

FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE

SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Town Hall Saffron Walden on Monday 20th October 2024 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Ahmed (from minute reference F&E 148-24), de Vries (Chair), Eke, McBirnie, Meloy and Reeve.

Officers: Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Public: Representative Dig It Community Allotment regarding agenda item 13
Representatives of Saffron Walden Initiative regarding agenda item 14

F & E 144-24	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Coote, Freeman, Gadd, Parker and Shotropa.</p>
F & E 145-24	<p>To receive any Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllrs McBirnie and Reeve declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as District Councillor for Uttlesford District Council.</p> <p>Cllr Meloy declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as a member of Saffron Walden Initiative.</p>
F & E 146-24	<p>Public Speaking Time</p> <p>A Saffron Walden Initiative representative thanked SWTC for its support of the Dance in the Square held in August, noting the event was a huge success.</p>
F & E 147-24	<p>Committee agreed to bring forward agenda items 13 and 14 being presentations from grant applicants.</p>
F & E 148-24	<p>Grant Request Dig It Community Allotment - £500</p> <p>A representative of Dig It Community Allotment explained the group has been running for 11 years and continues to develop, this year the group has introduced another plot with a sensory garden. The group works alongside community groups including Enterprise East CIC, Mencap and Mind.</p> <p><i>Cllr Ahmed arrived.</i></p> <p>The representative explained, the monies being sought would fund two months of staffing costs; it was noted the sessions work alongside vulnerable people requiring trained staff. The group has also applied for other grants including the lottery fund and ward members initiatives.</p> <p>Committee thanked the representative for their time and noted remaining funding is limited. <i>The representative left the meeting.</i></p> <p>It was resolved: To grant Dig It Community Allotment £250 utilising the resilience fund, noting the small grants scheme budget has been spent for 24/25.</p>

F & E 149-24	<p>Grant Request Saffron Walden Initiative (SWI) - £500</p> <p>Representatives explained the application is seeking £500 toward the Annual Late Night Shopping Event, for the PA system. SWI noted the event is historically very well attended and raised over £1k last year.</p> <p>It was noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The pitch fee for traders increased two years ago. Several traders are booked alongside several musicians scheduled to perform. Profits from the event go to charity, supporting the young careers at Fairycroft. <p>Committee thanked the representatives for their time and noted remaining funding is limited. <i>The representatives left the meeting.</i></p> <p>It was resolved: To grant SWI £250 utilising the resilience fund, again noting the small grants scheme budget has been spent for 24/25. Committee noted whilst SWI has already been awarded one grant this year, it was for a different event, both of which (the Dance in the Square and Light Night Shopping) are well attended and supported by the community. Committee requested for 2025/26 SWI adheres to the grant applicant guidelines with one application.</p>
F & E 150-24	<p>Minutes of the Finance & Establishment Committee 16.09.2024</p> <p>The 16.09.2024 minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>
Financial Matters	
F & E 151-24	<p>Expenditure – to be authorised</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Payment of the accounts received since 16 September 2024 were approved. Payment of accounts for payments already made since 16 September 2024 were approved.
F & E 152-24	<p>Tourist Information Centre</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee received and noted the profit and loss account for September 2024. The Committee received and thanked the TIC staff for the written update, noting the next update is scheduled for December 2024.
F & E 153-24	<p>Monthly Reports</p> <p>Committee received and noted the following monthly reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Bank reconciliation statement with supporting statements Cash Book – showing all income and expenditure for September 2024 Income report broken down by budget code – year to date including comparison of income year to date against previous years.
F & E 154-24	<p>Committee Hi-Light Reports</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Hi-Lighted reports from the RFO. There were no specific items to note or action to be taken in relation to documents 8a-c.</p>

F & E 155-24	<p>Precept Tranche</p> <p>The second precept tranche of £684,919 for 2024/25 was received on 26th September 2024.</p>
F & E 156-24	<p>Annual Governance Review</p> <p>The accounts for 2023/24 have been signed off by the external auditor, committee is asked to note the attached reports.</p>
F & E 157-24	<p>Financial Regulations Requirement 2.6</p> <p>It was noted Cllr Reeve was appointed by Committee in September to <i>verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO</i> (this being financial regulation 2.6) and this was completed.</p>
F & E 158-24	<p>Faster Payments Online System</p> <p>Committee noted the written report, detailing the costs and benefits in setting up a Faster Payments Online System which allows for dual authorisation (officer and councillor) payments to be made online to the debt management office. This process would negate the need to submit CHAPS forms in person at the Bishops Stortford Lloyds Branch.</p> <p>It was resolved: To proceed with the Faster Payments online application.</p>
F & E 159-24	<p>Completed Grant Monitoring Form U3A</p> <p>Committee noted the completed grant monitoring form received from U3A who received free of charge hall hire for their celebration event. It was additionally noted a recharge has been placed upon U3A for overtime worked by SWTC employee in managing this event, beyond the agreed time.</p>
F & E 160-24	<p>Grants Review</p> <p>Committee noted the review of the SWTC grant process will take place on conclusion of the 2025/26 budget and re-adoption and establishment of the mission statement / priorities.</p>
F & E 161-24	<p>Successfully received grants</p> <p>For information, SWTC has successfully received grant funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Painting of the TIC shop front (UDC Shop front fund, £1k) - LED lighting at Crabtrees MUGA (UDC sporting fund, £10k) - Little Walden Play Area Refurbishment (UDC Play area fund, £10k)
F & E 162-24	<p>Policies</p> <p>It was agreed to re-adopt the following with no changes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reserves (General and Ear-Marked) b. Privacy Policy c. Access to Information Policy <p>(a-c) with annual review dates.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> d. Menopause Guidelines e. Complaints Policy <p>(d-e) with two-year review dates.</p>

F & E 163-24	Urgent Information Items There were no matters raised.
F & E 164-24	Date and time of Next Meeting Next meeting to be held on 18 th November 2024 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm