepson, in the chair.

Councillor Jepson thanked Cllrs Bird and Richardson for nominating him to the office of Mayor for 2020/21 and paid tribute to the outgoing Mayor, Cllr Nick Barber, for his year in office, particularly during the challenging time since the coronavirus pandemic. The Mayor then invited the Bürgermeisterin of Wesel, Ulrike Westkamp, who had also joined the meeting, to address the Council.

Frau Westkamp spoke of her affection for Felixstowe and thanked Cllr Barber for his support during his time as Mayor. Council received an update on the coronavirus situation in Wesel and the Mayor thanked Frau Westkamp for taking the time to join the meeting.

In his incoming announcement, the Mayor named his charities for the Municipal Year 2020-21 as the Felixstowe branch of Citizens' Advice and the Felixstowe Carnival Association.

In closing, the Mayor spoke of his optimism for the future and how the Council would be working closely with its community and local businesses to help to encourage people to safely visit the town and support the economy.

The Mayor installed Mrs Julie Jepson as Mayoress.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

It was proposed by Cllr Doreen Savage, seconded by Cllr Tracey Green, that Cllr Sharon Harkin be elected as Deputy Mayor for the ensuing Municipal Year.

RESOLVED that Cllr Sharon Harkin be elected Deputy Mayor for the ensuing Municipal Year 2020-21.

Addressing the Council, the Deputy Mayor thanked Cllrs Savage and Green for nominating her to the office and referred to the sense of pride in being elected as Deputy Mayor, pledging to support the Mayor during his term in office.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public asked if the Felixstowe to Bawdsey Ferry would be able to get any support in becoming operational again since the Government shutdown restrictions are lifting. Members advised that East Suffolk Council was in discussion with the ferry operator to explore various options to assist the service.

A member of the public asked when it would be possible for the Felixstowe Leisure Centre to be opened again. Members advised that the leisure centre would not be possible until Government restrictions were lifted, which was unlikely to happen before July at the earliest.

4. APOLOGIES

There were none.

5. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 6 May 2020 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

6. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the following meetings be received and, subject to their accuracy being confirmed by those committees, adopted:

a) Planning & Environment Committee 6 May 2020

7. ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

The Mayor directed Council to its Annual Report for 2019/20 which had been published and circulated prior to the meeting.

Members commented on the clarity and quality of the Report and recorded a vote of thanks to the staff for their work.

It was RESOLVED that the Annual Report for Felixstowe Town Council for the year 2019/20 be approved and adopted as received.

8. DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS 2020/21

It was RESOLVED that the powers delegated to the Town Clerk for 2020/21 be approved as presented in the report.

9. COUNCIL GOVERNANCE AND POLICY 2020/21

It was RESOLVED that the following governance documents be approved and adopted by Council, inclusive of all recommendations as presented in the report and appended to the Minute Book 2020-21:

- a) Terms of Reference**
- b) Standing Orders**
- c) Financial Regulations**
- d) Risk Management Policy & Risk Register**
- e) Complaints Procedure**
- f) Freedom of Information Publication Scheme**
- g) Community Engagement Strategy**

10. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

The Mayor referred Council to the schedule of proposed appointments to Council's Committees.

It was noted that the Mayor of Felixstowe was an ex-officio Member of all Committees with full voting rights if not otherwise formally appointed as a Councillor.

It was RESOLVED that appointments to Committees for the ensuing Municipal Year 2020-21 be made as follows:

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (9)

1. Cllr Mick Richardson (Chairman)
2. Cllr Tracey Green (Vice-Chairman)
3. Cllr Seamus Bennett
4. Cllr Sharon Harkin (*ex-officio as Chairman of Assets & Services Committee*)
5. Cllr Stuart Bird
6. Cllr Mike Deacon
7. Cllr Andy Smith
8. Cllr Steve Wiles (*ex-officio as Chairman of Civic & Community Committee*)
9. Cllr Kimberley Williams

CIVIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE (9)

1. Cllr Steve Wiles (Chairman)
2. Cllr Doreen Savage (Vice-Chairman)
3. Cllr Seamus Bennett
4. Cllr Steve Gallant
5. Cllr Sharon Harkin
6. Cllr Graham Newman
7. Cllr Margaret Morris
8. Cllr Mick Richardson
9. Cllr Kimberley Williams

ASSETS & SERVICES COMMITTEE (9)

1. Cllr Sharon Harkin (Chairman)
2. Cllr Nick Barber (Vice-Chairman)
3. Cllr Darren Aitchison
4. Cllr Margaret Morris
5. Cllr Graham Newman
6. Cllr Mick Richardson
7. Cllr Doreen Savage
8. Cllr Andy Smith
9. Cllr Kimberley Williams

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (9)

1. Cllr Stuart Bird (Chairman)
2. Cllr Andy Smith (Vice-Chairman)
3. Cllr Seamus Bennett
4. Cllr Steve Gallant
5. Cllr Mark Jepson
6. Cllr Margaret Morris
7. Cllr Doreen Savage
8. Cllr Steve Wiles
9. Cllr Kimberley Williams

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE (5)

1. Mayor of Felixstowe (Chairman) (*ex-officio as Mayor of Felixstowe 2020/21*)
2. Cllr Kimberley Williams (Vice Chairman)
3. Deputy Mayor (*ex-officio as Deputy Mayor 2020/21*)
4. Cllr Nick Barber (*ex-officio as past Mayor of Felixstowe 2019/20*)
5. Cllr Doreen Savage

APPEALS COMMITTEE (5 Members not on the Personnel Committee)

1. Cllr Andy Smith (Chairman)
2. Cllr Steve Gallant (Vice-Chairman)
3. Cllr Mike Deacon
4. Cllr Tracey Green
5. Cllr Mick Richardson

YOUTH FORUM (3 FTC)

1. Cllr Doreen Savage
2. Cllr Sharon Harkin
3. Cllr Seamus Bennett

OTHER MEETINGS/GROUPS:

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY GROUP

1. Cllr Mark Jepson (Lead Emergency Coordinator)
2. Cllr Darren Aitchison (Deputy Emergency Coordinator)
3. Cllr Mick Richardson (Deputy Emergency Coordinator)
4. Town Clerk (Deputy Emergency Coordinator)
5. Deputy Town Clerk (Deputy Emergency Coordinator)

ESC/FTC JOINT FORUM

1. Cllr Nick Barber
2. Cllr Sharon Harkin
3. Town Clerk

TOWN MAGAZINE WORKING GROUP

1. Cllr Doreen Savage
2. Cllr Kimberley Williams
3. Town Clerk
4. Deputy Town Clerk

CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

1. Cllr Mick Richardson (Chairman)
2. Cllr Darren Aitchison
3. Cllr Nick Barber
4. Cllr Seamus Bennett
5. Cllr Margaret Morris
6. Cllr Doreen Savage
7. Cllr Andy Smith
8. Town Clerk
9. Deputy Town Clerk

11. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Mayor referred Council to the schedule of proposed appointments to Outside Bodies.

RESOLVED that the Members be appointed to Outside Bodies for the ensuing Municipal Year 2020-21 as follows:

Organisation	Representatives Appointed
Felixstowe & District Council for Sport & Recreation	1. Cllr Darren Aitchison 2. Cllr Seamus Bennett
Felixstowe Ferry Fairways Committee	1. Cllr Steve Gallant
Felixstowe Forward	1. Cllr Doreen Savage 2. Cllr Andy Smith
Friends of Felixstowe Library	1. Cllr Tracey Green
Felixstowe Nightsafe	1. Cllr Mark Jepson
Felixstowe Old People's Welfare Association	1. Cllr Sharon Harkin + Mayor is Honorary President (<i>ex-officio</i>)
SALC Area Meeting	1. Cllr Mark Jepson 2. Cllr Margaret Morris 3. Cllr Graham Newman
Felixstowe Salzwedel Partnership Association	1. Cllr Mike Deacon + Mayor is Honorary President (<i>ex-officio</i>)
Felixstowe Wesel Association	1. Cllr Mike Deacon 2. Cllr Mark Jepson 3. Cllr Steve Wiles + Mayor is Honorary President (<i>ex-officio</i>)
Felixstowe Travel Watch	1. Cllr Andy Smith (Substitute Cllr Margaret Morris)
Haven Ports Welfare	1. Cllr Doreen Savage
Landguard Partnership	1. Cllr Doreen Savage
Port of Felixstowe Local Authority Liaison Committee	1. Cllr Andy Smith 2. Mayor of Felixstowe (<i>ex-officio</i>) 3. Town Clerk (<i>ex-officio</i>)
Safer Neighbourhood Team	1. Cllr Mark Jepson 2. Cllr Mick Richardson 3. Cllr Doreen Savage 4. Cllr Kimberley Williams
Level Two Youth Project	1. Cllr Mark Jepson 2. Cllr Margaret Morris
Freight Quality Partnership	1. Cllr Andy Smith
Fairtrade Forum	1. Cllr Graham Newman
East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership	1. Cllr Graham Newman
Orwell District Scouts	1. Mayor of Felixstowe (<i>ex-officio</i>)
Felixstowe Peninsula Community Partnership	1. Cllr Sharon Harkin 2. Cllr Andy Smith 3. Town Clerk

CHARITY TRUSTEES

Charity	Trustees Appointed (<i>Proposed</i>)
<p>Mayor of Felixstowe Charity Fund (1184138)</p>	<p>1. (<i>Mayor of Felixstowe</i>) 2. (<i>Deputy Mayor</i>) 3. (<i>Immediate Past Mayor</i>)</p> <p>Authorised signatories to be any of the above plus Mayor's Secretary.</p>
<p>Felixstowe Relief Charity (1182192)</p> <p>Note: this is a successor charity to the following charities:</p> <p><i>Alexandrine De La Roche Relief In Need Charity (261597)</i></p> <p><i>Felixstowe General Charity (270980)</i></p> <p><i>Felixstowe War Memorial Cottages (240325)</i></p> <p><i>King George Vi Coronation Memorial Homes For Old People (211502)</i></p> <p><i>Widow's Charity Otherwise Known As The Poor's Estate (211504)</i></p>	<p>This charity requires a minimum of three trustees, and a maximum of 12. The charity may invite the Town Council to appoint up to three trustees if required, who need not be a Council Member.</p> <p>Trustees must ordinarily sit for a minimum of a three-year term and can remain a trustee for a maximum of four consecutive terms.</p> <p>No additional Trustees have been requested at this time. Current trustees are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Jon Garfield 2. Mrs Joan Sennington 3. Mr Norman Berry 4. Cllr Margaret Morris 5. Cllr Darren Aitchison 6. Cllr Mark Jepson

12. AUTHORISATION OF SIGNATORIES

BANK SIGNATORIES 2020/21

- Mayor
- Deputy Mayor
- Cllr Stuart Bird
- Cllr Steve Gallant
- Cllr Margaret Morris
- Cllr Andy Smith

QUARTERLY BANK RECONCILIATION SIGNATORY

- Cllr Doreen Savage

OPEN CREDIT AGREEMENT

- Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Business Services Officer are authorised by Council to withdraw up to £250 per month from Council's bank account by way of an Open Credit Agreement for the purposes of maintaining a Petty Cash float only.

13. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Council reviewed its Council's and staff subscriptions to other bodies for 2021 to the organisations below.

Organisation	2020/21 fee	Notes
Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)	£2,560.64	Provides procedural and legal advice to the Town Council. Subscription is recommended as part of review of Council's risks.
Institute of Cemetery & Cremations Management (ICCM)	£95	Provides procedural and legal advice to the Town Council. Subscription is recommended as part of review of Council's risks.

And on behalf of its staff Council pays subscription fees to:

Organisation	Annual fee	Notes
Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)	£398	Professional membership of the Town Clerk
Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)	£254	Professional membership of the Deputy Town Clerk

It was RESOLVED that the subscriptions for 2020/21 be approved.

14. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 20.31pm. It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting was scheduled for 10 June 2020 at 7.30pm

AGENDA ITEM 6: MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following Mayoral Engagements have been undertaken since the previous meeting:

Zoom Interview – Underwoods Hardware Store	20 May 2020
Zoom Interview - Fruit & Flowers	21 May 2020
Zoom Interview – Fresh Amber Radio	21 May 2020
Zoom Interview - Felixstowe Radio	21 May 2020
Zoom Interview – The Bakery	22 May 2020
Zoom Interview – Crescent Cafe	22 May 2020
Zoom Interview – The Little Ice Cream Company	22 May 2020
Zoom Interview – Alba Chiara Restaurant	26 May 2020
Zoom Interview – Felixstowe Radio	26 May 2020
Zoom Interview – Gullivers	27 May 2020
Visit to Morrisons Supermarket to meet Community Champion	28 May 2020
Zoom Interview – Nick Barber Auctions	1 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Treasurer Chest	1 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Clarks Shoes	1 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Wine Boutique	1 June 2020
Support Mrs Joan Rich Charity Walk	3 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Felixstowe Golf Club	3 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Greenhouse Café	3 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Saltwater Café	3 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Tommy Smith, Visitor to Felixstowe on why they love the town	3 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Ian Yeldham, Visitor to Felixstowe on why they love the town	4 June 2020
Zoom Interview – Meg Reid, Felixstowe Book Festival	8 June 2020

Council is requested to note the Mayoral Engagements attended since the previous meeting and any other announcements the Mayor may wish to lay before Council.

AGENDA ITEM 7: MINUTES OF COMMITTEES MEETINGS

MINUTES of a **PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING** held **ONLINE** on **Wednesday 27 May 2020** at **9.15am**

PRESENT: Cllr S Bird (Chairman) Cllr M Jepson
 Cllr A Smith (Vice-Chairman) Cllr M Morris (*to item 22*)
 Cllr S Bennett Cllr D Savage
 Cllr S Gallant Cllr S Wiles (*to item 19c*)

OFFICERS Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
 Mrs S Morrison (Planning Administration Assistant)

IN ATTENDANCE 1 member of the public.
 Mr R Abbott (Felixstowe Chamber of Trade & Commerce)

15. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public enquired about the process by which the Town Council would be responding to the East Suffolk Council Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation, as they were representing a local campaign group which would wish to understand what common ground it might share with the Committee on some of the matters therein. The Chairman advised that, whilst the topic was on the agenda for this meeting, the Committee's response would be developed over the next few meetings and at this stage Members would be scoping the process. The member of the public later expressed some concerns that the district council's housing numbers had been found to be too high by the inspector and that this may be something to consider in terms of the housing being proposed for Felixstowe.

16. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr K Williams**.

Cllr S Wiles gave apologies in advance of needing to leave the meeting at 11.00am to attend to other business.

Cllr M Morris gave apologies in advance of needing to leave the meeting at 11.45am to attend to other business.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr S Gallant Cllr M Jepson Cllr S Wiles	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of East Suffolk Council)
Cllr S Bird Cllr S Wiles	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of Suffolk County Council)

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

18. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Planning Application Review meeting held on 6 May 2020 be confirmed as a true record.

19. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Committee considered the following planning applications received since the last meeting and **RESOLVED** to submit the following observations to East Suffolk Council:

a	<p>DC/20/1666/FUL Demolition of ancillary Buildings and Plant and the Change of Use and Subdivision of Main Building from B1(c) Business Use to Mixed Business Uses, including B1(a) Office, B1(c) Light Industrial, B8 Storage and ancillary A3 cafe. Creation of new Vehicular Access onto Carr Road, new car parking and alterations to elevations to existing building to create new openings.</p> <p>Former Itron Factory Carr Road</p>
<p>Whilst Members would welcome the potential creation of employment at this site, Committee recommends REFUSAL for the plans as presented.</p> <p>Committee noted the proposal to sub-divide and change the use of this site and finds it regrettable that the planning statement makes no reference to the relevant planning policies. It was noted that HGV movements are accommodated in the proposal, but the application makes no reference to the estimated daily number of HGV movements. Clarification is required on the likely impact, particularly given the nearby residences and the residential nature of the roads leading to the site.</p> <p>Committee accept the proposed hours of operation for internal working but believe that there should be strict limits on delivery or dispatch times. Members also concur with the comments of SCC Highways with regards to visibility splays and safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Committee is concerned that the proposal to introduce B8 (storage uses) would contravene Policies FPAAP11 and the emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Polices SCLP4.3 and SCLP12.9 (c), (d) and (g) and recommends REFUSAL.</p>	

b	DC/20/1603/FUL New welfare hub to include 3No cabins positioned on paving slab base to accommodate storage, wc's and coffee hut. Incl. 3m high anti climb security fencing to perimeter plus security lighting. Seaton Recreation Ground Seaton Road
Committee welcomes this proposal and recommends APPROVAL. However, we would like ESC Officers to explore the possibility of making at least one of the toilets suitable for disabled users.	

c	DC/20/1685/FUL Proposed loft conversion to single storey detached dwelling incorporating roof terrace 24 Cliff Road
Committee recommended REFUSAL. Whilst Committee has no objection in principle to the proposed loft conversion, it considers the roof terrace to be in clear contravention to DM23(a) privacy and overlooking due to the unacceptable infringement on neighbouring properties of 26 Cliff Road and Bracklin.	

At this point, 11am, Cllr S Wiles left the meeting.

d	DC/20/1790/FUL Construction of a single storey dwelling 40 King Street
Committee recommended APPROVAL.	

e	DC/20/1815/FUL Two Storey Rear Extension Old Felixstowe House Marsh Lane
Committee recommended APPROVAL	

f	DC/20/1808/FUL Side extension to existing 2 storey semi-detached house. 14 Ferry Lane
Committee recommended APPROVAL	

g	DC/20/1807/VOC Variation of condition(s) 2 of application DC/18/1958/FUL - (Proposed development of the land between Treetops and Candlet Road to construct a total of 3 new dwelling houses with associated hard and soft landscaping including new access road from Treetops.) Land Between Treetops And Candlet Road
Committee recommended APPROVAL	

h	DC/20/1727/FUL To render the front elevation of the property, part of the left side and the small area of the front extension facing the front. This would be in keeping with surrounding properties and more aesthetically pleasing to the eye. 1 St Georges Road
Committee recommended APPROVAL	

f	DC/20/1841/TCA To fell Bay Laurel in rear boundary and growing at base of neighbour's garage. 69 Princes Road
Committee had NO OBJECTION to the work proposed subject to the guidance of the East Suffolk Council's Arboricultural Officer.	

20. PLANNING DECISIONS

Members present noted the decisions received from East Suffolk Council since the date of the previous agenda and up until the date of the agenda for this meeting be noted.

21. CORRESPONDENCE

Members noted the following:

- i) **Appeal APP/X3540/W/20/3247339 ref. REFUSAL of DC/19/2783/FUL 40 King Street**
Committee noted that the application had been refused and the applicant has appealed.
- ii) **DC/20/1205/LBC – The Old Hall 37 High Road**
Committee noted correspondence from E Limmer, Design & Conservation Officer advising that there would be a site inspection prior to determination of the application not to replace the chimney on the east elevation of this Listed Building.
- iii) **Seafront Gardens Litter Bins**
Committee considered the choice of Bins to be placed in the Spa Gardens to replace the broken metal bins. The Committee preferred the Glasdon jubilee 100 (square style) which were made from recycled plastic.

At this point, 11.45am, Cllr M Morris left the meeting.

22. SUFFOLK COASTAL LOCAL PLAN MAIN MODIFICATIONS CONSULTATION

The Chairman briefed the Committee on the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation which had been published subsequent to the report of the Planning Inspector. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk would summarise the modifications being proposed which were relevant to Felixstowe and report this to all Members prior to the next meeting. This matter would be a

standing item on the Agenda until 8 July. Members suggested that an additional meeting could be considered, should the number of planning applications requiring consideration constrain the agenda.

RESOLVED that the Committee would consider a summary of main modifications relevant to Felixstowe at the following meeting.

23. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 12.10am. The date of the next video-conference meeting was noted as being Wednesday 10th June 2020, 9.15am.

29. REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS

Committee reviewed the arrangements for and effectiveness of, Council's internal audit.

Committee noted that SALC-appointed auditors are not the only option for local councils. Members noted that the audit for 2019/20 would be carried out by Mrs V Waples a different auditor from SALC, but it was likely that Mr C Poole would be able to carry out the half year and final year audit for 2020/21.

The Deputy Clerk advised that the cost of the SALC internal audit had increased considerably and Members requested that a report of other internal audit options be brought to committee before the next annual review.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. it be recommended to Council that, having reviewed the effectiveness of its internal audit, it be recorded that Council considers the arrangements to be effective;**
- ii. it be recommended to Council that, in being satisfied of the independence and competence of its internal auditor, both Mr Colin Poole and Mrs Vicky Waples of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, be appointed to continue as the Council's internal auditors, undertaking a half-yearly and year-end audit on the basis of paras 4.14-4.17 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide 2019"; and,**
- iii. a report considering other options for internal audit be brought to Committee before the next annual review.**

30. BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 APRIL 2020

Committee received the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2020. A report of any variance to budget estimates for the period greater than 10% or £500 was considered.

It was RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2020 be approved, with no other action required at this time.

31. FINANCIAL IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS

Financial information including graphs were shown to illustrate losses in income revenue and decreased costs in outgoing expenditure due to the closure of the Town Hall and Walton Community Hall, ascribed to by the onset effects of the Covid-19 lockdown. A 2.4% loss of overall income would be suffered if normality returns in July, compared to a 5.1% loss of overall income if the pandemic continues throughout the year. In financial figures this would equate to a net loss of between £17,359 (3 months) to £32,569 (full year of lockdown). It was noted that £11,299 invoiced for weddings would be subject to them being

rearranged or otherwise able to take place later in the year or next year. Committee noted that the 2020 Felixstowe in Flower event will be carried over to 2021/22. Cemetery income had remained consistent with previous years, with an anticipated increase to the frequency of urn interments and memorials at such a time when restrictions allowed more family members to attend.

Members reviewed the financial impact of the Coronavirus and agreed that the 2020/21 budget should not be revised at this time. However, the impact would continue to be monitored as the year progresses and more information is known.

It was RESOLVED that the financial impact of the coronavirus on Council's finances be noted, with no other action required at this time.

32. QUARTERLY BANK RECONCILIATION

Committee noted that Cllr D Savage had seen and signed to confirm bank reconciliation with the bank statements for the third quarter 1 October to 31 December. Due to the Coronavirus, the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that she had emailed Cllr D Savage copies of the bank statement and monthly bank reconciliations for the period 1 January to 31 March which Cllr Savage had agreed and the documents would be signed off once Cllr Savage was no longer shielding due to Covid-19.

It was RESOLVED to note that the quarterly bank reconciliation between for the period 1 October 2019 – 31 March 2020 had been carried out by Cllr D Savage.

33. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2020/21

Committee noted the requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 for Council to ensure that it has a sound system of internal control. It was noted that, other than non-material updates, no changes were proposed to the Council's Statement of Internal Control from the previous year. Following consideration of the Council's policy and internal control statement document it was proposed that it be recommended to Council for approval and adoption with no further changes.

It was RESOLVED that the Internal Control Statement for the year ending 31 March 2021 be recommended to Council for formal adoption as presented.

34. CYBER RISK INSURANCE

Committee considered adopting a Cyber Risk Insurance policy from Zurich, which protects organisations from malware, ransomware, personal data breaches, and other cyber-borne malevolence. At a cost of £308, this would be taken out of Council's insurance and IT Maintenance & Software budgets.

It was RESOLVED that a Cyber Risk Insurance policy would be taken out with Zurich.

35. IT SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT

Committee considered the details of upgrading IT equipment for members of staff, to include 6 Dell laptops and docking stations and acknowledged the indicative costs due to being accepted on Dell's government framework, as used by East Suffolk Council. Committee agreed that the upgrade would bring improved convenience and efficiency for the administrative staff.

Committee also considered the principle of providing IT equipment and support for Members to carry out Town Council related business. The Town Clerk confirmed that Council's current IT support provide may be able to offer support to Members if required.

Members discussed the need for enhancing digital conferencing services at the Town Hall in the future to enable remote participation at meetings by Councillors or members of the public and improve facilities for external hirers.

Committee agreed that, subject to approval by Council, a sum could be transferred from the General Fund Reserves to the IT Earmarked Reserve to enable a wholesale upgrade to Council's IT and digital conferencing capabilities over time. It was agreed that £40,000 would allow Committee to oversee a phased upgrade for staff, Members and the Town Hall. The Clerk was asked to survey all Town Councillors so that Committee would be able to understand the level of hardware, software and support that may be required.

It was RESOLVED that Council be recommended to:

- i. transfer £40,000 from the General Fund into the IT Earmarked Reserve to enable Council to upgrade its IT provision;**
- ii. approve expenditure of up to £8,000 from the IT Earmarked Reserve for the purchase of business IT equipment for staff on the Dell government framework; and,**
- iii. delegate authority to the Finance & Governance Committee to commit expenditure from the IT Earmarked Reserve for the purposes of upgrading Council's IT hardware, software, and support.**

36. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.27pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 15 July 2020 at 7.30pm.

AGENDA ITEM 10: FELIXSTOWE FORWARD REPORT

Council is requested to receive the 'Felixstowe Forward Progress Report to June 2020 (**Appendix A**) which will be presented by the Felixstowe Forward Change Director, Helen Greengrass.

Members are asked to note that there has been significant effort to support local businesses throughout COVID19. In the early weeks this was to ensure eligible businesses were accessing the business grants. More recently, it has been answering queries and concerns as businesses plan to re-open. It has been clear that businesses are taking social distancing seriously and are looking for re-assurance that they are putting in place appropriate measures. As expected, there is a high level of anxiety about future viability. Businesses have expressed thanks to East Suffolk Council and Felixstowe Town Council for the support that has been, and continues to be, put in place.

Council is requested to receive the Felixstowe Forward Progress Report to June 2020 and consider any recommendations it deems appropriate.

AGENDA ITEM 11: REOPENING HIGH STREETS SAFELY FUND

A £50 million Reopening High Streets Safely Fund was announced on 24 May 2020, with allocations to District and Borough Councils on a per capita basis for activity from 1 June 2020 in support of the re-opening of high street retail as announced by the Prime Minister. The Fund is a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) initiative and East Suffolk has been allocated £222,198.

Expenditure must be committed between 1 June 2020 and March 2021 and focus should be on immediate needs. Accordingly, ESC is consulting with parish and town councils across the district to identify activities and local measures which may be supported under this scheme.

Four main strands of activity can be funded, provided that be for new, additional:

- Support to develop an action plan for how the Council may begin to safely reopen their local economies
- Communications and public information activity to ensure safe and successful reopening
- Business facing awareness raising activities
- Temporary public realm changes

Further detail about the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-high-streets-safely-fund-guidance>

To inform an action plan for Felixstowe, the Felixstowe Forward Change Director has been meeting with local business stakeholders to discuss practical options. A follow up meeting was held between representatives from the high street and tourism businesses, the Mayor, ESC's Assistant Cabinet Member for Economic Development and council officers on Thursday 4th June to develop initial ideas into a potential programme of action. Further meetings with local businesses have been scheduled and are being facilitated by the Felixstowe Forward Change Director.

A provisional action plan has been drafted (**Appendix B**) which, subject to the Town Council's endorsement, will be the basis for seeking support from East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council to implement measures.

It is anticipated that the funding allocated to ESC from the ERDF will be able to meet a significant portion of the costs, which are yet to be defined. Notwithstanding this, Council may wish to consider that the £10,000 emergency fund it made available to the Community Emergency Planning Group in March could be an appropriate resource to support swift implementation and/or supplement any particular measures that cannot be covered by the fund.

Council is therefore requested to consider the Reopening Safely action plan for Felixstowe at Appendix B; and, any funding that should be allocated towards the delivery of measures which may not be covered by the ERDF funding.

AGENDA ITEM 12: INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT: FULL YEAR 2019/20

The Internal Audit for the year ending 31 March 2020 took place on Thursday 4 June 2020 and the signed report is presented at **Appendix C**.

The Internal Auditor has completed page 3 of the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return confirming that the Council has met all its internal control objectives.

Though there were no actions raised by the Internal Auditor, one recommendation, due to identifying incomplete audit trails on four of the monthly fuel card statements (copies of the receipts were not attached to the statement at the time of the audit review) was made:

Recommendation: with reference to council's own FR 6.20, council should develop specific control procedures for the use of any payments by a trade card account which should include a procedure in place for the handling of such transactions including the requirement to submit receipts for all expenditure incurred.

Council is requested to consider the final Internal Audit Report for the year 1 April - 31 March 2020 and any actions it deems necessary in respect of the recommendation therein.

AGENDA ITEM 13: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR 2019-20

Council is required to approve its Annual Governance Statement and Accountability Return for 2019-20, presented at **Appendix D**.

Council's Full Year Internal Audit for 2019-20 was carried out 4 June and there were no matters arising from the report requiring an action plan to be submitted with the Annual Return 2019-20 to the External Auditor. Accordingly, Council's Internal Auditor has completed page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return confirming that all internal control objectives have been met.

Notes are provided below to provide some context to the figures to the Accounting Statements 2019/20 Section 2 of the Annual Return (figures for Year Ending 31 March 2019 are shown in brackets for comparison). The External Auditor requires an explanation of any variances for box 3 in Section 2 where the percentage change is greater than +/- 15% and if the increase or decrease is greater than £200. Where this applies, the explanation is given below and will be appropriately evidenced alongside all other documentation due to be submitted to the External Auditor. All figures are rounded to the nearest £1.

1 - Balances Brought Forward: £1,009,067 (£1,042,759 for Y.E. 31 March 2019)

This represents the total balances and reserves as recording in the financial records at the start of the year and agrees with the audited figure in Box 7 of the previous year ending 31 March 2019.

2 - Precept: £578,113 (£560,967) Variance = +3.06%

As approved by Council at its meeting of 8 January 2020 (*Minute #401 of 2019/20 refers*).

3 - Total other receipts: £218,148 (£158,694) Variance = +37.46%

Explanation of Variance

Variance predominately attributed to:

- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): £ 30,245 received during 2019/20 (£4,057 in 2018/19)
- Bank interest: £3,142 more in 2019/20 due to a higher rate being offered.
- Increase in hirings and weddings: £7,437 more in 2019/20.
- Cemetery fees: £9,611 more in 2019/20.
- Allotment rents increase of £935 in 2019/20
- Donations and sponsorship for Remembrance activities, Felixstowe in Flower & Magazine increase of £12,076

4 - Staff Costs: £410,532 (£386,269) Variance = +6.28%

5 - Loan Repayments: £34,732 (£34,732) Variance = 0%

Repayment of PWLB loan at fixed sum paid in two instalments of £17,365.97 per year.

6 – All Other Payments: £294,727 (£328,296) Variance = +11.32%

7 – Balance Carried Forward: £1,065,337 (£1,009,066)

Representing total Balances and Reserves at 31 March 2020.

Movements to Council's General Fund and allocated Earmarked Reserves for the year are shown below (all figures are rounded):

General Fund opening Balance: £ 385,601
 Earmarked Reserves: £ 623,465
 Total opening Balance 01.04.19: **£1,009,066**

Total Receipts: £796,261 (+)
 Total Expenditure: £739,991 (-)

Total closing Balance 31.03.20: **£1,065,336**

Represented by

General Fund: £447,003
 Earmarked Reserves: £618,333 (Net change to ER 19/20 = -£5,132)

A summary of transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves is provided in the table below:

Description	Opening Balance 1/4/19	Transfer In/Out	From/To Reference	Direct Expenditure	Reference	Closing Balances 31/3/20
Election Expenses	£14,862	-£9,000	Min 417 of 18/19	£0		£5,862
Enhancement & Promotional	£1,941	£0		£799	Min 399 of 19/20	£1,142
Asset Repairs & Replacement	£15,032	£3,000	Min 417 of 18/19	£0		£18,032
IT Replacement Fund	£3,117	£0		£0		£3,117
Cemetery Projects	£164,436	£20,000	Min 417 of 18/19	£15,376	Min 344 of 18/19 & 125 of 19/20	£169,060
Broadway House	£59,106	£2,500	Min 417 of 18/19	£1,499.50	Min 123 of 19/20	£60,107
Walton Community Hall	£65,000	£2,500	Min 417 of 18/19	£0		£67,500
Town Hall Maintenance	£77,187	£5,000	Min 417 of 18/19	£2,548.82	Min 95 (ii) & 123 of 19/20	£79,639

Play Equipment	£0	£0		£0		£0
Community Fund	£152,672	-£31,973	Min 340 & Min 417 of 18/19	£10,000	Min 516 (v) of 19/20	£110,699
CCTV	£42,000	£0		£0		£42,000
Staffing Reserve	£20,375	£10,000	Min 417 of 18/19	£3,500.79	Min 314 of 19/20	£26,874
Community Infrastructure Levy 2018/19	£4,057					£4,057
Community Infrastructure Levy 2019/20	£0	£30,245	CIL 2019/20	£0		£30,245
Armed Forces Weekend Legacy Fund	£3,680	£0		£3,680	Min 344 of 17/18 & Min 210 of 18/19	£0
Totals	£623,465	£ 32,272		-£37,404.11		£618,333

8 – Total Cash and Short-Term Investments: £1,070,070.26 (£1,000,956.69)

Variance between Boxes 7 and 8 = £4,733.82

Represented by:

Debtors: -£9,476.64
Creditors: £14,210.46

9 - Fixed Assets Plus Other Long Terms Investments/Assets: £55,502 (£56,517)

Variance = 1.8%

The value of fixed assets reported in 2019/20 was £56,517. The following additions and deletions took place:

Additions (Subtotal: £1,015)

Description	Location	Date Acquired	Purchase Cost (if known)	Insurance/ Replacement Value	Asset Register Valuation
Husqvarna LB553S Lawn Mower	Cemetery	16/07/2019	£515	21/01/1976 £515	£0.00 £515
Defibrillator Cabinet	Sea Road	25/09/2019	£500	£500	£500

Deletions (Subtotal: £2,030)

Description	Location	Date Acquired	Purchase Cost (if known)	Insurance/ Replacement Value	Asset Register Valuation
Defibrillator Cabinet	Sea Road	18/03/2015	£530	£530	£530
Cultivator	Cemetery/ Allotments	16/12/2015	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500

In accordance with the Practitioner's Guide to Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities, the Council's land and premises transferred under local government reorganisation or any 'community assets' without an intrinsic resale value are given a nominal valuation of £1.

The value of fixed assets reported to Council for 2019/20 was £55,501.97 (*Min #573 2019/20 refers*)

10 – Total borrowings: £330,071 (£347,803) Variance = -5.1%

Felixstowe Town Council borrowed £500,000 from the Public Works Loan Board in 2007/08 for the purchase and refurbishment of Felixstowe Town Hall. The loan period being 25.5 years. Repayments are £34,731.94 per annum and the balance outstanding as at 31 March 2020 was £330,071.

Further to the Accounting Statements, the following additional notes may be of benefit to Council:

Leases

At the end of 2019/20 the Town Council had no new lease of property. Parts of the Town Hall are licensed to third party organisations, as follows:

Lessee	Purpose	Annual Lease Payable £	Year of Expiry
Suffolk County Council	Registration Service Accommodation	£3,830.56 per annum (£3192.13 net)	Annual renewal
Suffolk Coastal District Council	Felixstowe Forward Accommodation	£3,250.00 per annum (£2,708 net)	Annual renewal
Suffolk Coastal District Council	Resort Team Accommodation	£2,500.00 per annum (£2,083 net)	Quarterly renewal

The Town Council owns the freehold interest in two schemes within Felixstowe which have either been re-built or re-furbished in conjunction with the Orwell Housing Association. Both schemes comprise a community hall on the ground floor and social housing flats on the upper floors.

The Housing Association financed the building works at each site and consequently has the benefit of an agreement to a long lease of the flats at a peppercorn rent to reflect the value of the building works carried out. The Housing Association then sub-lets the flats to its own tenants.

Lessee	Rent	Freeholder	Address
Orwell Housing Association Ipswich	Annual peppercorn	Felixstowe Town Council 65 years from January 2005	Broadway House Orwell Road Felixstowe
Orwell Housing Association Ipswich	Annual Peppercorn	Felixstowe Town Council 65 years from March 2007	Walton Community Hall Walton Felixstowe

In addition, the Town Council leases the following items of equipment:

Lessor	Purpose	Lease Payable Net £	Year of Expiry
Sharp	Multi-Functional Device	£162.61 per quarter	29.10.2021
Pitney Bowes	Franking Machine	£75.00 per quarter	10.12.2024
4Com	Telephone System	£206.71 per month	19.02.2021
O2	4 Mobile Phones	£30.56 per month	27.01.2021

Tenancies

During the year, the following tenancies were held:

Council as Landlord

Tenant	Property	Rent p.a.	Repairing/Non repairing
Felixstowe Old Peoples Welfare Association	Broadway House	£2,130.08	(Licence)
Telefonica	Telephone mast situated at Felixstowe Cemetery	£5,314.75	N/A

Council as Tenant

The Flood Memorial owned by Felixstowe Town Council is located at Langer Primary Academy, Langer Road, Felixstowe. An annual fee of £10.00 is due to Suffolk County Council.

General Power of Competence

The “General Power of Competence” was included in the Localism Act 2011 (Part 1, Chapter 1, ss 1-8). This power was brought into force by SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 in April 2012. The power enables eligible councils to have “the power to do anything that

individuals generally may do” as long as they are not prevented from doing so by other laws. The Town Council meets the criteria for eligibility and adopted the use of the General Power of Competence at its Annual Council Meeting on 15th May 2019.

Pensions

The Council is a member of the Suffolk County Council Local Government Pension Scheme. Employer’s contributions in 2019/20 were 25% and the Council paid £53,786.58 into the Suffolk County Council Local Government Pension fund in respect of its employees.

Employees qualifying for auto-enrolment to a pension scheme are enrolled into Council’s NEST Pension scheme. Employer contributions for 2019/20 were 6% and the Council paid £5,536.51 into the NEST Pension scheme in respect of its employees.

Financial Impact of Coronavirus

As part of the Council’s Annual Governance Statement it must confirm that it has considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.

Council is requested to note that the Finance & Governance Committee recently considered a report on the potential financial impact of the coronavirus on its budget. The Committee anticipates that there may be a net loss of between £17,359-£32,569, depending on the duration of Government lockdown measures, to the budget for 2020/21. The Committee is not recommending any formal adjustment to the budget at this time but will continue to monitor as the situation develops (*Minute #31 of 2020/21 refers*).

Council is requested to:

- i. confirm that it has considered the potential financial impact of the coronavirus on the authority’s budget;**
- ii. approve the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2020 (Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement) and authorise the Mayor and Town Clerk to sign the declaration on behalf of Felixstowe Town Council;**
- iii. approve the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2020 (Section 2 – Accounting Statements) as signed by the Town Clerk, as the Council’s Responsible Finance Officer, and authorise the Mayor to sign the declaration on behalf of Felixstowe Town Council; and,**
- iv. note that there were no actions arising from the final Internal Audit Report for the Financial Year 2019-20 and, therefore, no action plan is required to be submitted with the Annual Return 2019/20 to the External Auditor.**

AGENDA ITEM 14: IT SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT

At its meeting of 27 May 2020, the Finance & Governance Committee considered improvements to the Council's IT capabilities.

IT hardware used by Council staff based at the Town Hall currently consists of six desktop PCs and a laptop, of varying ages.

As an urgent response to the coronavirus lockdown measures and to enable home working, the Council's six administrative staff are using a combination of four desktop PCs taken home from the Town Hall, a privately-owned tablet and a Council-owned laptop (which was used for P&E meetings). During the first week one of the desktop PCs suffered a terminal hard drive failure and a second desktop PC had to be transported from the Town Hall to the staff member's home.

F&G Committee noted that to date business laptops would enable improvements to home and mobile working environments, allowing greater flexibility whether at the Town Hall or off-site and ensure that the team has the technical capacity required to meet the ever-increasing digital processes.

To give an indication of costs for upgrading Town Hall IT equipment to a good standard, the Clerk has made enquiries and the Town Council has been accepted on Dell's government framework, as used by East Suffolk Council.

Equipment	Cost (ex. VAT)
Latitude 7400 2in1 BTS Configuration With 3 Year ProSupport. ProSupport Includes: Hardware & Software Support, 24x7 availability and Next Business Day Onsite Service	£1,094.35
Dell Dock WD19 180W (To connect laptops to power source, pre-existing monitors and peripherals when working onsite)	£143.37
Total cost for 6 workstations:	£7,426.32

Over the long-term, investing in modern mobile hardware will enable the Town Council to transition to a leaner, more agile office environment.

In the meantime, the five desktop PCs that are currently still functional could be returned to the Town Hall and used until end-of-life.

IT support for Members

The introduction of online meetings has also required Councillors to rapidly increase their overall IT skills and has tested the limits of privately owned hardware.

The F&G Committee acknowledged that some Members may be more experienced than others with IT hardware and software but agreed that enhancing the level of off-site support available to all Council Members and staff would be valuable.

Committee was also concerned about the appropriateness of expecting Town Councillors to use privately owned devices for Council business and the varying capabilities of home equipment to process intensive audio-visual applications, such as videoconferencing for Council meetings.

In addition to seeking to improve the provision of IT hardware, software and support for staff and councillors, Committee also agreed that digital conferencing services at the Town Hall should be enhanced so that, in the future, remote participation at meetings by Councillors or members of the public could be supported and facilities for external hirers would be improved.

As such, Committee has recommended that Council approve a transfer of £40,000 from the General Fund Reserve to the IT Earmarked Reserve and delegate authority to the Finance & Governance Committee to oversee a phased upgrade to IT facilities for staff, Members and the Town Hall.

Council's IT Hardware Earmarked Reserve currently stands at £3,117. The General Fund Reserve balance stood at £447,003 at 31 March 2020.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee (*Minute #35 of 2020/21 refers*), Council is requested to:

- i. transfer £40,000 from the General Fund into the IT Earmarked Reserve to enable Council to upgrade its IT provision;**
 - ii. approve expenditure of up to £8,000 from the IT Earmarked Reserve for the purchase of business IT equipment for staff on the Dell government framework; and,**
 - iii. delegate authority to the Finance & Governance Committee to commit expenditure from the IT Earmarked Reserve for the purposes of upgrading Council's IT hardware, software, and support.**
-

AGENDA ITEM 15: STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2020/21

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 states that a Council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which

- facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives;
- ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and
- includes effective arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council must operate an overall system of internal control appropriate to its expenditure and activity. As part of its system of internal control, the council arranges for an internal audit where someone, (other than the Clerk or Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)) and acting independently of the council), scrutinises the council's financial systems.

The system of internal control is designed to ensure that the council's activities are carried out properly and as intended. Internal controls are set up by the RFO but it falls on the Council Members to ensure that they have a degree of control and understanding of those controls. Controls will include the checking of routine financial procedures; the examination of financial comparisons; the recording of assets and liabilities; the identification of risk and to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Council's Statement of Internal Control for the year ending 31 March 2021 was reviewed by the Finance & Governance Committee on 27 May 2019 (*Minute #33 of 2020/21 refers*) and is recommended for approval at **Appendix E**.

Council is requested to approve the Statement of Internal Control for the year ending 31 March 2021, as recommended by the Finance & Governance Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 16: REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS

Council's Finance & Governance Committee conducted a review of the effectiveness of Council's internal audit arrangements on the following basis:

Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 imposes a duty on local councils to "maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control."

Internal audit is a key component of the system of internal control. The purpose of internal audit is to review whether the systems of financial and other controls over a council's activities and operating procedures are effective.

Mr Colin Poole, as appointed by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC), has acted as the internal auditor to Felixstowe Town Council since October 2015. SALC have been providing internal audit services to the Town Council since December 2012. Mr Poole was unavailable to undertake the end of year internal audit in May, which will now be completed by MS Vicky Waples on 4 June 2020. Ms Waples has worked as an internal auditor for SALC for several years.

Local councils are required, at least once a year, to conduct, in accordance with proper practices, a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The Council is required to sign the annual governance statement (on the annual return submitted to the external auditor) to evidence that this review has been undertaken.

Review of effectiveness of internal audit

Paragraph 4.22 of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide (March 2019)" states that the "*review should be designed to assure the authority that it has maintained the standards of an adequate and effective internal audit of its risk management, control and governance processes. It should include, as a minimum, making an assessment of each of the following:*

- *the scope of internal audit;*
- *independence;*
- *competence;*
- *relationships with the clerk and the authority; and*
- *audit planning and reporting.*

The Council must also satisfy itself that the quality of delivery of the internal audit service provides reliable assurance about the Council's internal controls and its management of risk.

An assessment against the above criteria is provided, as follows, to assist Committee in reviewing the effectiveness of the Town Council's internal audit arrangements:

Scope of Internal Audit: *It is a matter for the authority to determine the necessary scope and extent of its internal audit. When securing an internal audit service, the authority should make sure that it is proportionate to the needs, size and the circumstances of the authority.*

The scope of the internal audit work carried out by Mr Poole follows that which was suggested in paras. 4.14-4.17 of the “Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner’s Guide 2019.”

Independence: *Independence requires the absence of any actual or perceived conflict of interest. It means that whoever carries out the internal audit role does not have any involvement in or responsibility for the financial decision making, management or control of the authority, or with the authority’s financial controls and procedures.*

Neither Mr Poole nor Ms Waples are involved in the Council’s financial controls, procedures or decision making.

Relationships with the Clerk and the Authority:

Neither Mr Poole nor Ms Waples are related to, nor associated with, any Member of the Council, its staff or the Clerk. The internal auditor has direct access to the Council should they think this necessary.

Competence: *There are various ways for an authority to source an internal audit service, for example, appointing a local individual administered by a local association or branch of NALC, SLCC or ADA. An individual will need to demonstrate adequate independence and competence to meet the needs of the authority.*

Both Mr Poole and Ms Waples have extensive experience of carrying out audit work for parish councils across Suffolk on behalf of the Suffolk branch of the National Association of Local Councils.

Audit Planning and Reporting: *The minimum reporting requirement for internal audit to the smaller authority is met by completing the annual internal audit report on page 3 of the Council’s Annual Governance and Accountability Return.*

In addition to completing the annual internal audit report on the annual return, Mr Poole prepares a report in his own name following completion of each internal audit. Each audit report is presented to the Council’s Finance & Governance Committee and any recommendations are reviewed and considered at that time. Any actions taken prior to the meeting, such as may be appropriate under delegated authority or for matters of urgency, are reported to the Committee at this time. Any actions to be taken on the recommendations made are recorded in the minutes of the meeting and reported to Council for approval, if required.

An internal audit of Felixstowe Town Council was carried out twice during 2019/20 on a half-yearly basis.

Council’s Finance & Governance Committee RECOMMENDED the following (Minute #29 of 2020/21 refers):

- iv. having reviewed the effectiveness of its internal audit, it be recorded that Council considers the arrangements to be effective; and,**
 - v. in being satisfied of the independence and competence of its internal auditor, both Mr Colin Poole and Mrs Vicky Waples of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, be appointed to continue as the Council's internal auditors, undertaking a half-yearly and year-end audit on the basis of paras 4.14-4.17 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide 2019".**
-