

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 MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr M Deacon (Chairman)
Cllr D Rowe (Vice Chairman)
Cllr D Aitchison
Cllr S Bird
Cllr S Bennett

Cllr M James
Cllr M Sharman
Cllr W Underwood
Cllr S Wiles

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** to be held at **TOWN HALL, FELIXSTOWE** on **Wednesday 23 October 2024** at **7.30pm** for the transaction of the following business:

Public Attendance

Meetings of the Town Council and its Committees are open to the press and public who are welcome to attend. Members of the public are invited to make representations or put questions to the Committee during the public session.

There is a limit to the number of public attending in-person. If you wish to attend in person, please email townclerk@felixstowe.gov.uk to confirm capacity.

Members of the public are very welcome join via Zoom using the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83090518311> . Alternatively, you may join via the meeting ID 830 9051 8311 or over the telephone by calling 0131 460 1196
Our online meeting guidance can be found here: <https://felixstowe.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/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.



The Council kindly asks that anyone planning to attend the meeting in-person to consider car-sharing or low-carbon modes of transport to the Town Hall.

Ash Tadjrishi
Town Clerk
18 October 2024

For information (via email):

All Town Councillors
Local Press



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 three minutes each) to make representations or put questions to the Committee on any relevant matters.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
To receive any 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, other registerable or non-registerable interest.
- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**
To confirm the Minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee meeting held on 5 June 2024 as a true record. **(Pages 3-7)**
- 5. Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2024**
To receive budget monitoring report to 30 September 2024 and consider any actions deemed necessary. **(Pages 8-11 & Appendix A)**
- 6. Annual Governance Statement and Annual Return 2023-24**
To receive the External Auditor's Report on the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the Financial Year 2023/24. **(Page 12 & Appendix B)**
- 7. Internal Audit Report: Interim 2024/25**
To receive the Interim Internal Audit report for 2024/25 taking place on Monday 21 October 2024. **(Page 13)**
- 8. Quarterly Bank Reconciliations**
To note that the appointed Councillor has confirmed the reconciliations between the bank statements and accounts statements for the period 1 April – 30 September 2024. **(Verbal confirmation)**
- 9. County Court Judgment and Debt Recovery**
To consider the next steps in recovering an outstanding debt. **(Page 14)**
- 10. Community Infrastructure Levy Working Group Update**
To consider the recommendations of the CIL Working Group. **(Pages 15-16)**
- 11. Business Plan Monitoring**
To review progress against objectives of the Business Plan 2024-28. **(Pages 17-18)**
- 12. Closure**
To close proceedings and confirm the date of the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 4 December 2024 at 7.30pm.

40. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT: FULL YEAR 2023/24

Members considered the final Internal Audit Report for the year 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 as presented and noted the following Auditor's recommendations alongside the Clerk's comments:

Recommendation: whilst council is aware of the requirement to ensure that the SOs are fully tailored to the council and that in accordance with proper practices they need to be regularly reviewed, fit for purpose and adhered to, at the next annual review, council should ensure that Standing Order 18av and 18c are amended to reflect the changes to procurement thresholds as identified below.

Clerk's Comment: Resolved. Updated Standing Orders were reviewed by Finance & Governance Committee, subsequently approved by Annual Council on 15 May 2024.

Recommendation: Council should note the procurement thresholds which were updated from 1 January 2024. The new updated financial regulations will take these figures into account and are available for adoption by councils at the earliest opportunity.

Clerk's Comment: Updated Financial Regulations, recently published by NALC, are on this agenda for consideration by the Finance & Governance Committee.

Recommendation: whilst this is a minor sum (£11.60) a review of the timing of the submission of the VAT reclaim should be undertaken to ensure that whilst submission is within a timely manner, it is in line with the underlying records.

Clerk's Comment: This was found to be an error with the accounting software which, when moving from one VAT quarter to the next, did not account for a refunded receipt with VAT totalling £11.60. The error has since been resolved.

Committee wished to record a vote of thanks to the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, and Financial Administration Assistant, for their work in obtaining another clear audit.

RESOLVED that Committee noted that there were no significant actions arising from the final Internal Audit Report for the Financial Year 2023/24 and, therefore, no action plan is required to be submitted with the Annual Return 2023/24 to the External Auditor.

41. REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS

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

Members considered the good service received from the SALC-appointed auditor and the benefit of an internal auditor with experience of working within the town council sector. It was proposed that the arrangement be recommended to continue on the same basis for 2024/25.

Councillors were mindful of having the same auditor appointed from SALC, and suggested requesting SALC to provide separate auditors for the interim and end of year internal audits, as happened this year.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that:

- i. having reviewed the effectiveness of its internal audit, it be resolved that Council considers the arrangements to be effective; and,**
- ii. in being satisfied of the independence and competence of its internal auditor, the Suffolk Association of Local Councils be appointed to continue as the Council's internal auditor, undertaking a half-yearly and year-end audit on the basis of Section 4 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide 2023".**
- iii. SALC be requested that different auditors complete the half yearly audits.**

42. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND ANNUAL RETURN 2023-24

Members considered the Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Annual Return for the Financial Year 2023/24 as presented.

The Clerk confirmed that the Notice of Audit would be displayed on the Town Hall noticeboard in accordance with the statutory requirements.

Councillors recommended the '0' Code be made more clear, and has since been renamed '0 - Control Account', and this will be updated when it goes to Council.

Councillors expressed their thanks to the Town Council team.

It was RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that:

- i. the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 (Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement) be approved and the Mayor and Town Clerk be authorised to sign the declaration on behalf of Felixstowe Town Council;**
- ii. the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 (Section 2 – Accounting Statements) as signed by the Town Clerk, as the Council's Responsible Finance Officer be approved, and the Mayor be authorised to sign the declaration on behalf of Felixstowe Town Council; and,**
- iii. it be noted that there were no actions arising from the final Internal Audit Report for the Financial Year 2023/24 and, therefore, no action plan was required to be submitted with the Annual Return 2023/24 to the External Auditor.**

43. ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Committee considered the Annual Report 2023/24. Members suggested a couple of minor amendments and corrections and a change to the colours as the contrast made it difficult to read. The Clerk advised that he would update the report and circulate to all Councillors, with a deadline of the following Friday, prior to inclusion on the next Council meeting agenda.

It was RESOLVED that, subject to the amendments discussed, the Annual Report for the Municipal Year 2023-24 be recommended to Council for approval and adoption.

44. BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 APRIL 2024

Committee received the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2024. A report of any variance to budget estimates for the period greater than 9.2% or £500 was considered.

RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2024 be noted.

45. QUARTERLY BANK RECONCILIATION

It was confirmed that the Council's nominated Quarterly Bank Reconciliation Signatory (*Min #15 2023/24 refers*), had signed the reconciliation between the bank statement and Scribe accounts to confirm the amounts agreed each month.

RESOLVED that it be noted that the reconciliations between the bank statement and accounts statements for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 had been reviewed and signed by the appointed bank reconciliation signatory.

46. COUNCIL INVESTMENTS

Committee noted the report on Council investments and discussed the reinvestment of £500,000 in a 1-year bond with the Close Brothers Group at a return of 5.1% interest.

Points were also made concerning the ethical nature of investing with banks, effort taken to avoid banks tied to arms trade and fossil fuels, and the pros and cons of investing with multiple banks. It was proposed that some funds be taken out of our existing Nationwide account to invest with Unity Bank, subject to a satisfactory credit rating, and to be approved at Ordinary Council on June 19th.

Members were however still supportive of renewing a 1-year bond with the Close Brothers.

It was RESOLVED that £500,000 be reinvested in a 1-year bond with the Close Brothers Group, with an additional request to investigate the rating of Unity Bank, for possible investment.

47. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2024/25

Committee noted the requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 for Council to ensure that it has a sound system of internal control.

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 2025 be recommended to Council for formal adoption as presented.

48. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2024/25

Committee reviewed new draft Financial Regulations 2024/25, following the model which has recently been published by NALC.

RESOLVED that the draft Financial Regulation for 2024/25 be recommended to Council for adoption.

49. RESERVES POLICY 2024-26

Committee reviewed the Council's Reserves Policy, outlining how the Council will determine and review its level of reserves.

It was RESOLVED that the Reserves Policy for the period 2024-2026 be recommended to Council for adoption as presented.

50. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.47pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 7.30pm.

AGENDA ITEM 5: BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

A summary Income & Expenditure Report to 30 September 2024 is shown below with a detailed report provided at **Appendix A**.

1 April - 30 September 2024 (2024 - 2025)

Felixstowe Town Council Summary of Receipts and Payments Summary - All Cost Centres

Cost Centre	Receipts				Payments			
	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	% Received	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	% Spent
101 Administration	700,727.00	699,355.85	-1,371	99.80%	348,113.00	171,631.44	176,482	49.30%
201 Town Hall	21,400.00	12,303.74	-9,096	57.49%	87,417.00	45,012.59	42,404	51.49%
202 Walton	8,000.00	7,099.52	-900	88.74%	14,007.00	7,627.23	6,380	54.45%
203 Broadway House	2,650.00	0.00	-2,650	0.00%	10,302.00	5,606.23	4,696	54.42%
204 Cemetery	76,565.00	27,454.63	-49,110	35.86%	177,917.00	88,203.41	89,714	49.58%
205 Allotment	17,850.00	1,224.66	-16,625	6.86%	39,775.00	17,894.52	21,880	44.99%
206 Parks & Recreation	0.00	4,755.00	4,755	N/A	40,075.00	17,034.98	23,040	42.51%
301 Civic & Community	4,191.00	0.00	-4,191	0.00%	38,578.00	21,249.96	17,328	55.08%
302 Grants	0.00	0.00	0	N/A	38,578.00	25,946.99	12,631	67.26%
303 Felixstowe in Flower	6,000.00	3,370.87	-2,629	56.18%	9,250.00	6,455.81	2,794	69.79%
304 Communication	6,000.00	2,100.00	-3,900	35.00%	22,000.00	9,806.00	12,194	44.57%
305 Community Projects	0.00	0.00	0	N/A	11,000.00	11,000.00	1,000	100.00%
NET TOTAL	843,383.00	757,664.27	-85,718.73	89.84%	837,012.00	427,469.16	409,542.84	51.07%

Created by  Scribe

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 less. As the Council's budgets are not produced on a phased basis, the expectation is, being six months in to the year, for overall expenditure to be around 50%, with an explanation for any items overspent by £500 or 10% or over this level (i.e. 55%). Total expenditure for the first six months stood at 51%. Explanatory notes and any recommended action for individual qualifying items in **Appendix A** are as follows:

Cost Centre 101 - Administration
<p>4400 Stationery (64%) Boswell orders, printer paper increase in price Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4460 Subscriptions (96%) All annual subscriptions for 2024/25 now paid. Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4464 Insurance (100%) Full year payment up front. Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4481 IT Maintenance & Software (84%) Laptop replacement Recommendation: No action.</p>

<p>4490 Professional Fees (155%) Birketts – Legal fees Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>Cost Centre 201 - Town Hall</p>
<p>4003 Employee Salaries (58%) Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4110 Rates (62%) Rates are paid over 10 months only. Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4155 Cleaning Materials (58%) Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4180 Licences (100%) Paid in full for 2024-25 Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4260 Equipment Purchases (100%) Safety equipment, additional clothing for new member of staff, shelving Recommendation : Continue to monitor on a monthly basis</p>
<p>4170 Repairs & Maintenance (56%) Stair-Riser / Lift servicing - paid upfront Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>Cost Centre 202 – Walton Community Hall</p>
<p>4003 Employee Salaries (58%) Recommendation: No action.</p>
<p>4111 Rates (65%) Rates are paid over 10 months only. Recommendation: No further action</p>
<p>Cost Centre 203 – Broadway House</p>
<p>1031 Leases, Rents & Licenses (0%) Annual invoice is outstanding, awaiting payment Recommendation: Chase outstanding invoice</p>
<p>Cost Centre 204 – Cemetery</p>
<p>1032 Mobile Phone Mast (0%) Annual invoice is outstanding, awaiting payment Recommendation: Chase outstanding invoice</p>

<p>1100 Interment Fees (28%) £7010 outstanding awaiting payment (56%) Recommendation: Chase outstanding invoices</p>
<p>1130 Memorials (37%) Three outstanding invoices totalling £2632 awaiting payment (43%). Recommendation: Chase outstanding invoices</p>
<p>4032 Water & Sewerage (126%) Overspend caused by increased water usage due to FIF basket watering Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis</p>
<p>4112 Rates (65%) Rates are paid over 10 months only. Recommendation: No further action</p>
<p>4124 Electricity (69%) Electric Van Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis</p>
<p>4173 Repairs & Maintenance (62%) Cemetery signage, tree services Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis</p>
<p>4262 Equipment Purchases (75%) Safety equipment & PPE purchased, new tools Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis</p>
<p>4300 Vehicle Running Costs (78%) Front loaded costs such as MOT, Truck Tax paid, also work to trailer and tractor. Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis</p>
<p>Cost Centre 205 – Allotments</p>
<p>1080 Allotment Rents (7%) Majority of Allotment rents are billed annually end of September Recommendation: No further action.</p>
<p>Cost Centre 206 – Parks & Recreation</p>
<p>4175 Repairs & Maintenance (91%) East Suffolk Services/Norse maintenance work Recommendation: No further action.</p>
<p>4615 Street Furniture (137%) Awaiting refund from ESC for erroneous invoice Recommendation: Chase up credit note and code accordingly</p>
<p>Cost Centre 301 – Civic & Community</p>

1800 Agency Income (0%)
CCTV maintenance contract – ESC withdrew from the shared maintenance agreement.

Recommendation: No further action

4511 Town Twinning (100%)

Travel and expenses for visits

Recommendation: Continue to monitor on a monthly basis

4645 Christmas Lights (100%)

Paid in full June 2024.

Recommendation: No further action

4512 Engraving/Sign Writing (85%)

Paid in full for 2024-25

Recommendation: No further action.

Cost Centre 302 – Grants

4620 Annual Grants (100%)

All annual grants processed & paid.

Recommendation: No further action.

Cost Centre 303 – Felixstowe in Flower

4290 Flowers & Containers (85%)

Flowers & containers purchased for 2024/25

Recommendation: No further action

Cost Centre 304 – Communication

1812 Donations & Sponsorship (38%)

Invoices are outstanding and awaiting payment. £3,432 (92%)

Recommendation: Chase outstanding invoices

Cost Centre 305 – Community Projects & Partnerships

4625 Harwich Harbour Ferry Services (100%)

Paid in full

Recommendation: None

4630 Level 2 (100%)

Paid in full

Recommendation: None

Committee is requested to consider the budget monitoring report to 30 September 2024 and decide on any action it deems necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 6: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023/24

Council is advised that Notice has been given that the external audit of the accounts of Felixstowe Town Council for the Financial Year 2023/24 was completed on 28th September 2024. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), including the Audit Certificate is presented at **Appendix B**.

The Council's External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn, has expressed the view that, on the basis of the annual return, in their opinion, the information is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. In addition, there were no other matters affecting their opinion that required the issue of a report or the further attention of the Council.

In accordance with Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234) and the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/404) the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was displayed on the Town Hall noticeboard from 30 September 2024 and is also available to view on the Town Council website to advise local electors that the accounts and requisite information as defined by Section 13(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 are available for inspection.

Additionally, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Financial Year 2023/24 will remain available online on the Council's website, as have the documents for the preceding six years. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is presented to the Finance & Governance Committee for review and is also required to be formally approved and accepted at a meeting of the full Council.

Council is requested to:

- i. Approve and Accept the Annual Governance and Accountability Return including Audit Certificate as presented at Appendix B; and,**
 - ii. Note that, in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 as defined by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 & the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was displayed on the Town Hall noticeboard from 30 September 2024 and is available to view on the Financial Page of the Town Council Website.**
-

AGENDA ITEM 7: INTERIM AUDIT REPORT: YEAR 2024/25

The Interim Internal Audit for the half-year ending 30 September 2024 is due to take place on Monday 21st October 2024 and a copy of the internal auditor's report will be available prior to the meeting.

The primary objective of the internal audit is to review, appraise and report upon the adequacy of internal control systems operating throughout the Council.

Further to consideration made to Internal Audit Effectiveness at the last meeting, (*Min #41 2024/25 refers*), and the request to ask the Suffolk Association of Local Councils to provide different auditors for the interim and the end of year internal audits. The audit is being conducted via SALC's auditor Ms Julie Lawes, who is also Clerk to Capel St Mary Parish Council and has been carrying out audits for SALC for over three years. This will be the first time that Julie has audited Felixstowe Town Council.

The Interim Internal Audit Report is required to be formally reviewed by the Finance & Governance and received at a meeting of the full Council.

Council is requested to note the Interim Internal Audit Report for the period 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024.

ITEM 9: COUNTY COURT JUDGMENT AND DEBT RECOVERY

On 29th July 2024, a County Court Judgment (CCJ) was requested against a debtor who owes £1,508. The claim includes interest of £37.68 and a claim fee of £115, bringing the total owed to £1,660.68.

While a CCJ can negatively impact the debtor's credit rating by alerting credit agencies, it does not guarantee that the debt will be repaid. Unfortunately, in this case, no payment has been forthcoming since the judgment.

The next steps involve enforcing the judgment, with several options available (further details can be found here: [gov.uk enforce a judgment](https://gov.uk/enforce-a-judgment)).

1. Assessing the Debtor's Ability to Pay:

We can request the court to order the debtor to attend a hearing to determine what they can afford to pay. This process incurs a fee of £65.

2. Further Enforcement Action:

After assessing the debtor's financial situation, we can decide whether to pursue further court action to collect the debt. The most common next step is requesting a **warrant of control**, which involves the court sending bailiffs to collect the debt.

- The cost to request bailiff service is £131, plus a warrant fee of £91. The bailiff will give the debtor 7 days to make the payment. If the debt remains unpaid, the bailiff will visit the debtor's home or business to assess whether any assets can be seized to cover the debt.

3. High Court Option:

For debts between £600 and £5,000, we can apply either to the County Court or the High Court. If we choose the High Court, a **Writ of Control** (at a cost of £78) will be required instead of the county court's £91 warrant fee. Legal advice may be necessary when pursuing enforcement via the High Court.

It is important to note that enforcement action does not guarantee the recovery of the debt. The committee will need to weigh the additional court fees and legal costs against the risk of unsuccessful enforcement, which could result in further unrecovered costs.

Committee is requested to consider the next step in recovering the outstanding debt.

ITEM 10: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) WORKING GROUP REPORT

The CIL Working Group has met regularly to discuss and identify projects suitable for CIL funding. Subject to Committee's consideration, the following recommendations will be presented to Full Council on 6th November 2024:

i) Play Area Refurbishments

A total of £100,000 (£50,000 for each) is recommended for the complete refurbishment of play equipment at Walton and Seaton Road recreation grounds. East Suffolk Council has approved match funding through District CIL, supplemented by the ESC Capital Programme and Outdoor Play Space Funds, as part of the broader "East Suffolk Play Enhancement Project." The total funding for this broader initiative is approximately £675,000.

Plaques acknowledging Felixstowe Town Council's support will be requested.

ii) Level Two Music Digital Arts Centre

A contribution of £30,000 towards the Level Two Music Digital Arts Centre at Beach Street is proposed. Accessibility and environmental improvements have been made to the project in response to feedback from the Town Council's Planning & Environment Committee. The total estimated project cost exceeds £170,000, and Level Two is confident of securing the remaining funding with the Council's support.

The building will include a lift, disabled access flooring and alarm, an air source heat pump, and a green roof. The facility will extend its current offering to young people aged up to 25.

iii) Allenby Park Gates

It is recommended that, subject to consultation with the Felixstowe Society and the ESC Conservation Officer, £15,000 + VAT from CIL funding be allocated for the replacement of the gates at Allenby Park. Consideration will be given to the heritage value of the existing gates, pending an assessment.

The CIL Working Group is also conducting preliminary investigations into developing a Neighbourhood Plan, engaging with other Town Councils to explore potential timelines and opportunities.

The Group will continue to meet to review further potential projects for CIL funding, including bus indicators and a pump track.

CIL Financial Overview

The table below provides a summary of CIL amounts currently held in Earmarked Reserves and their 5-year expiry dates:

Year	CIL Received	CIL Payments Spent/(Allocated)	EOY Balance
2016/17	£910.67	£0	£910.67
2017/18	£26,896.79	£0	£27,807.46
2018/19	£4,057.27	£27,807.79 Play Equipment	£4,056.94
2019/20	£30,245.03	£0	£34,301.97
2020/21	£17,291.40	£0	£51,593.37
2021/22	£77,289.65	£10,000 Allotment Assoc Community Hut	£118,883.02.
2022/23	£116,511.36		£235,394.38
2023/24	£158,023.77	£10,000 Lions Relocation £23,665 Paths at Gosford & Allenby Parks	£359,753.15
2024/25	£17,750.03	(£100,000 Play Improvements) (£30,000 Level Two Music Digital Arts Centre) (£15,000 Allenby Park Gates)	£232,503.18*
Total to date	£448,975.97	£71,472.79 (£145,000)	£232,503.18*

*Figures reflect proposed allocations, subject to Council approval in November 2024.

CIL Reserves and Expiry Dates

The following table outlines the unspent CIL amounts and their 5-year expiry dates, should Council approve the funding of the play improvements, Level Two music project and the Allenby Park Gates:

Date Received	Amount	5-year expiry date
21/10/2022	£56,729.38	20/10/2027
18/04/2023	£46,843.92	17/04/2028
24/10/2023	£111,179.85	24/10/2028
17/04/2024	£17,750.03	17/04/2029
Total in CIL Earmarked Reserves	£232,503.18	

Committee is requested to note this report from the Community Infrastructure Levy Working Group and consider any necessary actions.

AGENDA ITEM 11: BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING

The Business Plan 2024-28 was approved by Council at the Annual Council meeting of 15th May 2024 (*Minute #17 2024/25 refers*) and is published on the Town Council website here: <https://felixstowe.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Felixstowe-Town-Council-Business-Plan-2024-28-full-res.pdf>

The actions outlined in the Business Plan are to be regularly monitored to ensure successful implementation in alignment with the Council's four main objectives.

Progress will be regularly reviewed by the Finance & Governance Committee, and a summary will be made available to the public through the Council's Annual Report.

Progress towards the Council's objectives are as follows:

1. Take Pride in Public Spaces & Services

- The Council is participating in the consultation process for the North Felixstowe Garden Neighbourhood Masterplan. Following a briefing meeting for Councillors on 8th October, the Council will consider its corporate response to the Masterplan consultation on 6th November.
- Regular promotion of public spaces on social media and in the Council's magazine.
- Play areas have received an annual inspection, with improvements underway.
- Working with East Suffolk Council to enhance Walton and Seaton Road recreation grounds (see item 10 regarding the use of CIL funds).
- New pathway being installed at Gosford Way park to improve accessibility.
- Preliminary investigations have started for the Cemetery extension.
- Supported new local initiative 'Edible Felixstowe' in delivering community gardens in the town centre, providing fresh produce.

2. Enable Our Communities

- Grants awarded supporting various community activities and age groups, including youth initiatives.
- Community events continue to be promoted in our quarterly magazine.
- Ongoing collaboration with partners to improve local CCTV provision.
- The Town Hall remains accessible for community events, with recent refurbishment of the disabled access entrance and installation of a larger, more secure ramp.
- Recognising local heroes through the Civic Award Scheme; the next deadline for nominations is 31st March 2025.

3. Celebrate Felixstowe

- Encouraging grant recipients to promote Felixstowe Town Council as a grant provider to inspire other local groups to apply.
- Supporting the Tourist Information Hut Volunteers to provide appropriate leaflets and guide visitors.

- Supported BID by hosting a Green Market during the Love Green Felixstowe Weekend.
- Continued support for Blue and Green Flag beach awards.
- Supported cultural events such as WAMfest, Art on the Prom, the Book Festival, and Felixstowe Carnival.
- Opened the Town Hall for Heritage Open Day 2024.

4. Promote Environmental Sustainability

- Council continues to explore ways to reduce the Council's environmental impact, aiming to be carbon-neutral by 2030. Investigations are underway into a grant for environmental improvements at Walton Community Hall, including solar panels, battery storage, air source heat pumps, and secondary glazing.
- 60 twisted hazel and 60 dogwood saplings have been planted along the hedge line on Langley Avenue. A lime tree was planted in Allenby Park as part of the 30th twinning anniversary with Salzwedel. Additional trees rescued from Persimmon will be planted in permanent locations in the coming month.
- The magazine continues to feature several pages on environmental topics, raising public awareness and highlighting local environmental initiatives.
- The CIL Working Group is investigating the process of implementing a Neighbourhood Plan, focused on environmental sustainability.

Additional Update:

- The Business Plan will be updated to reflect Cllr W Underwood having joined the Council.

The Business Plan will be a standing agenda item for Committee meetings to monitor ongoing progress.

Committee is requested to note the report on the Business Plan monitoring and decide on any action it deems necessary.
