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# MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS

# MONDAY 14TH OCTOBER 2024 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

**Present:** Councillors T Bennett (Deputy Chair), C Beavis, J Hodgson and E Price.

**Apologies:** Cllrs J Chinnock, J Hannam and D Peters.

**In Attendance:** Cllr T Robshaw, C Marlton (Town Clerk).

# 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair read a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded. The apologies were accepted.

*The Committee will adjourn for the following items:*

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

*The Committee will reconvene to consider the following items:*

**2**.  **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**To approve the minutes of 9th September 2024 and update on any matters arising.**

The minutes were **AGREED** unanimously as an accurate record of the proceedings.

**3. BUDGET MONITOR**

**To consider the Budget Monitor including the reserves projection.**

The budget monitor was **AGREED**.

**4. MAYOR’S ENGAGEMENTS AND BUDGET**

**To consider the Mayor’s engagements since July 2024 and the current budget.**

The Mayor’s engagements and budget was **AGREED**.

**5. FINANCIAL DELEGATION**

**To consider granting financial delegation to the Town Maintenance Officer to sign for expenditure on the TMO Tools and Consumables budget line.**

It was **AGREED** to grant financial delegation to the Town Maintenance Officer on the tools and consumables budget line.

**6. COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP**

**To consider the recommendations from the Community Working Group – point 3: Council Awards policy.**

The proposed changes to the Council Awards Policy were **AGREED**. The policy will be updated with the revised text (below) and this will be passed to Full Council to consider its adoption:

* The Life-time Achievement Award is renamed to the Judy Westacott Award.
* The Honorary Freemen process is unchanged and should remain discretionary, and only reserved for exceptional, long serving members of the community.
* Two caveats regarding the Honorary Freeman award are suggested:
	+ Serving Councillors cannot apply/be nominated.
	+ It should not be awarded when the nominee has undertaken the community role as an exclusively paid position.

# 7. ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM WORKING GROUP

**To consider the recommendations from the Environment and Public Realm Working Group - point 2: planter review.**

The recommendation was **AGREED,** that:

• There is a phased removal of the planters over two years (rather than the proposed three) at the locations identified (plus an additional three) this year; and

• The planters are offered to schools and community groups as listed (plus KEVICC and Totnes Gardens) at no charge (for example if The Mansion wish to relocate the planters on the pavement within their front paved area).

# 8. ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

# To review the Absence Management Policy.

It was **AGREED** to adopt the updated Absence Management Policy.

# 9. WORKING TIME AND LEAVE POLICY

# To review the Working Time and Leave Policy.

# It was AGREED to adopt the updated Working Time and Leave Policy.

# 10. RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SELECTION POLICY

# To review the Recruitment, Retention and Selection Policy.

It was **AGREED** to adopt the updated Recruitment, Retention and Selection Policy.

# 11. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

# To review the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

# It was AGREED to adopt the updated Bullying and Harassment Policy.

# 12. EXTERNAL AUDITY CERTIFICATE

# To update on the external audit certificate

# The External Audit certificate has now been received and published. It was noted that no concerns regarding the Council’s operation were raised. The Town Clerk explained the reason for the delay was due to an administrative/staffing issue at PFK Littlejohn.

# 13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 11th November 2024 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.**

Noted.

*The Committee will be asked to* ***RESOLVE*** *to exclude the press and public “by reason of the confidential nature of the business” to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. (CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)*

# 14. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

**To consider the bank statements and reconciliations for September (financial).**

These were reviewed and **AGREED**.

# 15. CASTLE MEADOW PERMISSIVE PATH

# To consider a request to formally acknowledge the permissive path access to Castle Meadow (legal).

It was **AGREED** to give the Town Clerk delegated authority to spend on independent legal advice in relation to this issue. Members were not unsupportive of the need to clarify the status of the lane but felt advice should first be sought.

# 16. STAFF ATTENDANCE

# To note sickness and overtime balances (personal details).

Noted.

# 17. STAFFING UPDATE

**For any general or urgent updates that required confidential sharing with Councillors (staffing).**

The Town Clerk updated on the current consultation process and feedback received. Further to a request from an employee, it was **AGREED** to offer an enhancement of 0.5 weeks’ pay.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

October 2024