



MINUTES of the meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee held on Monday 3rd March 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Committee Room, 4 York Road, Torpoint.

PRESENT: - Councillor Mrs. J M Martin (Chairman), Councillor G J Davis (Town Mayor), Councillor Mrs. K Brownhill (Deputy Town Mayor), Councillors Mrs. S G Bickle, Miss R A Evans BEM, D Phipps, M J Spurling and J Tivnan BEM plus the Town Clerk & RFO (Clerk) and Operations Manager were in attendance.

| | ACTION |
|---|---------------|
| <p>125-24F&O Apologies for absence None.</p> | |
| <p>126-24F&O Declarations of Interest relating to items on the Agenda None.</p> | |
| <p>127-24F&O Minutes of the previous meeting It was resolved that the minutes of the Finance and Operations Committee meeting held on Monday 3rd February 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.</p> | |
| <p>128-24F&O Matters arising from the minutes a) To update on the renewal of the Torpoint Library and Community Hub lease: - Pursuant to minute number 113-24F&O, this is progressing with the legal professionals, all papers are signed and returned. b) Remembrance Sunday 2024 – actions following wash up meeting held: - Pursuant to minute number 115-24F&O (a), the summary notes of the meeting are awaited – Clerk to action in advance of next meeting. c) Armed Forces Covenant – set up a task and finish group with a view to renewing the Armed Forces Covenant: - Pursuant to minute number 122-24F&O (k), the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mrs. K Brownhill) has linked up with Councillors Miss R A Evans BEM and Mrs. J L Reeves, to progress renewing the Armed Forces Covenant further.</p> | |
| <p>129-24F&O To consider Policies referred to this Committee a) Markets Policy and Application: - Following consideration and discussion, it is agreed to review / update the Markets Policy and Application and bring to the next meeting of this committee. b) Model Councillor-Officer Protocols: - Following consideration and discussion, it is agreed to review / update the Model Councillor-Officer Protocols and bring to the next meeting of this committee (highlighted these Protocols are from the adopted Civility and Respect Pledge). c) Business Risk Management Plan: - Following consideration and discussion regarding the Business Risk Management Plan, updated to include: -</p> | |

| FINANCIAL CONTROLS | | |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| <p>When significant funding bids are successful, how is the risk of payments being made in arrears and cash flow managed?</p> | <p>On successful bid completion, funding is usually claimed back/paid in arrears, which impacts on the council cash flow. Ensure that funder is advised that claims need to be expedited, as councils cash flow is not limitless. Use funds in reserves to ensure prompt payment/authorisation of invoice, in line with prompt claims submission to minimise the risk to the council.</p> | |
| <p>It is recommended to adopt the updated Business Risk Management Plan for 2025.</p> | | Council |
| <p>d) Financial Risk Management Plan: - Following consideration and discussion regarding the Financial Risk Management Plan, Clerk to update the grant funding addition accordingly: -</p> <p>To ensure prompt payment of invoices: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) When General (Unallocated) Reserves need to be used, permission to use these funds does not need to be sought in advance. ii) When Ear marked (Allocated) Reserves need to be used, council permission MUST be sought and agreed in advance. | | Clerk |
| <p>It is recommended to adopt the updated Financial Risk Management Plan for 2025.</p> | | Council |
| <p>e) Letting Policy and Hire Charges (to follow). Following consideration and discussion, it is recommended to incorporate the Free of Charge usage documents into the Lettings Policy and Hire Charges and adopt the updated Policy accordingly.</p> | | Clerk Council |
| <p>f) Free of Charge Use Policy: - See minute recorded above.</p> | | |
| <p>g) Safeguarding Policy: - Following consideration and discussion, it is agreed to review the existing Safeguarding Policy, refer to CALC for advice on this policy and bring to the next meeting of this committee.</p> | | |
| <p>h) Reserves Policy: - Following consideration and discussion, it is recommended to adopt the council's Reserves Policy.</p> | | Council |
| <p>130-24F&O Civic Functions and other events</p> <p>a) No additional events to report.</p> | | |

131-24F&O To consider the Council Risk Management

a) Creditors/Debtors: -

The Clerk was pleased to advise there are currently no concerns.

b) Budget Variance – Finance and Operations Committee responsibilities (January 2025 Budget Variance Information): -

All committee income and expenditure was considered, with no immediate concerns. The insurance renewal overspend for 24/25 was again highlighted by the Clerk, with members' being already aware of the reasons for the overspend.

Following a question put by a member regarding the recent discussion regarding the WWI memorial, which is on an external wall of St. James Church, the Clerk explained investigations are continuing into ascertaining who is the owner of the WWI memorial. The member understands the memorial was historically 'gifted to the town', many years' ago.

c) Operations Report - Report on any matters relating to council assets, facilities and operations, including the Library and Christmas Lights.

Clerk/
Ops Mgr

| FACILITY | PROJECT | STATUS |
|-------------------|--|-----------|
| COUNCIL CHAMBERS | Areas of loose slates on south facing rooves, due to recent storms scheduled for repair w/c 3 rd February. The contractor pointed out that many of the slate hooks have corroded. Seized radiator valve in room one, this will need replacing in the summer. | Completed |
| | In house repairs to parquet floor in room one has not lasted, a professional contractor will need to be sought. | Ongoing |
| | A blocked sewer caused flooding in the main hall. After inspecting the line with a contractor, it is recommended to survey the whole system. It seems that all the rainwater from the office end of the building is piped into the sewers. Also, when the inspection hole in the RBL room was lifted the render in the hole had blown, with some cement debris lying in the sewer channel. | Ongoing |
| LIBRARY & COM HUB | Library central heating system is governed by a heat sensor that is currently on the wall in the café kitchen. On days when baking or other things are being made the heat overrides the sensor leaving the rest of the building cold. | Ongoing |
| | 24 February - Employee at the Library and Community Hub had a minor slip in the morning, which resulted in the facility closing for the remainder of the day, due to staff shortages. Accident form being completed, employee needed an additional 24hours at home, after visiting Minor Injuries clinic. | Ongoing |
| PARKS | Work to reinstate the football pitch in Cambridge Field has started. | Ongoing |
| | All parks equipment serviced, replacement of the lawnmower to be discussed in the new financial year. | |

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|-----------|
| PUBLIC CONVENIENCES | Damage to the Paper dispensers in the ladies cubicles and toilet seat in the disabled cubicle. Reported to the Police and all repairs carried out in house. | Completed |
| TRAINING | List of training needs for 2025 compiled. This will be finalised once the Operations Team structure is settled. | Ongoing |
| | The Support Officer has submitted all work for ILCA. | Completed |
| BENCHES | Wording for memorial plaque now received from Mrs Stockton, plaque to be ordered. | Ongoing |
| FOOTPATHS | No issues to report. | |
| JAPANESE KNOTWEED | Meeting arranged to discuss this years Knotweed treatment | Ongoing |
| CHRISTMAS LIGHTS/ BUNTING | Tender to be written and issued by Friday 28 th February. | |
| OTHER | St Piran's Flag ripped in high wind, leaving the rope stuck at the top of the pole, arrangements being made to repair the rope to fly a flag again at Sparrow Park. | Ongoing |
| | Richard Austin's last day with the Council was Sunday 16 th February, a gathering of Councillors, staff and volunteers, was held in the Library and Community Hub, Richard has asked to pass on his thanks to all those that attended and contributed to his leaving gift. Planters on Harvey Street to be reviewed. | Ongoing |

The Operations Manager advised: -

- The sewerage leak at the Council Chambers resulted in a significant flood in the main hall, whilst a hirer was using the building. It is now suggested that a survey of the whole system to be undertaken and quotations are therefore being sought for this work.
- The loose slates works on the rear roof of the Council Chambers have been completed, further works quotations are being sought.
- Library and community hub central heating system is governed by a heat sensor that is currently on the wall in the café kitchen. On days when baking or other things are being made the heat overrides the sensor leaving the rest of the building cold.
- Employee at the library and community hub had a minor slip in the morning, which resulted in the facility closing for the remainder of the day, due to staff shortages. Accident form is being completed.
- Work to reinstate the football pitch in Cambridge Field have started.
- All parks equipment has been serviced. The servicing contractor has issued an Advisory statement [on the invoice] "The Mountfield Mower has wear and tear on the components."
- Torpoint Community Fire Station has very recently assisted with flag pole repairs.
- Damage to the Paper dispensers in the ladies cubicles and toilet seat in the disabled

cubicle, all have been reported to the Police. Following discussion, it is agreed to investigate what infrastructure is needed to install a charging option at the Antony Road public convenience and the associated costs with this.

- Issue of the Christmas lights tender has been delayed.

Ops Mgr

d) To consider and adopt the review of Internal Controls: -

The Chairman (Councillor Mrs. J M Martin) minuted thanks to Councillor Mrs. S G Bickle and M J Spurling for completing the review of Internal Controls. It is **recommended** to adopt the review of Internal Controls, as previously circulated. Pursuant to a question put, the Clerk explained that having undertaken a service and insurance valuation of the Civic Chain of Office worn by the Town Mayor, it is anticipated that in the next financial year, the same will be undertaken with the Civic Chain of Office worn by the Mayoress.

Council

Clerk

e) To update on progress with the council's insurance renewal provision 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 (quotation attached/other documents available on request).

The Clerk presented the quotation, provided by James Hallam for the council's insurance provision 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, with the main commercial combined policy being under an existing 3 year long term agreement.

RENEWAL COMPARISON

A summary of the cost of the renewal for last year. All amounts in the below table include tax and fees where applicable.

| | Cover at Start of Last Year (£) | Cover at End of Last Year (£) | Renewal Quote (£) |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Commerical Combined | 10,805.30 | 13,475.75 | 14,443.00 |
| AVIVA GPA/Sickness/Business Travel | 503.66 | 503.66 | 575.52 |
| TOTAL (£) | 11,308.96 | 13,979.41 | 15,018.52 |

The Clerk highlighted additional two premiums to increase the existing cover, giving explanations for the need to increase these: -

1. The additional premium to increase Legal Expenses to £250,000 is **£25.41** inc IPT
2. The additional premium to increase Directors and Officers also Corporate Legal Liability to £500,000 is **£230.35** inc IPT

Therefore, it is **recommended** to renew the council's insurance provision 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, for a total cost of **£15,274.28 inc IPT** with James Hallam.

Council

f) To consider the independent appointment / Internal Audit proposal for Torpoint Town Council submitted by Hudson Accounting Ltd. for Year End 2024/25: -

It is **recommended** to accept the proposal for the independent appointment for Torpoint Town Council to appoint Hudson Accounting Ltd. to undertake the Internal Audit for the year end 2024/25.

Council

g) To consider and seek authorisation to delegate to the Town Clerk to arrange payment authorisation of Salaries/Mayor's Allowance Quarter 4 invoice (January – March 2025), in order to pay before year-end 31st March 2025, recording detail on next meeting agenda after payment.

It is **recommended** to delegate to the Clerk to arrange BACS payment, from two signatories, of Salaries/Mayor's Allowance Quarter 4 invoice (January – March 2025), in order to pay before year-end 31st March 2025 and record detail on the Finance and Operations Committee meeting agenda, following payment.

Council

h) To note: Mayoral Allowance payments for Civic Year 2024/25 are paid to the Mayor, with final payment expected 31st March 2025.
Noted.

132-24F&O Items Referred to this Committee

a) None.

133-24F&O Planning Applications

a) None

134-24F&O Health and Safety

a) Reports and any new, proposed regulations/legislations and current issues.

There are currently no areas for consideration. The Operations Manager is updating the emergency contact information for all sites, following the departure of the Caretaker.

b) Fire Risk Assessment for all buildings.

The fire risk assessment for the Council Chambers has been reviewed in February 2025 and is being written up.

135-24F&O Climate Emergency Action Plan

a) To consider the actions relating to this Committee: - There were no further updates.

136-24F&O Accounts for payment

| PAYEE | Invoice Number | Total (£) | TAX | NET | Description |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|---|
| ITEC | 1072058 | 35.57 | 5.93 | 29.64 | Photocopying |
| South West Hygiene | 329344 | 294.01 | 49.00 | 245.01 | Sanitary/Nappy Bin Disposal rental |
| Western Web Limited | 24789 | 126.00 | 21.00 | 105.00 | Renewal of domain and web space for torpointplan.org.uk |
| Cornwall Council | February 2025 802980235 | 87.00 | 0.00 | 87.00 | Bus Rates Room 4 |
| Western Web Limited | 24823 | 108.00 | 18.00 | 90.00 | Annual Renewal of webspace torpointtowncouncil.gov.uk 17/03 |
| Every Corner Distribution Ltd | TTCECD012 | 595.00 | 0.00 | 595.00 | Distribution February 2025 Newsletter |
| Hampshire Flag Company | INV31971 | 187.42 | 31.24 | 156.18 | St Piran Flag |
| Biffa | 522C07418 | 33.82 | 5.64 | 28.18 | Recycling collection Council Chambers |
| Biffa | 522C07419 | 67.34 | 11.22 | 56.12 | General Waste Collection Council Chambers |
| Biffa | 522C07416 | 33.82 | 5.64 | 28.18 | Recycling collection Library |
| Biffa | 522C07417 | 51.58 | 8.60 | 42.98 | General Waste Collection Library |

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|--|------------|-----------------|--------|----------|--|----------|
| AP Electrical Contractors Ltd | 13472/2024 | 2,720.99 | 453.50 | 2,267.49 | Remedial works following unsatisfactory EICR - Library | |
| Just Rods - Drainage Services | 8070 | 98.00 | 0.00 | 98.00 | Attended Council Chambers for emergency blocked drain works | |
| LBS Worldwide Ltd | 448843 | 643.84 | 107.31 | 536.53 | Purchase of various horticultural items including grass seed - Cambridge Field works | |
| Francis Thomas | 7490 | 325.22 | 54.20 | 271.02 | Servicing on Weibang Mower and Oleo Mac 44 Strimmer | |
| Francis Thomas | 7492 | 235.26 | 39.21 | 196.05 | Repairs and maintenance to Husqvana Brush Cutter and Ego Hedge Trimmer | |
| Francis Thomas | 7493 | 239.31 | 39.88 | 199.43 | Repairs and maintenance to Mountfield Ride-On Mower | |
| TOTAL | | 5,882.18 | | | | |
| <p>137-24F&O Correspondence</p> <p>a) To consider: Free of charge usage request – Jenny Hughes for Prostate Blood testing ‘event’: - Following consideration of the application for free of charge use, it is resolved to agree the free of charge usage for J Hughes, to organise a Prostate Blood testing event.</p> <p>b) To note: Torpoint Ferry LYNHER refit commencing 24th March – Tamar Crossings: - Noted.</p> <p>c) To note: Employer Newsletter February 2025 – Cornwall Pensions: - Noted. The Chairman (Councillor Mrs. J Martin) explained, having attended with the Clerk, the initial Employer briefing regarding the Triennial Valuation for 2025-26.</p> | | | | | | Clerk |
| <p>138-24F&O Date of next meeting</p> <p>Monday 31st March 2025.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>139-24F&O Any Business that has been disclosed to the Chairman and members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>➤ The Clerk highlighted having received a ‘thank you email with photos’ from Action for Children, following the free of charge use of the Council Chambers, for their “Tea Through Times” event, which had been a great success. Clerk to share the correspondence with all council members.</p> | | | | | | Clerk |
| Meeting closed at 8.20pm _____ | | | | | | Chairman |