

**FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE**

**SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Town Hall Saffron Walden on Monday 18 November 2024 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Ahmed, de Vries (Chair), Eke, Freeman, Reeve and Parker.

Officers: Town Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).

Public: Representatives of Uttlesford Citizens Advice and Saffron Walden Scouts regarding their respective grant applications.

<p>F &amp; E 165-24</p>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b>  Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Coote, Gadd, McBirnie, Meloy and Shotropa.</p>
<p>F &amp; E 166-24</p>	<p><b>To receive any Declarations of Interest</b>  Cllr Ahmed, Freeman and Reeve declared generic non-pecuniary interests as District Councillors for Uttlesford District Council.</p>
<p>F &amp; E 167-24</p>	<p><b>Public Speaking Time</b>  There were no questions arising.</p>
<p>F &amp; E 168-24</p>	<p><b>Minutes of the Finance &amp; Establishment Committee 21.10.2024</b>  The 21.10.2024 minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>
<p>F &amp; E 169-24</p>	<p><b>It was agreed to bring forward agenda items 13 and 14, grant application presentations.</b></p>
<p>F &amp; E 170-24</p>	<p><b>Grant Request Citizens Advice £15k - presentation</b>  A representative of Citizens Advice explained:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 20% of service users are based in Saffron Walden, with most queries being around fuel, council tax and water costs alongside disability benefits.</li> <li>b. CA operates with six months of reserves.</li> </ul>  It was noted the monies requested are provisioned in the budget as agreed by Council. Committed thanked the representative for their time who then left the meeting.  It was <b>Resolved:</b> To grant CA with the requested £15k as provisioned for in the budget, it was noted there is no guarantee this will be provisioned for in 2025/26</p>

F & E 171-24	<p><b>Grant Request Saffron Walden Scouts £500 – presentation</b></p> <p>A representative of Saffron Walden Scouts explained the grant request would support their project costs for a mobile range set up, as commonly requested by scout members. Committed thanked the representative for their time who then left the meeting.</p> <p>It was <b>Resolved:</b> To grant SW Scouts with £300 toward the project costs (monies to be vired from the Resilience Fund) and to provide the applicant with the UDC Ward Member Councillor details who may be able to further support the project utilising their Ward Members' Initiative Fund</p>
<b>Financial Matters</b>	
F & E 172-24	<p><b>Expenditure – to be authorised</b></p> <p>(a) Payment of the accounts received since 21.10.2024 were approved. (b) Payment of accounts for payments already made since 21.10.2024 were approved.</p>
F & E 173-24	<p><b>Tourist Information Centre</b></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the profit and loss account for September 2024</p>
F & E 174-24	<p><b>Monthly Reports</b></p> <p>Committee received and noted the following monthly reports:</p> <p>(a) Bank reconciliation statement with supporting statements (b) Cash Book – showing all income and expenditure for September 2024 (c) Income report broken down by budget code – year to date including comparison of income year to date against previous years.</p>
F & E 175-24	<p><b>Committee Hi-Light Reports</b></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 8(a) or 8(b).</p>
F & E 176-24	<p><b>First Draft Budget 2025/26</b></p> <p>Committee noted the Budget Working Group continues its work on preparing the 2025/26 budget and the first draft budget will be presented to a Finance and Establishment Committee in December for final adoption at the January Full Council meeting to set the precept.</p>
F & E 177-24	<p><b>Essex Pension Fund Revised Strategy</b></p> <p>Committee received and noted the updated Local Government Pension Fund strategy.</p>

<p>F &amp; E 178-24</p>	<p><b>Grant Monitoring Form Saffron Walden Choral Society</b></p> <p>Committee received and noted the Saffron Walden Choral Society Monitoring Form concluding this grant application.</p>
<p><b>Establishment</b></p>	
<p>F &amp; E 179-24</p>	<p><b>Sexual Harassment Policy</b></p> <p>It was agreed to adopt the proposed Sexual Harassment Policy subject to the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Paragraph 9.4 which states “<i>where your complaint is about someone other than an employee, such as a customer, supplier or visitor...</i>” to include reference to a councillor.</li> <li>b. Include reference to the adopted disciplinary policy which may be referenced and initiated following any allegation made.</li> </ul>
<p>F &amp; E 180-24</p>	<p><b>Urgent Information Items</b></p> <p>There were no matters raised.</p>
<p>F &amp; E 181-24</p>	<p><b>Date and time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Next meeting to be held on 9 December 2024 at The Town Hall, Saffron Walden.</p>

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm