



TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

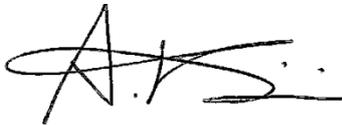
Cllr S Bird (Chairman)	Cllr G Newman
Cllr S Gallant (Vice Chairman)	Cllr D Savage
Cllr N Barber	Cllr A Smith
Cllr M Deacon	Cllr S Wiles
Cllr Jan Garfield	Cllr K Williams

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** to be held at the **Town Hall, Felixstowe** on **Wednesday 23 May 2018** at **7.30pm** for the transaction of the following business:

A G E N D A

- 1. Public Question Time**
Up to 15 minutes set aside to enable members of the public to make representation or put questions to the Committee on any relevant matters.
- 2. Apologies**
To receive apologies for absence.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
Members and officers are invited to make any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Local Non-Pecuniary Interests that they may have in relation to items on the Agenda and are also reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the meeting if it becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is considered.
- 4. Requests for Dispensation**
Councillors with a pecuniary interest in an item on this agenda, who wish to remain, speak and/or vote during consideration of that item, may apply for a dispensation in writing to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting. Applications may also be considered at the meeting itself should the nature of the interest become apparent to a Councillor at the time of the meeting.
- 5. Confirmation of Minutes**
To confirm the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 28 March 2018 as a true record. **(Pages 3-5)**
- 6. Budget Monitoring for the Financial Year 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018**
To receive budget monitoring report for the financial year 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018, and consider any actions deemed necessary. **(Pages 6-8 & Appendix A)**

- 7. Budget Monitoring to 30 April 2018**
To receive budget monitoring report to 30 April 2018 and consider any actions deemed necessary. **(Pages 9-12 & Appendix B)**
- 8. Review of Internal Audit Effectiveness**
To review the effectiveness of Council's appointed Internal Auditor and make any recommendations to Council. **(Pages 13-14)**
- 9. Statement of Internal Control 2017/18**
To review the Council's Statement of Internal Control and make any recommendations to Council. **(Page 15 & Appendix C)**
- 10. Digital Communications**
To consider Councillor's email addresses and digital tablets and make any recommendations to Council. **(Page 16-17)**
- 11. Business Plan 2016-2020 – Action Plan Review**
To review the Action Plan, as part of the annual review process for the Council's Business Plan and consider any actions deemed necessary. **(Page 18)**
- 12. Closure**
To close proceedings and confirm the date of the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 25 July 2018 at 7.30pm.



Ash Tadjrishi
Town Clerk
17 May 2018

For information (via email): All Town Councillors
Local Press

Meetings of the Town Council and its Committees are open to the press and public who are welcome to attend.

580. SINGLE USE PLASTIC POLICY

Committee noted that the Council's Youth Forum had expressed an aspiration for Felixstowe to become a single-use plastic free town. The subject had been discussed at the Ordinary Council meeting of 14 March 2018 and authority had been delegated to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to develop a policy phasing out the use of single-use plastic products (*Min. #552 of 2017/18 refers*). Members considered the draft policy presented in the agenda.

It was RESOLVED that the Single Use Plastics Policy be adopted as presented, subject to a minor amendment to include reference to promoting reusable products as well as biodegradable and other alternatives.

581. CONSULTATION: LEISURE VISION

It was noted that Council had delegated authority to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to submit a response to the SCDC Leisure Vision Consultation on its behalf (*Min #550 of 2017/18 refers*)

Following a discussion it was RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk and the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee to submit a response to the SCDC Leisure Vision Consultation reflecting the generality of Committee's comments in respect of future leisure provision in Felixstowe.

582. GDPR UPDATE REPORT

Committee considered the General Data Protection Regulations report, and options for appointing a Data Protection Officer (DPO).

It was noted that the Local Council Public Advisory Service (LCPAS) offered a DPO service and had been recommended by other local authorities in the Suffolk Coastal district. The service would include a pack of documents including policies, consents and privacy notices, a check list for personal information audits, risk assessments and the steps to take for compliance by 25 May 2018.

Committee noted that the cost of the LCPAS DPO service, which also include a compliance visit and unlimited ongoing support was £500 for the year.

It was RESOLVED that the GDPR Report be noted and, to ensure Council compliance with the regulations before the deadline of 25 May, it was agreed to instruct LCPAS to act as the Council's Data Protection Officer (DPO) for 2018/19 and Council to be advised of the action taken at the next Council meeting.

583. TERMS OF REFERENCE 2018/19

Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference for Council and its Committee for 2018/19.

It was RESOLVED that, the Terms of Reference for 2018/19 be recommended to the Annual Council meeting for adoption as presented.

584. STANDING ORDERS 2018/19

Committee considered Standing Orders for 2018/19

It was RESOLVED that Standing Orders for 2018/19 be recommended to Annual Council meeting for adoption as presented.

585. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2018/19

Committee reviewed its Financial Regulations for 2018/19. In accordance with Regulation 6.8, Committee reviewed the continued use of BACS.

It was RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations for 2018/19 be recommended to the Annual Council meeting for adoption as presented and the continued use of BACS also be recommended to Council.

586. RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY & FINANCIAL RISK REGISTER

Committee considered Council's Risk Management Policy and Financial Risk Register for 2018/19.

It was RESOLVED that the Risk Management Policy be recommended to the Annual Council meeting for adoption.

587. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Committee reviewed the Council's Complaints Procedure for 2018/19.

It was RESOLVED that Council's Complaints Procedure be recommended to Annual Council for re-adoption in 2018/19 with no changes.

588. PUBLICATION SCHEME

Committee reviewed the Publication Scheme based on the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) model publication scheme, and the schedule of information available from Felixstowe Town Council.

RESOLVED that the ICO model publication scheme be recommended to Annual Council for re-adoption and maintained up to date should any revisions be made by the ICO in respect of GDPR.

589. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.40pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 23 May 2018 at 7.30pm.

AGENDA ITEM 6: BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1 APRIL 2017 – 31 MARCH 2018

At the previous meeting Committee received the accounts report to 21 March 2018 together with an estimated outturn position projected for 2017/18. A summary Income & Expenditure Report for the Financial Year ending 31 March 2018 is shown below with a detailed report provided at **Appendix A**. These provide the final, unaudited, position at year end:

		Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Of Budget	
02/05/2018		Felixstowe Town Council YE 17/18							Page No 1
18:25		Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/03/2018							
Month No : 12		Committee Report							
<hr/>									
<u>Finance & General Purposes</u>									
	Expenditure	277,515	252,788	257,053	4,265	0	4,265	98.3 %	
	Income	562,055	593,476	555,342	38,134			106.9 %	
	Net Expenditure over Income	-284,540	-340,688	-298,289	42,399				
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<u>Assets & Services</u>									
	Expenditure	243,799	246,839	262,922	16,083	0	16,083	93.9 %	
	Income	127,610	150,786	105,982	44,804			142.3 %	
	Net Expenditure over Income	116,189	96,053	156,940	60,887				
<hr/>									
<u>Civic & Community</u>									
	Expenditure	110,142	122,702	125,584	2,882	0	2,882	97.7 %	
	Income	17,210	13,808	11,992	1,816			115.1 %	
	Net Expenditure over Income	92,932	108,894	113,592	4,698				
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<u>INCOME - EXPENDITURE TOTALS</u>									
	Expenditure	631,456	622,329	645,559	23,230	0	23,230	96.4 %	
	Income	706,876	758,070	673,316	84,754			112.6 %	
	Net Expenditure over Income	-75,419	-135,741	-27,757	107,984				

In accordance with Council's Financial Regulations, Committee is to receive explanations of Material Variances for expenditure in excess of the estimated budget of 10% or £500, whichever is the lesser. At the end of the full year 2017/18, the expectation is for overall expenditure to be around 100%, with an explanation for any items overspent by £500 or 10% or over this level (i.e. 110%). Total expenditure for the year stood at 96.4%. Explanatory notes and any recommended action for individual qualifying items in the accompanying Appendix A are as follows:

Cost Centre 101 - Administration
<p>4490 Professional Fees (134.9%) Overspend on budget relates to legal work associated with land titles licence and lease arrangements. (Moneyclaim fees to be credited back when received from debtor 10%) Recommendation: No action required.</p>
Cost Centre 201 - Town Hall
<p>4260 Equipment Purchases (397.1%) Approved overspend for the purchase of conference tables (Minute #92 of 2017/18 refers). Recommendation: No action required.</p>
Cost Centre 203 – Broadway House
<p>4170 Repairs & Maintenance (135.0%) Approved overspend (Minute #487iii of 2017/18 refers) Recommendation: No action required.</p>
Cost Centre 204 – Cemetery
<p>1140 Upkeep of Grave Spaces (77.6%) Decrease in upkeep of graves 2017/18. Recommendation: Monitor in 2018/19.</p>
Cost Centre 304 – Communication
<p>4421 Newsletter Distribution (121.2%) Increase in distribution costs, notification received after budget setting for 2017/18. Recommendation: No action required.</p>

Total expenditure against budget for the year was 96.4% and Council achieved an income of 112.6% against budget. The positive outturn on budget totalled £107,984.

Net expenditure against Earmarked Reserves was -£60,356 (£27,757 transferred in minus £5,094 expenditure plus £26,897 CIL Payments and £10,796 Armed Forces Weekend Legacy Fund) as shown in the table below:

900	Earmarked Reserves	Closing Balance at 31 March 2017	Transferred in from General Fund	Council approved expenditure during 2017/18	Closing Balance at 31 March 2018
9010	Election Expenses	£2,862	£6,000	-	£8,862
9015	Enhancement & Promotional	£2,721	£0	£780	£1,941
9020	Felixstowe in Flower	£8,428	-£8,428	-	£0
9025	Asset Repairs & Replacement	£16,532	£3,000	-	£19,532

9030	IT Replacement Fund	£3,117	£0	-	£3,117
9035	Recycling Credits	£2,434	-£2,434	-	£0
9040	Cemetery Projects	£129,922	£20,000	-	£149,922
9050	Broadway House	£58,520	£2,500	-	£61,020
9055	Walton Community Hall	£60,000	£2,500	-	£62,500
9065	Town Hall Maintenance	£105,732	£0	£1,490	£104,242
9070	Play Equipment	£27,000	£0	-	£27,000
9075	Community Fund	£152,461	£7,184	£2,824	£156,821
9080	Council Tax Localisation Resrve	£12,565	-£12,565	-	£0
9085	CCTV	£42,000	£0	-	£42,000
9090	Staffing Reserve	£375	£10,000	-	£10,375
9100	Community Infrastructure Levy	£911	£0	-£26,897	£27,808
	Armed Forces Weekend Legacy Fund	0	£0	-£10,796	£10,796
	Total Earmarked Reserves	£625,580	£42,619	£94,195	£685,936

The overall financial position of the authority as of 31 March 2017 therefore was £1,042,759.

At the previous Financial Year end 31st March 2017, Council held total reserves of £912,112. This was represented by General Reserves of £286,532 and Earmarked Reserves of £625,580.

Fund	Balance at 31 March 2017	Balance at 31 March 2018
General Fund	286,532	356,823
Earmarked Reserves	625,580	685,936
Total	912,112	1,042,759

The Annual return for the Financial Year 2017-18 was prepared on this basis and was submitted to Council on 16 May 2018 for approval due to the deadline for submitting the Annual Return to the External Auditor.

The End of Year Internal Audit report which is normally presented to this committee also was submitted to Council and reviewed on 16 May 2018.

Committee is requested to receive the Accounts to 31 March 2018 and note the Council's financial position as at year end 2017/18.

AGENDA ITEM 7: BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 APRIL 2018

A summary Income & Expenditure Report to 30 April 2018 is shown below with a detailed report provided at **Appendix C**.

	Felixstowe Town Council	Page No 1					
14/05/2018							
13:19							
	Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 30/04/2018						
Month No : 1	Committee Report						
	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Of Budget
<u>Finance & General Purposes</u>							
Expenditure	252,788	34,466	265,081	230,615	0	230,615	13.0 %
Income	555,783	282,128	564,967	-282,839			49.9 %
Net Expenditure over Income	<u>-302,995</u>	<u>-247,662</u>	<u>-299,886</u>	<u>-52,224</u>			
<u>Assets & Services</u>							
Expenditure	246,839	17,691	263,066	245,375	0	245,375	6.7 %
Income	150,786	10,280	113,222	-102,942			9.1 %
Net Expenditure over Income	<u>96,053</u>	<u>7,411</u>	<u>149,844</u>	<u>142,433</u>			
<u>Civic & Community</u>							
Expenditure	122,702	3,769	128,958	125,189	0	125,189	2.9 %
Income	13,808	2,529	14,242	-11,713			17.8 %
Net Expenditure over Income	<u>108,894</u>	<u>1,240</u>	<u>114,716</u>	<u>113,476</u>			
<u>INCOME - EXPENDITURE TOTALS</u>							
Expenditure	622,329	55,926	657,105	601,179	0	601,179	8.5 %
Income	720,377	294,938	692,431	-397,493			42.6 %
Net Expenditure over Income	<u>-98,048</u>	<u>-239,011</u>	<u>-35,326</u>	<u>203,685</u>			

In accordance with Council's Financial Regulations, Committee is to receive explanations of Material Variances for expenditure in excess of the estimated budget of 10% or £500, whichever is the lesser. As the Council's budgets are not produced on a phased basis, the expectation is, being one month in to the year, for overall expenditure to be around 8.3%, with an explanation for any items overspent by £500 or 10% or over this level (i.e. 9.2%). Total expenditure for the first month stood at 8.5%. Explanatory notes and any recommended action for individual qualifying items in **Appendix C** are as follows:

Cost Centre 101 - Administration

4270 Photocopier (23.1%)

Lease & no of copies paid quarterly.

Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a quarterly basis.

4460 Subscriptions (96.7%)

Front loaded – five annual subscriptions paid to date. Awaiting ICO subscription.

Recommendation: No action.

4464 Insurance (94.9%)

Full year payment up front.

Recommendation: No action.

4481 IT Maintenance and Software (65.4%)

Front loaded, annual fee for IT support, mail boxes & Defense 360, already paid.

Recommendation: No action.

4490 Professional Fees (25%)

DPO Service & Compliance visit.

Recommendation: No action.

Cost Centre 201 - Town Hall

4110 Rates (9.3%)

Rates are paid over 10 months only.

Recommendation: No action.

4120 Gas (19.6%)

Winter gas monthly bill. Supplier changing 7th May 2018

Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.

4170 Repairs & Maintenance (21.9%)

Paid in full for 2017-18.

Recommendation: No action.

4180 Licences (100%)

Paid in full for 2018-19.

Recommendation: No action.

1000 Hirings (0%)

£249.17 (11.3%) invoiced, awaiting payment

Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.

1030 Leases, Rents & Licences (0%)

£6421.30 (82.7%) invoiced awaiting payment. Payments for Resort office due at various points in-year. Expect to be at 100% by year end.

Recommendation: No further action

Cost Centre 202 – Walton Community Hall
<p>4110 Rates (10.1%) Rates are paid over 10 months only. Recommendation: No further action</p>
<p>1000 Hirings (0.8%) £866.25 (11.5%) invoiced, awaiting payment. + £283.75 (3.8%) outstanding debt being paid by instalments. Minus figure due to year end debtors. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.</p>
Cost Centre 203 – Broadway House
<p>1030 Leases, Rents & Licences (0.0%) Annual receipt to be invoiced. Recommendation: No further action.</p>
Cost Centre 204 – Cemetery
<p>4110 Rates (9.4%) Rates are paid over 10 months only. Recommendation: No further action</p>
<p>4170 Repairs and Maintenance (11.6%) Repair to cemetery office roof tiles. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>4300 Vehicle Running Costs (10.9%) Some costs are front loaded e.g. Truck Tax paid for the year. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>1032 Mobile Phone Mast (0.0%) Paid annually, invoiced in June. Recommendation: No further action</p>
<p>1100 Interment Fees (2.1%) £4,500.50 (11.3%) invoiced, awaiting payment. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>1130 Memorials (-4.5%) £3,175 (26.4%) invoiced, awaiting payment. Minus figure due to year end debtor which has since been received in May. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>1140 Upkeep of Grave Spaces (0.0%) Invoiced in June. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.</p>

Cost Centre 205 – Allotments
<p>1080 Allotment Rents (0.9%) Majority of Allotment rents are billed annually in September Recommendation: No further action</p>
Cost Centre 301 – Civic & Community
<p>4513 Civic Awards (12.2%) Held in May 2018. Invoices for the Annual Town Meeting/Civic Awards are still being received. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a regular basis</p>
<p>4650 Seasonal Events (25.2%) Deposit for ice rink paid. Recommendation: No further action</p>
<p>1800 Agency Income (0%) CCTV contribution from SCDC, invoice in July Recommendation: No further action</p>
<p>1810 Donations & Sponsorship (0%) None received as yet. Recommendation: Continue to monitor.</p>
Cost Centre 305 – Community Fund Projects
<p>4625 Felixstowe Harwich Ferry (100.0%) Paid over at start of Financial Year. Recommendation: No further action.</p>

Committee is requested to consider the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2018 and decide on any action it deems necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 8: REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS

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.

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 Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioner’s Guide (March 2018)” 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 Appendix 9 of the “Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner’s Guide 2014.”

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.*

Mr Poole has no involvement in the Council's financial controls, procedures or decision making.

Relationships with the Clerk and the Authority:

Mr Poole is not related to, nor associated with, any member of the Council or the Clerk. The internal auditor has direct access to the Council should he 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.*

Mr Poole has 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 5 of the annual 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 & General Purposes 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 2017/18 on a half yearly basis.

Committee is requested to review the effectiveness of the internal audit and recommend appropriate arrangements to Council for 2018/19.

AGENDA ITEM 9: STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

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 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 2019 is presented in draft with tracked changes for consideration at **Appendix C**.

Committee is requested to review and recommend to Council, its Statement of Internal Control for the 2018/19 financial year as drafted for consideration at Appendix C.

AGENDA ITEM 10: DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Councillor Email addresses - GDPR

Investigations have been made into the cost and potential benefit of providing Councillors with official Town Council email addresses e.g.:
cllr.firstname.lastname@felixstowe.gov.uk.

With the introduction of GDPR on 25 May, advice has been sought and in order to protect Member's interests and that of the Council it is recommended that consideration be given to providing separate Council email address for each Councillor for the following reasons:

- Using a personal email for social and business heightens the risk of breach, for example if an autofill address pops up when inputting who the email is to, a business email could easily be sent to the wrong person.
- At such as time when a Member leaves, the council-business mailbox can be deleted. Otherwise a Councillor and/or Council could still be liable for a breach if any Council-related data leaked even once a Councillor has left.
- It prevents the possibility of confusion between personal and business use.

We are also advised to take additional care when forwarding emails which may contain sensitive data within previous conversations in the thread, as this could also easily lead to a breach.

Separate email addresses for council-only business can be obtained for free from services such as Gmail, Hotmail and Yahoo. However, these would be fully outside the Council's control and may not provide the same assurance to enquirers that they are corresponding with official representative of the Town Council.

Alternatively, a hosted exchange mailbox for Felixstowe.gov.uk addresses can be provided. The cost per mailbox is between £3.95 - £4.95 per month (the lower price when paid quarterly or annually on a one year agreement).

For 16 councillors, paid annually the cost would be £ 758.40 + VAT per year.

Other advice for Councillors using electronic communication are:

- If forwarding information, consider whether to just include the issue and not the name of the person reporting the issue
- Copy into a fresh email to remove the IP address or use email encryption.
- Correspond where possible through the Council's office and Clerk to avoid holding personal information
- Password protect PCs and other electronic devices like phones and tablets if they hold Council information and emails
- Keep anti-viruses up to date
- Keep Firewalls activated
- Keep Operating Systems up to date and automatic updates enabled
- Consider encryption for emails and files where relevant.

Members should also note that any emails copied in to council staff become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act. These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

Electronic Tablets for Agenda publication, for use at meetings and the reduction of printed paper.

Printed agenda papers, reports and appendices for Council and committee meetings often run over 60 and sometimes more than 100 pages. Navigating through the documents can be time consuming and challenging, especially when appendices are multiple and do not have pages numbered.

Some approximate costings have been calculated to work out whether it would not only be more environmentally friendly and convenient, but also cost effective to purchase electronic tablets for Councillors for use during a four year term as a Councillor.

For the year 2017/18 1,421 pages of agendas and appendices were printed out per Councillor.

As a guide to the cost of this over a typical year:

1,421 x 0.8 pence per black & white copy = **£11.45**

£11.50 per 2,500 sheets of paper = **£ 6.50**

Est. staff cost of max. £20 a week / by 16 Councillors = **£65.00**

Total cost per year: £82.95

Cost over four year term = £331.80

A Windows 10 tablet would cost upwards of £300 each depending on specification but might offer some advantages in terms of saving paper and staff time, being able to receive and consider updated information efficiently, being able to consider reports in colour at no additional cost and also being able to be used to support council business in other ways.

However, paper does not malfunction and requires no training to use. There may be an additional cost to consider associated with maintenance, software and training if tablets are an option Members would like to see progressed further.

Papers would still be made available for members of the public at meetings in the usual way.

Committee is requested to consider the use of Town Council email addresses either as a .gov email or free email account and the introduction of electronic tablet devices instead of paper agendas and decide on any actions it deems necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 11: BUSINESS PLAN 2016-2020- ACTION PLAN REVIEW

Following public consultation and consideration, Council approved its first four-year business plan on 14 September 2016. The Business Plan was reviewed and updated last year (*Minute #162 2017/18 refers*) to reflect changes since its introduction, and the Business Plan will be brought to Committee again this year in due course.

To aid the review process, Council's corresponding Action Plan is currently being updated to show achievements and progress against its Business Plan objectives over the past year. This will be forwarded to Members before the meeting.

Committee is requested to consider the draft Action Plan 2018/19 and any actions it deems necessary in preparation for the Business Plan review.
