



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 11 APRIL 2022 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 T Bloomfield, Cllr A Kingston-James, Cllr A Lawton (Deputy Chair), Cllr J Malin, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr H Rose
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District Councillor "SWaT")*

Officers in Attendance: Mr B Howe – Deputy Clerk
Mrs M Swallow - Remote 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 C Palmer welcomed Councillors and Officers to the Meeting and the public watching via Facebook.

1512 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr P Bolton, Cllr M Burke and Cllr T Venner*.

1513 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	1516.2	Personal	2022	Stayed in the room, did not speak nor vote
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2022	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS [Localism Act 2011](#)

No dispensations were requested.

- 1514 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7 MARCH 2022 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

Cllr A Kingston-James asked for his apologies to be noted on the Minutes as they had been given prior to the Meeting.

Cllr C Palmer proposed that subject to that amendment the Minutes be approved as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

Agreed with five in favour and two abstentions from Councillors not present at the previous Meeting.

- 1515 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION [Standing Order No 3e](#)

As there had been no requests to speak at the Meeting, adjournment was not necessary.

- 1516 FINANCE

- 1516.1 **To approve urgent payments for April 2022**

Payments 1 - 6 totalling £31,675.31, including £19,991.38 for staff salaries

Cllr C Palmer asked for any comments or questions, of which there were none.

It was proposed that the payments should be approved.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James

Unanimously agreed.

- 1516.2 **To approve payments under £1,000 for April 2022**

Payments 7 - 27, totalling £5,473.23

Cllr C Palmer asked for any comments or questions.

Cllr Malin requested clarification on payment number 10 to Danfo. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that it was the call-out charge for the necessary specialist labour required to fix a leak in the disabled toilet at Warren Road and repair the soap dispenser in another unit.

Cllr Lawton queried payment number 12 regarding compost, bone meal and manure for the Rose Garden. The Deputy Clerk explained that the charge also included grass seed, and the ordered goods would, in addition to the Rose Garden, be used in the Cemetery and other areas as necessary.

Cllr M Palmer highlighted payment number 7 to Exmoor Skip Hire. The Deputy Clerk explained that this was incurred from green waste collected by 'Minehead Wombles': MTC's green waste receptacle had been full at the time. He had spoken to Cllr C Palmer, and it was felt that as the waste collected by the Wombles was from land owned by SWaT it should be asked to fund future skip hire for this purpose. Cllr M Palmer suggested that the waste should be divided between what could be easily composted and other such as brambles.

Cllr Bloomfield asked whether the Minehead Wombles were insured, to which Cllr M Palmer replied that it was not necessary because power tools were not used in their work. The Deputy Clerk believed they were covered by MTC insurance but agreed that if tools became part of the process separate insurance would be required - but this should be a responsibility of SWaT. Cllr Bloomfield felt it would be wise for the Minehead Wombles to become constituted.

It was proposed that the payments should be approved.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer Seconded: Cllr Lawton
Agreed with six in favour and one abstention.

1516.3 **To recommend to Full Council payments over £1,000 for April 2022**

Payments 28 - 37, totalling £37,253.20

Cllr C Palmer explained that the considerable April figure was due to the MTC office rental charge and various annual business rates. He asked for any comments or questions.

Cllr Malin requested confirmation of payments 30 - 35 - business rate payments to SWaT - in relation to elections. As he understood there would not be elections in the five wards during May, it was presumed that payments to the District Council in that respect would not be necessary. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that to be the case and there would indeed be a saving. Cllr C Palmer added that there would be a small charge even if an uncontested election.

Cllr M Palmer queried item 37 to Louise Crossman Architects. The Deputy Clerk understood this to be the final payment in relation to work undertaken on the Community Building. He reminded Councillors that £5,000 had been withheld from the final building costs due to the various defects requiring attention.

It was proposed that the payments be referred to Full Council for approval.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James
Unanimously agreed.

1516.4 **To approve payments by Procurement Card for March 2022**

Payments 38 - 46, totalling £510.20

Cllr C Palmer asked for any comments or questions, of which there were none.

It was proposed that the payments should be approved.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer Seconded: Cllr Malin
Unanimously agreed.

1516.5 **To approve Regular Payments for March 2022**

Payments 1 - 30, totalling £5,242.86

Cllr C Palmer asked for any comments or questions.

Cllr Lawton had noted the use of several energy providers by MTC and suggested that in the climate of high fuel costs using one provider for all would perhaps be more cost-effective. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that Opus Energy was generally the provider for new supplies, but it was at that time difficult to find more competitive options for the existing supplies. Cllr C Palmer added his belief that it was not the right time to attempt this anyway. The Deputy Clerk emphasised the continued vigilance of the Finance Assistant in sourcing a possible new deal.

Cllr M Palmer queried payments 24 and 25 in relation to two electricity supplies to the building at the King George Playing Field. The Deputy Clerk was unsure about the situation but would investigate. The Deputy Clerk added his belief that one payment might relate to the Football Club Changing Rooms, plus other usage - he confirmed the arrangement that MTC would pay the charge and then be reimbursed by the Football Club. He believed the other related to lighting.

Cllr M Palmer also asked for clarification regarding payment 19 concerning lighting at Cross Farm Park. The Deputy Clerk explained that it included unmetered supplies for all CCTV cameras within the town - it appeared that because Cross Farm had unmetered lighting, the provider EDF had added the CCTV cameras' unmetered supplies to the same invoice. The Deputy Clerk added that this situation could be rectified by considering the future use of solar/LED lighting.

The Deputy Clerk reported the positive news that Wessex Water had that day credited MTC with a substantial rebate in relation to water supplies to various public conveniences.

It was proposed that the payments should be approved.

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

1516.6 **To receive the Income Report for March 2022**

Cllr C Palmer confirmed the received income as £16,330.54 and asked for any comments or questions.

Cllr Malin asked whether the Community Building was proving cost effective, to which the Deputy Clerk responded positively.

The Deputy Clerk referred Councillors to the contribution from Minehead BID towards the lighting infrastructure in The Avenue. He explained that the amount was being held in advance of the work commencing once permission from both SCC and Western Power was hopefully granted.

Cllr C Palmer acknowledged receipt of the Income Report.

1517 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Cllr C Palmer confirmed that the Committee would proceed to discuss staffing matters *in camera*.

**Proposed by: Cllr C Palmer
Unanimously agreed.**

Seconded by: Cllr Lawton

The Public Meeting closed at 7.55 pm.