



Morecambe Town Council

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Proper Officer: Mr Luke Trevaskis

Minutes of Full Council Meeting of Morecambe Town Council held at Morecambe Town Hall at 7pm on the tenth day of June 2021

Present: Councillors Cary Matthews (Chairman); June Ashworth; Alex Ashworth; Vicky Boyd-Power; Patricia Clarke; Glenys Dennison; Roger Dennison; Patricia Heath; Margaret Pattison; Jim Pilling, Jason Firth, Merv Evans, Roger Cleet, Janice Hanson, Ian Clift, Paul Hart, Jake Goodwin, Tony Anderson.

In attendance: Mr Luke Trevaskis (Proper Officer) and no members of the public.

Minute 20326

Apologies

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs P Anderton, S Burns, Mirka Balcer, Mariusz Balcer.

Minute 20327

Declarations of Interests

Cllr Pattison noted membership of Lancashire County Council.

Minute 20328

Minutes

The minutes of the prior meeting were approved.

Minute 20329

Public Participation

None.

Minute 20330

Reserves and Carry Forward

The Council considered its underspend and agreed to carry forward the underspends for 2020-2021 to same budget headings for 2021-2022 as below.

Expenditure	Budget (Approved 17.12.2020)	Underspend from 2020-2021 (Approved to carry forward to each Budget 10.6.21)	Final Budget 2021-2022	Budget %
Salaries + Staff Expenses	£65,000.00	£6,557.12	£71,557.12	15.88
Office Equipment / Consumables / Administration	£4,000		£4,000	0.89
Professional Services	£10,000.00	£387.46	£10387.46	2.31
Office Rent	£4,000.00	£1,112.50	£5,112.50	1.13
Local Council Award Scheme	£500.00		£500.00	0.11
Insurance	£2,500		£2,500	0.55
Audits	£1,500		£1,500	0.33
Lengthsman / Town Ranger	£23,556.00	£23,556.00	£47,112.00	10.46
Enforcement Officer	£23,556	£3,811.00	£27,367.00	6.07
Training	£5,000.00	£1,000.00	£6,000.00	1.33
Communications	£2,500.00	£2,395.51	£4,895.51	1.09
Litter Campaign	£5,000.00		£5,000.00	1.11
Grant Fund	£35,000	£17,639.00	£52,639.00	11.68
Community Engagement	£5,000.00	£9,950.00	£14,950.00	3.32
Asset Purchase / Maintenance	£45,000.00	£19,933.00	£64,933.00	14.41
Backstreet Project	£6,000.00	£5,000.00	£11,000.00	2.44
Green Corridor	£6,000.00		£6,000.00	1.33
Arts Projects	£6,000.00	£4,327.89	£10,327.89	2.29
Festivals, Events, Sponsorships	£75,000.00		£75,000.00	16.65
Morecambe in Bloom	£6,000.00	£4,796.00	£10,796.00	2.40
Outdoor Gym Project	£12,000.00		£12,000.00	2.66
CCTV / Security	£2,000.00		£2,000.00	0.44
Neighbourhood Plan	£5,000		£5,000	1.11
Totals (Excl Reserves)			£450,577.48	

Exclusion of press and public

The Council resolved that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

Minute 20331

Audit 2020-2021

The Council received a presentation from the Responsible Financial Officer and considered a report outlining the actions undertaken regarding the internal audit 2020-2021.

The Council was advised of issues that had arisen with the first contractor appointed to undertake the audit, and a decision had been taken by the Responsible Financial Officer to appoint a new contractor in line with Financial Regulation 4.5 that states “in cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the Proper Officer may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf on the Council which in the Proper Officer’s judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1,000. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.”

First contractor submitted work to the Council on 16.4.21.

Inaccuracies were identified and reported to the contractor on 7.5.21.

An unsatisfactory response was received from the first contractor on 8.5.21 and no resolution was reached to correct the inaccuracies.

The Council is under a duty to accept, sign and submit documentation that is accurate.

A quote was obtained from a second contractor on 10.5.21.

The Proper Officer consulted with the Chairman on 11.5.21.

The Proper Officer signed terms with the new contractor on 11.5.21 and submitted the terms to the contractor on 12.5.21.

An internal audit was undertaken by the second contractor between 13.5.21-23.5.21.

An accurate report outlining the findings of the Internal Audit was received from the second contractor on 24.5.21.

The accurate Internal Audit report was circulated to members, alongside the inaccurate work undertaken by prior contractor, ahead of meeting scheduled for 27.5.21.

Due to time, the agenda item was not heard on 27.5.21, and the meeting was adjourned for 10.6.21.

Councillors noted the Council must not wilfully mislead the public by publishing misleading or inaccurate information.

The Council considered the action that had been undertaken to date and understood there was a duty on the authority to submit an Internal Audit report to the External Auditor by the end of the month.

The Council noted the course of action had been taken to uphold the integrity of the Internal and External Audit and it was agreed that the Council had a duty to ensure all documentation was a true and accurate record of fact.

The Council resolved to accept the Annual Internal Audit Report 2020-2021 completed by JDH Business Services Ltd and return this to the External Auditor. The Council resolved to accept Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Statement - assertions agreed as follows:

- 1 - YES**
- 2 - NO**
- 3 - YES**
- 4 - NO**
- 5 - NO**
- 6 - YES**
- 7 - YES**
- 8 - YES**
- 9 - N/A**

A recorded vote was requested. Members in favour included Cllrs T Heath, A Ashworth, J Ashworth, V Boyd-Power, J Goodwin, J Pilling, P Hart, C Matthews, G Dennison, R Dennison, J Firth, M Pattison, I Clift, J Hanson. Members against included Cllrs T Anderson, M Evans, R Cleet, and T Clarke.

The Council resolved to accept Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Statements prepared on a 'receipts and payments' basis, including the restated 2019-2020 figures, to be signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and Chairman. A recorded vote was requested. Members in favour included Cllrs T Heath, A Ashworth, J Ashworth, V Boyd-Power, J Goodwin, J Pilling, P Hart, C Matthews, G Dennison, R Dennison, J Firth, M Pattison, I Clift, J Hanson. Members against included Cllrs T Anderson, M Evans, R Cleet, and T Clarke.

The Council noted the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which state that the AGAR must be uploaded to the website. The Council also noted that the GDPR states the Council must not publish personal and identifiable information. With this in mind, the Council resolved to approve the redaction of the Chairman's signature when the AGAR is published to the website. Examples of which can be found in other authorities including Firsdow PC, Idmiston PC, Launton PC and Caversfield PC.

The Council resolved to set the period for the Exercise of Public Rights from Monday 14 June 2021 to Friday 23 July 2021.

The Council approved the payment of £840+VAT to be paid to JDH Business Services. A recorded vote was requested. Members in favour included Cllrs T Heath, A Ashworth, J Ashworth, V Boyd-Power, J Goodwin, J Pilling, P Hart, C Matthews, G Dennison, R Dennison, J Firth, M Pattison, I Clift, J Hanson. Members against included Cllrs T Anderson, M Evans, R Cleet, and T Clarke.

The Council considered whether or not the first contractor had undertaken the requested work with reasonable care and skill and noted the Responsible Financial Officer could not recommend payment of the invoice.

The following motion was proposed:

That the Council pay the first contractor in full (two invoices) and do not accept the work undertaken due to its inaccuracies.

A recorded vote was requested. Members in favour included Cllrs P Hart, R Dennison, G Dennison, J Firth, J Goodwin. Members against included Cllrs J Pilling, V Boyd-Power, C Matthews, T Heath, A Ashworth, J Ashworth, M Pattison, J Hanson, T Clarke, I Clift, R Cleet, M Evans, T Anderson. The motion was not approved.

The following motion was proposed:

That the Council pay the first contractor in full (two invoices).

A recorded vote was requested. Members in favour included Cllr M Evans, R Cleet, T Clarke, J Hanson, T Heath, I Clift, M Pattison. Members against included Cllrs T Heath, A Ashworth, J Ashworth, V Boyd-Power, J Goodwin, J Pilling, P Hart, J Firth, G Dennison, R Dennison, C Matthews. The motion was not approved.

The following motion was proposed:

That the Council do not accept the work undertaken by the first contractor.

A recorded vote was requested. Members in favour included Cllrs T Heath, A Ashworth, J Ashworth, V Boyd-Power, J Goodwin, J Pilling, P Hart, J Firth, R Dennison, G Dennison, C Matthews. Members against included Cllrs T Anderson, M Evans, R Cleet. The motion was approved.

The following motion was proposed:

That in light of the first report not being accepted, the Council pay the first invoice of the first contractor (half payment).

Cllrs R Cleet, M Evans, and T Anderson withdrew from the meeting.

A recorded vote was taken. Members in favour included Cllrs A Ashworth, V Boyd-Power, J Hanson, J Goodwin, J Pilling, P Hart, J Firth, C Matthews, G Dennison, R Dennison. The motion was approved.