



Wallingford Town Council

**MINUTES
of a meeting of the
FINANCE AND PROPERTIES
COMMITTEE
held on Monday, 11 December 2023 at 7.00 pm
in Wallingford Town Hall**

Present

Members: Cllr Dan Beauchamp (The Mayor) (from Minute 451/23 onwards)
Cllr Mahmood Ebrahimjee
Cllr Marcus Harris
Cllr Claire Holford (The Deputy Mayor) (Chairman)
Cllr Mark Hoskins
Cllr Nigel Hughes (Vice-Chairman from Minute 447/23 onwards)
Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan

Officers: Michelle Taylor, Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Luke Whitcomb, Meetings Officer
Jade Howard-Tull, Assistant Finance Officer

Others: 1 member of the public
0 members of the press

444/23 MEETING PROTOCOL

The Chairman explained the protocol that would be followed in the conduct of the meeting.

445/23 APOLOGIES

No apologies had been received.

Steve Beatty had resigned as a Town Councillor on 8 December 2023 with immediate effect and therefore was not present.

446/23 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Keats-Rohan subsequently declared interests in two items minuted as 451/23 and 456/23 and did not take part in discussions relating to Wallingford Museum.

447/23

ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Paul Gibbon had resigned from the Committee since the last meeting and there was therefore a need to elect a new Vice-Chair for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Ebrahimjee, and

RESOLVED that Councillor Nigel Hughes be elected as Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2023-24 Municipal Year

448/23

MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Properties Committee held on 16 October 2023 be approved as a correct record and the Chairman is authorised to sign them

449/23

ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee reviewed progress on 'open' actions agreed at previous meetings.

450/23

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public chose to speak.

Councillor Keats-Rohan declared an interest in the following item where it related to Wallingford Museum

451/23

DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR 2024-25

The Chairman and Town Clerk presented the Draft Estimates for 2024-25 which reflected the consideration of requests made during the last committee meeting cycle.

Particular attention was drawn to new lines or those that had changed significantly compared to the current year, including:

- Parks Yard Car Park rental – recognising both income and expenditure, thereby amounting to a neutral entry
- The creation of a new Community Engagement budget of £500
- An increase in the Tourism and Economic Development budget to £11,500
- A new line for knotweed treatment (£800) as required by law

- Reduction in environmental composting and shredding expenditure, made possible by new equipment
- A recognition of the rental value of Flint House, provisionally at £25k, thereby making clear that this value represented the monetary support for Wallingford Museum, similar to a grant
- Similar adjustments for the Council-owned building used by the Wigod Way Family Centre, demonstrating the value of the Council's support for this community service
- Salary increases recommended by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

Clarification was also given on which of the Reserves Funds (for example, General, Capital or Properties Maintenance) would be applied to one-off items. No figures had yet been confirmed for the Water Feature (Castle Gardens) and the Bull Croft toilet block, but these would be brought to the Full Council when ready for approval. A provision of £92k was being made for Properties Maintenance.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Hughes, and

RECOMMENDED at that Full Council adopt a revised budget showing a 8.56% increase which is equivalent to an additional £10.41 for a Band D household or £1.06 for each of the 10 months

452/23

BILL SCHEDULE

The Committee reviewed the Bill Schedule for October 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED that the Bill Schedule for October 2023 be approved

453/23

QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS

The Committee reviewed the second quarter accounts.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Harris, and

RESOLVED that the Accounts for Quarter of 2 the 2023-2024 Financial Year be approved.

454/23

GRANTS

The Grants Officer was unable to attend the meeting, so this item was deferred to the next meeting of the Full Council.

Councillor M Hoskins and the Grants Officer were congratulated on the grant of £28k towards a community transport scheme.

Action:

Schedule for FC meeting

455/23

CURFEW BELL

The Committee considered the costs for reprogramming the chip to ensure that the Curfew Bell rang regularly at the correct time.

It was proposed by Councillor Beauchamp, and seconded by Councillor Harris, and

RECOMMENDED that the quotation of 30 November 2023 by Smith of Derby for this work be approved and that the works be undertaken, subject to the correct time being confirmed (assumed to be the historic time of 8.50 pm)

Action:

The Anglican Church of St Mary-le- More – through its churchwardens - to be consulted about the setting of the time for the Curfew Bell. If the church disagrees with the historic time of 8.50 pm, the item to be brought back to the Committee.

The maintenance of the church clock, and the recurring timing issues, which were regularly the subject of public complaint, to be scheduled for the next meeting of the Committee on 15 January 2024

Councillor Keats-Rohan declared an interest in the following item and did not participate in the discussion

456/23

FLINT HOUSE – CHIMNEY STACK

The Committee considered the condition of the chimney stack of Flint House and a quotation secured by Homebase for its repair.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Beauchamp, and

RESOLVED that the powers of the Town Clerk to address pressing health and safety matters be used to ensure that the repair work is undertaken as soon as possible

Action:

Town Clerk to authorise this work to be undertaken as soon as possible

457/23

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following items were identified for future meetings:

- Wigod Way Family Centre – service level agreement
- Individual Council-owned property – renewal of lease in 2036
- St Mary's clock
- Valuations of Council-owned properties

458/23

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Beauchamp, and

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

The meeting ended at 8.32 pm

Minutes of the meeting of the
Finance and Properties Committee
held on
11 December 2023,
signed as a correct record

Chairman

2023-12-11 FIN minutes CONFIDENTIAL