



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 PM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, IRNHAM ROAD, MINEHEAD TA24 5DW

The Meeting was streamed live on the MTC Facebook page

The Meeting was digitally recorded

Members are reminded that Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and Biodiversity

Present: Chair: Cllr C Palmer*
Councillors: Cllr M Burke, Cllr A Kingston-James, Cllr A Lawton (Deputy Chair),
Cllr M Palmer, Cllr T Venner*
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)*

Officers in Attendance: Ms S Rawle – Clerk
Mr B Howe – Deputy Clerk
Mrs J Notley - Notetaker

Members of the Public and Press: 0 members of the public
0 members of the press

Councillors Absent: Cllr O Harvey, Cllr R Lillis, Cllr H Rose

Cllr C Palmer welcomed Councillors and Officers to the Meeting and the public watching on Facebook.

1342 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr T Bloomfield and Cllr J Malin.

1343 TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY DISPENSATIONS
[In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members](#)

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/Vote
Cllr A Kingston-James	1346.2 1348.3	Personal Pecuniary	08.11.2021	Stayed in the room. Did not speak or vote Left the room
Cllr A Lawton	1348.1 1348.2	Personal Personal	08.11.2021	Stayed in the room. Did not speak or vote
Cllr C Palmer	All 1348.3	SWaT Councillor Personal	2021 08.11.2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted Stayed in the room. Did not speak or vote
Cllr M Palmer	1348.3	Personal	08.11.2021	Stayed in the room. Did not speak or vote
Cllr T Venner	All 1348.3	SWaT Councillor Personal	2021 08.11.2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS [Localism Act 2011](#)

There were no dispensations requested.

- 1344 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2021 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

Proposed: Cllr A Kingston-James
Agreed with all in favour.

Seconded: Cllr C Palmer

- 1345 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION [Standing Order No 3e](#)

No members of the public had asked to speak.

- 1346 FINANCE

- 1346.1 *To approve urgent payments for November 2021*

Items 1-6, totalling £28,203.28, including £19,044.70 staff salaries.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Approved with all in favour.

Seconded: Cllr M Burke

- 1346.2 *To approve payments under £1,000 for November 2021*

Items 7-19, totalling £2,809.82.

Cllr Lawton queried payment no 8 which seemed high for bin bags and gloves. The Clerk said this was probably for more than just those items; she would investigate and report back to Cllr Lawton.

Cllr M Palmer asked about a bench purchased for the Cemetery. The Clerk confirmed that this was a memorial bench ordered on behalf of a private individual. MTC would now charge that individual for the bench.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Approved with 1 abstention and 5 in favour.

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

- 1346.3 *To recommend to Full Council payments over £1,000 for November 2021*

Item 20, for £1,149.16.

Cllr M Palmer asked what this item was for and the Deputy Clerk informed the meeting that it was for Heras fencing. MTC had had the fencing on hire for two years for use whilst the Community Centre was under construction and also for play areas. The company had now agreed to sell the fencing to MTC at a price 40% cheaper than it would otherwise be. MTC now owned 29 panels which would save on hire charges and have fencing available for MTC's use at any time.

Proposed: Cllr M Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Lawton**
Agreed with all in favour to recommend to Full Council for payment.

1346.4 *To approve payments by Procurement Card for October 2021*

Item 21, for £9.60.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Lawton**
Approved with all in favour.

1346.5 *To approve Regular Payments for October 2021*

Items 1-34, totalling £10,673.12.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James**
Approved with all in favour.

1346.6 *To receive the Income Report for October 2021*

Income totalled £72,037.20.

Cllr Palmer confirmed the Committee had received the Income Report.

1347 TO NOTE THE ACTIONS LOG

Cllr Palmer said that the action against his name would be covered in his report later in the Meeting. He confirmed the Committee noted the Actions Log.

1348 TO CONSIDER SMALL GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM:

1348.1 **Chamber Orchestra of the West**

This group had applied for a grant of £500. Cllr M Palmer was not sure that it fitted with Council's policy for small grants. Cllr C Palmer suggested reverting to them to provide further information as to how the funds would be used.

Proposed: Cllr M Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Burke**
Agreed with 5 in favour and 1 abstention to request further details from the Chamber Orchestra of the West about what the Grant would be used for.

1348.2 **Minehead Male Voice Choir**

The Choir had applied for a grant of £500. Cllr M Palmer was concerned that the grant was to enable people to travel to another part of the country. Cllr Venner considered that this was for a Minehead group, benefitting the people of Minehead and should be supported.

Proposed: Cllr Venner **Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James**
Agreed with 2 in favour, 1 against and 3 abstentions to award the full grant of £500 to Minehead Male Voice Choir.

Cllr A Kingston-James left the room.

1348.3 Gateway Events

Gateway Events had applied for a grant of £500. Cllr Burke observed that this was to provide presents, facilities and fun for children at the Christmas events. In his experience over the previous two years it had been wonderful. The application was specific and for Minehead children and he wished to support it.

Proposed: Cllr Burke

Seconded: Cllr Lawton

Agreed with 3 in favour and 3 abstentions to award the full grant of £500 to Gateway Events.

Cllr A Kingston-James returned to the Meeting.

1349 TO CONSIDER QUOTATIONS FOR REMEDIAL WORK AT CROSS FARM PARK PLAY AREA FOLLOWING THE ROSPA SAFETY INSPECTION

Councillors had seen the Clerk's report on the required remedial work and 3 quotations for this. The Clerk summarised the faults needing repair including the two pieces of play equipment needing complete replacement – a basket swing and a roundabout. Neither of these would qualify for S106 funding as they were replacements rather than new equipment. Three quotations had been obtained as required by Financial Regulations and quote no 1 was the preferred option as the supplier had recently been selected to instal new equipment at three other sites.

Cllr M Palmer asked about maintenance of the replacement equipment and the Clerk informed her that only general maintenance would be required which would be covered by the Amenities Team's weekly checks which MTC was required to carry out for insurance purposes. Checks were carried out annually by RoSPA and also MTC's insurers. The preferred supplier was a strong British company. The Clerk added that 40% of the cost of installing play equipment was the necessary groundwork.

The Deputy Clerk advised that Council should acquire a piece of equipment each year rather than having to spend a lot at one go, especially as some play equipment was usable but not worth keeping. Cllr Venner said whilst Council was looking at budgets at the current time they should have a rolling programme of improvements.

Proposed: Cllr Burke

Seconded: Cllr Lawton

Agreed with all in favour to accept Quote No 1 for remedial work at Cross Farm Park play area.

1350 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ABOUT THE PROPOSED CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF FOUR MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL PAINTINGS

Cllr Palmer had taken advice about restoration of the four paintings. He reported that conservation of the water colour was probably not worthwhile as it may cause further damage to the painting.

Considering the three oil paintings, for the View of (from) Friday Street which was oil on board, the conservation estimate was between £700 and £800, the view of Minehead Harbour was estimated at £1600-1800, and the Quay at Minehead was estimated at £450. This would total somewhere between £2,500 and £3,000 for all 3. The valuations made in 2004 put their value at somewhere in region of £14,000. The cost of conservation would be a small portion of their eventual value and with the work completed could well be worth more after conservation.

Cllr Burke asked if these figures were for actual restoration and Cllr Palmer confirmed that they were. Estimates had come from a conservator recommended by the Heritage Centre in Taunton.

Cllr Burke questioned where the paintings could be kept after restoration. Cllr Palmer suggested having a discussion with Minehead Museum or displaying them in a future Town Council office. Cllr M Palmer said the paintings were part of Minehead's history, belong to Minehead and should not still be in Taunton.

Cllr Venner said he was in two minds about the paintings. On the one hand they belonged to Minehead Town Council but on the other Minehead people had been struggling for the past two years and was it justifiable to spend money on restoring paintings while people were having to go to food banks. The paintings were safe where they had been since 2004.

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the paintings were on MTC's asset register with a value listed of £10-15,000. It was important to have them valued for insurance purposes.

Cllr Palmer said he would continue to find out more about restoration of the paintings and would approach Minehead Museum about possibly housing them in the future.

1351 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James

Agreed with all in favour to continue the meeting *in camera* to discuss staffing issues.

Cllr C Palmer thanked those watching on Facebook.

The Public Meeting ended at 8.23pm.