

## **SALTASH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held at the Guildhall on Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 6.30 pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillors: R Bullock, J Dent, M Griffiths, S Lennox-Boyd, S Miller (Chairman), P Samuels (Vice-Chairman) and B Stoyel.

**ALSO PRESENT:** One Member of the Public, S Burrows (Town Clerk / RFO), W Peters (Finance Officer) and D Joyce (Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk).

**APOLOGIES:** R Bickford, J Brady, J Foster, S Martin, L Mortimore, J Peggs and B Samuels.

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#### **106/24/25 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Chairman informed those present of the actions required in the event of a fire or emergency..

#### **107/24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

a. To receive any declarations from Members of any registerable (5A of the Code of Conduct) and/or non-registerable (5B) interests in matters to be considered at this meeting.

None.

b. The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration.

None.

#### **108/24/25 PUBLIC QUESTIONS - A 15-MINUTE PERIOD WHEN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ASK QUESTIONS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.**

None received.

109/24/25 **TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2024 AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD.**

Please see a copy of the minutes on the STC website or request to see a copy at the Guildhall.

It was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor P Samuels and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 12 November 2024 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

**110/24/25 TO RECEIVE A RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SERVICES COMMITTEE AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

**91/24/25 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL LAND AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

Members discussed the report received and contained within the circulated reports pack.

Members debated at length the requests received to purchase land, including instances where encroachments had occurred prior to seeking permission to purchase.

Members acknowledged that action was necessary to address these matters appropriately, ensuring the correct procedures are followed.

During discussions, Councillor Stoyel gave his apologies and left the meeting.

Members considered the complexities involved in selling Town Council owned land, including any potential covenant on the land, character of the estate etc.

It was proposed by Councillor Peggs, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED:**

1. To appoint Coodes solicitors to manage, in principle, the sale of land at properties 9 Oak Apple Close, 57 Dartmoor View and 157 Grassmere, including the market valuation, working within the Acquisition or Sale of Land and Property on behalf of the Town Council;
2. To delegate to the Town Clerk to work with Coodes solicitors to manage the associated cost working within budget code 6224 Professional Fees;
3. To **RECOMMEND** to the Policy and Finance Committee to approve associated legal costs be allocated to 6224 Professional Fees, managed by the Town Clerk to remain within budget.

It was proposed by Councillor Dent, seconded by Councillor Bullock and **RESOLVED** to approve the above recommendation.

111/24/25 **TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING SUB COMMITTEES AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

a. Property Maintenance Sub Committee held on 26 September 2024;

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**25/24/25 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON SALTASH HERITAGE EXTERNAL WINDOWS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

Members discussed the report included in the reports pack and the recommendation from the Town Council's building surveyor to undertake a scope of works.

Following the scheduled installation of a new mural to the front elevation of the Heritage Building, further repair works had been identified. Members agreed a full scope of works would be appropriate to undertake to the front elevation of the building.

It was proposed by Councillor Bickford, seconded by Councillor Peggs and **RESOLVED:**

1. To appoint Barron Surveying to prepare a scope of works for external repair and painting of the front elevation of the Heritage Building;
2. To **RECOMMEND** to the Policy and Finance Committee the cost of £650+vat be allocated to budget code 6224 Professional Fees.

It was proposed by Councillor Dent, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED** to approve the above recommendation.

b. Town Vision Sub Committee held on 24 October 2024;

**RECOMMENDATION:**

38/24/25 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES FOR QUARTER TWO AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

4. To **RECOMMEND** to Policy and Finance to:

- a. Add under Strategic Priority 2 'Actions' – Continue to support the Delivery of Professional Youth Work in Saltash for the year 2024-25, setting a budget of £59,069 through a tender process.
- b. Add under Strategic Priority 2 'Actions' – Continue to support Saltash Youth Network for the year 2024-25, setting a budget of £4,726. To note; a formal Agreement is to be considered to improve the process in the coming years.

Members agreed to receive the above recommendation under minute number 112/24/25.

**112/24/25 TO RECEIVE AND REVIEW THE POLICY AND FINANCE BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES FOR QUARTER THREE AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

Councillor Griffiths reported that the Town Vision Sub Committee had reviewed the Town Council deliverables at their previous meeting and requested additions for further consideration from the Policy and Finance Committee.

The Town Clerk requested Members further review and input if required to the Policy and Finance deliverables received at this evening's meeting. The Town Clerk highlighted the importance of regular quarterly reviews with an implemented deliverable workflow now in place to ensure that all Committees and Sub Committees consistently reviewed their objectives.

This process aims to identify any unmet deliverables and provide Members with an opportunity to contribute to the successful delivery of the Town Council Business Plan.

Members received the following recommendation from the Town Vision Sub Committee meeting held on 24 October 2024:

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**38/24/25 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES FOR QUARTER TWO AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

**4. To RECOMMEND to Policy and Finance to:**

- a. Add under Strategic Priority 2 'Actions' – Continue to support the Delivery of Professional Youth Work in Saltash for the year 2024-25, setting a budget of £59,069 through a tender process.
- b. Add under Strategic Priority 2 'Actions' – Continue to support Saltash Youth Network for the year 2024-25, setting a budget of £4,726. To note; a formal Agreement is to be considered to improve the process in the coming years.

It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the above recommendation from Town Vision;
2. To note the status of the Committees deliverables;
3. To approve the Town Clerk continue to score quarter three.

**113/24/25     TO NOTE THAT ALL ACCOUNTS AND BANK ACCOUNTS ARE RECONCILED UP TO NOVEMBER 2024.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**114/24/25     TO NOTE THAT PETTY CASH IS RECONCILED UP TO DECEMBER 2024.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**115/24/25     TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON VAT.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**116/24/25     TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON INVESTMENTS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**117/24/25     TO NOTE THAT AN AUDIT ON RECENT SUPPLIER PAYMENTS WAS CONDUCTED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF POLICY & FINANCE IN LINE WITH THE COUNCILS FINANCIAL REGULATIONS. THERE ARE NO DISCREPANCIES TO REPORT.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**118/24/25     TO RECEIVE THE CURRENT STC COMMITTEE BUDGET STATEMENTS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**119/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE FINANCE OFFICER AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**120/24/25     TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A LETTER FROM THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR BDO LLP.**

The Town Clerk provided a brief verbal update regarding the letter received from the external auditor.

The letter presented at this evening's meeting, confirmed that the Town Council had adhered to the external auditor's requirements. The letter is available on the Town Council website.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**121/24/25     TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025.**

The Town Clerk reported that the interim internal audit report was returned with no actions.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**122/24/25     TO RATIFY THE TOWN COUNCIL PONTOON AND CYBER INSURANCE RENEWALS.**

It was proposed by Councillor P Samuels, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED** to ratify;

1. The pontoon insurance for the year 2025-26 appointing James Hallam Limited as the broker and Everard Insurance Brokers as the underwriter at a cost of £2,769.89 including taxes allocated to budget code 6205 P&F Insurance;
2. The cyber insurance for the year 2025-26 appointing Clear Insurance Management Ltd as the broker and Talbot Underwriting Limited as the underwriter at a cost of £1,434.88 inc taxes allocating to budget code 6205 P&F Insurance.

**123/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TOWN COUNCIL FLEET INSURANCE RENEWAL AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED** to delegate to the Finance Officer to obtain renewal for the Town Council Fleet Insurance for review and final approval from the Town Clerk/ RFO, working with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Policy and Finance, and working within budget code 6205 P&F Insurance, reporting back at the 11 March 2025 Policy and Finance Committee meeting.

**124/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON INSURANCE CLAIMS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

The Town Clerk provided an overview on the report received and contained within the circulated reports pack.

The pontoon is currently unavailable for use due to the damage that occurred during Storm Darragh. Health and Safety notices are in place.

The Town Clerk advised that the insurers are to send a Marine Surveyor to assess the damage on 15 March 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the update received with a further update to be received at the future Policy and Finance meeting.

The Chairman brought forward Agenda Item 37 – To receive a report on the level of Town Council General Reserves, Contingency and Earmarked Reserves and consider any actions and associated expenditure due to it being misplaced at the end of the summons.

**125/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE LEVEL OF TOWN COUNCIL  
GENERAL RESERVES, CONTINGENCY AND EARMARKED  
RESERVES AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED  
EXPENDITURE.**

The Town Clerk referenced the previous Policy and Finance meeting held on 12 November 2024, expressing concerns as the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) around the Town Council's current level of general reserves and contingency funds and lack of justification for maintaining such balances.

The Town Clerk submitted a report included in the circulated reports pack for Members consideration during the meeting. Drawing attention to the report summary, the Town Clerk highlighted guidance from section 5 of the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners Guide (JPAG), which clarifies best practice for the level of funds Town Councils of this size should hold.

Additionally, the Town Clerk referenced information from the Cornwall Association of Local Councils (CALC) concerning principal authorities that exceed expected income levels and how they are not able to declare bankruptcy.

Members were asked to review the Town Council's fund levels, as detailed in Appendices A and B of the reports pack. The Town Clerk emphasised the importance of conducting annual reviews as good practice and requested that Members provide clear justification for the current fund levels being maintained.

The Town Clerk confirmed she had no concern regarding the level of EMF's as justification is provided; Members agreed. However, she requested Members consider recommending to the Town Vision Sub Committee to review EMF 6280 Town Vision funds and future spending.

Members debated and discussed in length the levels being maintained.

The Town Clerk explained that the Town Council can adjust the contingency level during this evening's meeting without affecting the precept set for 2025/26. The Town Clerk noted that if Members chose to reduce the contingency funds to the recommended best practice level of three months' operating costs, the surplus would be transferred into General Reserves.

This adjustment would provide a clear, transparent and accountable rationale for maintaining funds specifically for unexpected situations. The General Reserves would then be available for further investments or projects.

As an example, the Town Clerk highlighted potential repair works to the Pontoon following storm damage, the Waterside or Victoria Gardens. Such expenditure aligns with the Town Council's strategic priorities outlined in the Business Plan, ensuring that these funds are used responsibly and in accordance with established goals.

It was proposed by Councillor P Samuels, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the advice of the Proper Officer / RFO to Saltash Town Council (as attached and received at the meeting);
2. To **RECOMMEND** to the Town Vision Sub Committee to review budget code 6280 EMF Town Vision against future spend under the Sub Committees Terms of Reference;
3. To retain the level of General Reserves and Contingency stated in the report (as attached);
4. To note the Ear Marked Reserves (EMF's) of the Town Council are justified on the projects to be delivered in the near future (as attached);
5. The RFO continues to review the level of Town Council General Reserves, Contingency and Ear Marked Reserves on an annual basis reporting back to the Policy and Finance Committee for consideration.

**126/24/25     TO CONSIDER RISK MANAGEMENT REPORTS AS MAY BE RECEIVED.**

Nothing to report.

**127/24/25     TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT REPORT AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE.**

The external auditor has undertaken the Town Council annual Health and Safety audit of all Town Council sites.

Twelve months ago, the Town Clerk raised concerns on the Health and Safety of the Town Council and Risk Assessments in place, she is pleased to confirm scores have alleviated any areas of non-compliance. Still areas for improvements and further work.

It was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and **RESOLVED** to note the latest external Health & Safety Audit report recognising further work is required, delegating to the SDM to prioritise the work working within budget.

**128/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CIVIC REGALIA AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

Members discussed the Town Council Civic Regalia report circulated in the reports pack.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the cleaning and polishing of the Civic Regalia items as follows;
  - 2 x large maces
  - 2 x small silver oars
  - 1 x mini oar
  - 1 x pepper pot
2. To appoint Company A at a cost of £1,200 allocated to budget code 6272 PF EMF Robes and Civic Regalia;
3. To delegate to the Mayor's Secretary to arrange for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's chain to be repaired, cleaned and polished working within budget code 6272 PF EMF Robes and Civic Regalia;
4. To delegate to the Mayor's Secretary to ensure all Civic Regalia cleaning does not jeopardise any Town Council Civic Events and or Mayoral Engagement

**129/24/25     TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT INFORMATION AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS.**

Members received the Precept Information contained within the circulated reports pack.

It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED** to approve the content for both the Precept Information page of the Observer and the bus shelter display posters.

Members are requested to provide any feedback on the grammar and spelling no later than 24 January 2025.

**130/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON APPOINTING A PHOTOGRAPHER AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

Members reviewed the recommendation to appoint a photographer to provide photos of Town Council property and assets that can be used for multiple publications and promotions such as leaflets, the Town Council website and Town Council portfolios.

It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED**;

1. To approve appointing Company A to undertake the photography specification to obtain good photos of the Town Council assets to use in the portfolios, promotion of the Town and for historical reference;
2. At a cost of £785 allocated to budget code 6301 PF Stationery/Postage/Printing;
3. To appoint a photographer to undertake drone photography subject to requirements of a specific project and associated costs.

**131/24/25     TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY CHEST APPLICATIONS:**

- a. CC280 Cornwall Air Ambulance;

Members discussed the application and of the vital work the Cornwall Air Ambulance undertake.

Members referred to the Grants Policy for further guidance on the application's suitability to receive funds from the Community Chest funding.

It was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED** to reject the application due to the application not falling in line with Community Chest funding parameters, referring to Section 5 Types of grants and funding limits - The Community Chest supports small scale community projects intended to improve the town environment to strengthen the community or the common economy of the town.

- b. CC281 Saltash Floral Art Club

It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED** to award £150.

**132/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON FUNDING AWARDED TO CC275 SALTASH UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**133/24/25     TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL GRANT FUNDING AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS.**

Members reviewed and deliberated on the report included in the circulated reports pack.

Members discussed the financial risks and scrutiny required if assessing an individual's claim for funding with Members agreeing that the Town Council currently does not fund individuals.

Members discussed various ways the Town Council could assist individuals trying to access funding for community projects.

It was proposed by Councillor Stoyel, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and **RESOLVED**;

1. To note the report;
2. To agree that Saltash Town Council does not fund applications from individuals based on financial risk in making payments to those individuals and level of scrutiny required when making grants compared to organisations;
3. To suggest individuals approach Saltash organisations in the town that may be able to assist.

**134/24/25     TO RECEIVE AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS:**

a. Grants;

Members received the policy with amendments.

The Town Clerk drew members attention to the Project Approval Form contained within Appendix 4.

The Town Clerk requested an additional amendment be included to the section Safeguarding and Duty of Care to include successful applicants provide confirmation of training undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their Disclosure Barring Certification and confirm an Action Plan is in place for their organisation.

It was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Griffiths and resolved to **RECOMMEND** to adopt the Grants Policy as attached, to Full Council to be held on 6 February 2025.

b. STC Privacy Notice.

It was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and resolved to **RECOMMEND** to adopt the STC Privacy Notice as attached, to Full Council to be held on 6 February 2025.

**135/24/25     TO RECEIVE AND REVIEW THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS:**

The Town Clerk advised that the Senior Policy and Data Compliance Officer has undertaken a review on the following policies and confirmed there are no amendments identified to be made.

a. Code of Conduct;

b. Home Library Service;

c. Library Stock Management;

d. Data Protection and Disposal Policies.

Members agreed that there are no amendments to be made at this time.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the policies en-bloc.

**136/24/25     TO RECEIVE AND NOTE QUARTERLY REPORTS FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF PROFESSIONAL YOUTH WORK IN SALTASH:**

a. The Core;

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

b. Livewire.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**137/24/25     TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES:**

a. Section 106 Panel

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

**138/24/25     PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:**

To resolve that pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press leave the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**139/24/25     TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE MAIN PART OF THE AGENDA.**

None.

**140/24/25     PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:**

To resolve that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting.

141/24/25 **TO CONFIRM ANY PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA RELEASES  
ASSOCIATED WITH ANY AGREED ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE  
OF THE MEETING.**

It was proposed by Councillor P Samuels, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED** to issue the following Press and Social Media Releases:

1. Community Chest Grant Award;
2. Precept Information.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 6.30 pm

Rising at: 8.27 pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_