

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE, POLICY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held at the Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 78:00pm on **Monday 16th September 2024**.

Those present

Cllr Eric Buckmaster
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt
Cllr Reece Smith
Cllr Steve Smith

In attendance:

Christopher Hunt - Town Clerk

F 24/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Greg Rattey
[prop Cllr N Parsad-Wyatt sec'd Cllr R Smith]

F 24/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

F 24/17 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 10th June 2024 (FO1).
[prop Cllr N Parsad-Wyatt sec'd Cllr R Smith]

F 24/18 STAFF MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.

The Clerk explained that all interim one to one's were complete and all staff were happy in their roles and no issues were raised. All staff had or have booked leave and long term absences had been recorded.

F 24/19 FINANCE MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to the finances and year end arrangements of the Council.

- To update with on the external audit from PKF Littlejohn. The Clerk reported that the report had been assessed by external auditors and had been returned as all correct and no comments were recorded highlighting any inconsistencies.
- Clerk reported on two variances on expenditure to budgeted figures. One related to fuel used by the spare bus as the Sawbobus was off the road due to repair for an extended period of time. The fuel budgeted for each bus was out of balance but only in the respective records and no extra overall fuel costs had occurred.
- **Noted;** The detailed Income and Expenditure report was attached to the agenda pack and no comment was made on this.
- **Resolved;** The Clerk update on current quotes from brokers, two had been received and one more was expected this week but others had not responded. It was debated and resolved to delegate the selection of the insurance provider to be decided between the Clerk and Cllr Eric Buckmaster as this will be needed prior to the next finance and full town council meeting.
[prop Cllr R Smith sec'd Cllr S Smith]

F 24/20 JUBILEE GARDENS (TOWN GREEN) WORKING PARTY

Update on the current project status, The Clerk reported that pre-planning advice had been sought, and the planning department of EHDC deemed a planning application necessary. It was agreed that this application should be submitted once the revised design is received. Additionally, it was decided to explore whether the project could commence in areas not requiring planning authority approval, such as tree removal, path construction, and planting.

F24/21 COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT

The Clerk explained that the police were working on further engagement initiatives, which presented a valuable opportunity for councillors. Councillor Reece Smith suggested that having officers patrol Bell Street would be more effective in increasing engagement than holding surgeries within the council offices. The Clerk will discuss this proposal with the local officers.

F24/22 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To discuss proposals for promoting economic development in the town: The Clerk explained that the local business What's App group had been set up by Joanne and Cllr Rattey and he had sent out the first messages last week and the system was working well.

ACTION: The Clerk to explore if the traders would open the What's App group to all councillors

F24/23 POLICY MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to policies for the future development of Town Council services to the community. The Clerk explained that he is collaborating with his peers on the new financial regulations. Once a draft has been developed, he will present it at the next meeting. The current regulations remain valid until next year.

F24/24 REDUCING THE COUNCILS CARBON FOOTPRINT

To discuss the progress of the the reduction of the councils carbon footprint. The Clerk explained that the funding for the Hub project had been utilised to purchase an outdoor television and other equipment. These items were used at the "Fun on the Field" event to provide advice on reducing bills and lowering carbon emissions. The company advising the council on key focus areas, Three Acorns, has been contacted for a follow-up, as their report is still pending.

ACTION: The Clerk to contact Ware Clerk to assess any availability the sustainability officer has they have recently employed.

F24/25 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

All opportunities for funding will be explored, nothing was raised at the meeting.

F24/26 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None raised for this meeting. However, the members wanted an update on the progress for the market being reintroduced to the Town at the full town council meeting at the end of the month.

Meeting Closed at 7:51pm

ACTIONS

Owner	Action	Update
Clerk	The Clerk to explore if the traders would open the What's App group to all councillors	Email sent to Cllr Rattey enquiring if the traders would be happy with this or not.
Clerk	The Clerk to contact Ware Clerk to assess any availability the sustainability officer has they have recently employed.	Email sent 18/9/24 awaiting update.