



Morecambe Town Council

Morecambe Town Hall,
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Proper Officer: Mr Luke Trevaskis

Members of Morecambe Town Council

Cllr C Cozler - Chairman

Cllr P Hart - Vice Chairman

Cllr C Ainscough, Cllr J Ainscough, Cllr Dan Blacow, Cllr David Bottoms, Cllr L Bradbury, Cllr P Clarke, Cllr B Cooper, Cllr F Cooper, Cllr R Dennison. Cllr W Dixon, Cllr K Gee, Cllr J Goodrich, Cllr J Hanson, Cllr C Kent, Cllr D Knight, Cllr G Knight, Cllr J Livermore, Cllr M Pattison, Cllr J Pilling, Cllr J Rogerson, Cllr J Slater, Cllr M Stenneken, Cllr R Walsh, Cllr D Whitaker

Minutes - 18 January 2024

Minutes of Morecambe Town Council's Full Council Meeting held at 7pm on the eighteenth day of January 2024 at Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road, Morecambe. LA4 5AF.

Record of Attendance:

Councillors: C Cozler (Chairman), C Ainscough, J Ainscough, D Blacow, D Bottoms, L Bradbury. P Clark, F Cooper, R Dennison, W Dixon, K Gee, J Goodrich, J Hanson, P Hart, C Kent, D Knight, G Knight, J Livermore, M Pattison, J Pilling, J Slater, M Stenneken, R Walsh, D Whitaker

Officers: Luke Trevaskis, Peter Fisher, Joel Beal, Helen Freeborough

Press: Beyond Radio

Public: 12 persons

Minute 2023/24 - 072 - Apologies

Apologies for non attendance received from Cllrs B Cooper and J Rogerson

Minute 2023/24 - 073 - Declarations of Interest

Cllrs R Dennison, P Hart, M Pattison, M Bottoms, J Livermore, J Ainscough declared an interest as a Councillor of Lancaster City Council.

Cllr J Ainscough declared they were the portfolio holder for Environment Services at Lancaster City Council.

Cllr M Pattison declared an interest as a Councillor of Lancashire County Council.

Cllr C Ainscough declared they are an employee of Lancashire County Council.

Cllr D Whitaker declared they are an employee of Lancashire County Council.

Minute 2023/24 - 074 - Minutes

The minutes of the last full council meeting were approved.

Minute 2023/24 - 075 - Public participation

None

Minute 2023/24 - 076 - NALC Elections

The Council noted that the NALC elections have concluded and the Proper Officer Luke Trevaskis, has assumed roles on the Larger Councils Committee and Management Board of the National Association of Local Councils. These appointments will actively contribute to upcoming reviews of crucial frameworks, including the Model Financial Regulations and the Good Councillor's Guide (Q2), the Good Councillor's Guide to Finance and Transparency (Q3), and the Model Standing Orders (Q4), ensuring optimal governance for Morecambe Town Council.

The Council noted the Lancashire Association of Local Councils has approached the Council to host its next county meeting. With the aim of fostering collaboration among neighbouring councils, this initiative supports knowledge sharing and regional insights, reinforcing the Council's commitment to addressing local issues effectively.

Minute 2023/24 - 077 - Public Realm Fleet

The Council considered the report and recommendations of the Environment Committee.

The report provided an overview of the current public realm operation and highlighted a more efficient and environmentally friendly approach to vegetation clearance.

The Council's Financial Regulations permit it to engage in procurement of contracts without competition if there is an appropriate reason and, in this case, the Council noted that there are limited market-available options for six-seater electric tipper trucks with the pay load required by the Council, and even fewer suppliers and conversion companies willing to undertake the work within the required timeframe. The Council approved for a six-seater Renault Tipper Truck to be purchased at a cost of £75,000.00 (£30,000 of which will be subsidised by income received from the public realm service provision) and the Proper Officer will facilitate this with a supplier for delivery as quickly as possible. It is understood that the supplier (Allports Group) will be able to deliver by July 2024, but the PO will engage an alternative supplier if lead-times change and become problematic for service delivery.

Minute 2023/24 - 078 - Frontierland Consultation Response

The Council considered and approved the response to Lancaster City Council's consultation regarding the former-Frontierland site.

Minute 2023/24 - 079 - Finance

The Council approved its Q3 budget summary, bank reconciliation and finance report.

The Council noted that the F&G Committee had been presented with a budget proposal for 2024-2025 based upon Q2 budget summaries, and these had now been updated to obtain a more accurate summary for Q3.

The Council reviewed all in-year budget amends within the finance report, and discussed significant budget variances.

The Council noted that since the Town Council set its budget in February 2023, there has been further growth in service delivery and officers have facilitated further divisions of some budget lines (as previously discussed with members) in order to assist with budgetary control.

In Q1, the accounts were changed to take into consideration the fact that VAT had to be removed, following a change in accounting method from 'receipt and payments' to 'income and expenditure'.

In Q2, there were further reports to the Council about unanticipated costs - for example, an overspend in election fees, and additional costs associated with the office move following a request from Lancaster City Council to return all existing loaned furniture and equipment. Whilst the Council had initially discussed coding some additional costs within existing budget lines which were anticipated to produce an underspend at year end (such as the 'Staffing' budget), officers have presented revisions to the accounts which more accurately reflect the current position to date, ensuring all costs are coded to an appropriate budget line, to provide more appropriate insight into project budgets for FY2425 and facilitate a pragmatic approach to budgetary control. With this in mind, new budget lines have been created within Corporate Services - including 'IT Infrastructure'.

Members also noted additional budget lines that have not incurred any expenditure in the current financial year, which have been included with the new budget to account for even further delineation of budget lines in FY2425 demonstrating greater accountability and transparency,

enabling the Council to better manage its financial obligations (an example of which can be found in 'Civic Expenses' to cover out of pocket expenses for members such as car parking).

The Council reviewed the budget lines, and new 'service' titles, noting these would be easier for residents to understand the level of expenditure required to delivery each of the Council's main areas of service, agreeing that lines (such as staffing costs) should be specified within each individual area of service as presented in the updated accounts summary. The Council also noted that the budget lines redrawn for Town Maintenance Service will help ensure clarity is provided for residents that taxpayers are not subsidising any services that fall outside the boundary of MTC's administrative area - for example, Cost Code 36 and 27 provide clear delineation between weed control products paid for by MTC (and used solely within the boundary of MTC), and weed control products paid for by Lancashire County Council (and used solely to deliver the district-wide weed spraying service).

The Council also noted some income had not been received (so far) during the FY2324 and that adjustments to budgets may be required to accommodate a reduced level of income.

The Council considered the Financial Report, all budget line amends, the actual spend to date as of end of Q3, projected outturn for year end, proposed budget allocations for 2024-2025, and precept requirement.

The Council received a presentation from officers on the proposed budget for 2024-2025, and the requirements for the retention of an adequate level of reserves. Following questions, the below motions were passed.

The Council resolved to adopt the budget presented in the Financial Plan Report, and set its total budget for 2024-2025 at £1,164,680.00

The Council resolved to set its precept for 2024-2025 at £951,384.33

The Council resolved to move all reserves into a General Reserve and allocate £150,000.00 to subsidise the budget for 2024-2025.

Publication Scheme:

The Council resolved to accept the Publication Scheme.

Financial Regulations (Petty Cash)

Following a recommendation from Finance and Governance Committee, the Council resolved to increase the petty cash float to £4000.00 - effective from 1 April 2023.

Peninsula HR:

The Council resolved to extend the contract with Peninsula HR service for a further twelve months whilst officers undertake a full review of HR provision.

Minute 2023/24 - 080 - Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council resolved to exclude the press and public.

Minute 29023/24 - 081 - Grant Applications

Community Grant Application 2023/24 - 006

This grant application was refused.

Community Grant Application 2023/24 - 007

More Music. Approved £1000.00

Community Grant Application 2023/24 - 008

It was resolved to defer this item, subject to the request for additional information.

Festival Grant Application 2023/24 - 013

It was resolved to award a grant of £3,500.00 to Morecambe 1940's Revival Festival.

Festival Grant Application 2023/24 - 014

It was resolved to award a grant of £6,500.00 to A Splendid Day Out Festival.