



Newark TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 27th March 2024 in the Council Chamber, at the Town Hall.

Membership Present:	Councillor	B Corrigan (Chairman)
	Councillors	I Brown D Campbell T Collier E Cropper S Crosby S Dickinson L Geary J Kellas D Ledger D Moore (Vice-Chairman) G Rix N Ross L Roulstone M Skinner M Spoons (Ap) P Taylor
Apologies for Absence:	Councillors	M Spoons
Officers Present:	Town Clerk	Matthew Gleadell
Taking Notes:	Executive Assistant	Helen Crossland
	There were two members of the public and no press present.	
Venue:	Committee Room, Newark Town Hall	

FGP97/23/24 Minutes of the last meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 13th March 2024

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 13th March 2024 were proposed by Cllr B Corrigan, and seconded by Cllr L Geary.

A vote was held and they were **AGREED**.

FGP98/23/24 Declarations of Interest

It was **AGREED** to accept any Declarations of Interest as and when they arose during the meeting.

FGP99/23/24 2024/2025 Grant Structure and Grant Requests Received

Cllrs N Ross, D Moore and T Collier declared non-pecuniary interests in this Agenda Item.

Cllr P Taylor began the discussion; he proposed that the annual grant for £5,000.00 be given to the Citizens Advice Bureau, but not the other annual grants to the Twinning Association or St Mary Magdalene Church.

General discussion followed with many different combinations of how future grants could be structured.

Cllr P Taylor then proposed that Recommendation 1.1 (below) be deferred:

‘That Members determine how they wish to address financial grants in the 24/25 financial year.’

This was seconded by Cllr D Moore.

The Clerk was requested to bring another report back to the Committee with some ‘firm’ options. The Clerk responded that he would need a ‘steer’ from Members as to what the general feeling was with regard to this matter.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

Cllr B Corrigan then began a debate about the Ballroom Use Applications (Agenda Item 2.6 on this report).

Following a lengthy discussion Cllr D Moore proposed that the two requests already (Recommendation 1.2) received be granted.

Cllr E Cropper seconded the proposal with the addition that it should be made clear to both applicants that this would not happen every year in future.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

Following further discussion Recommendation 1.3 (below) was also deferred in line with the previous deferral.

‘That Members consider their policy for free use of the Ballroom for the 24/25 financial year’.

FGP100/23/24 Climate Change Working Group Finances

Finance and Project Update / Future Finances

The Recommendations as in the Agenda Report were proposed by Cllr B Corrigan and seconded by Cllr S Crosby.

A vote was held and Members **AGREED**:

- a. That the climate change budget underspend from the 23/24 financial year be earmarked for spend in the 24/25 financial year.
- b. That CIL funds required to be spent in the 24/25 financial year be allocated to the Climate Change Working Group (£4,696.07).
- c. As in Agenda Report.
- d. The Climate Change Working Group be given delegated authority to incur expenditure within all available budget allocated to the group in the 24/25 financial year (Council Revenue Budget and CIL).
- e. Members **NOTED** the activity and ambitions of the Climate Change Working Group to date.

FGP101/23/24 Online Payments Policy

It was proposed by Cllr B Corrigan that the Administration Support Officer be authorised to become a Bankline user to support the online payment processes. This was seconded by Cllr N Ross.

A vote was held and it was **AGREED**.

FGP103/23/24 Annual Parish/Town Electors Meeting

Following discussion, Cllr D Campbell proposed that the Annual Parish/Town meeting be held separately from the Full Town Council Meeting, as suggested in the Agenda Report.

This was seconded by Cllr G Rix.

Further debate followed in relation to whether there would be any issue with the upcoming by-election and the purdah period.

Cllr E Cropper proposed that the Annual Parish/Town meeting be held after the local elections on 2nd May.

This was seconded by Cllr D Campbell, who withdrew the original proposal (above).

The Clerk pointed out that the meeting scheduled for Wednesday 24th April would therefore be a Full Town Council meeting only, and no reports from Committee Chairmen would be required.

FGP104/23/24 Quarterly Budget Analysis Report

Following discussion, the Report proposed by Cllr B Corrigan, seconded by Cllr P Taylor and **NOTED** by Members.

FGP105/23/24 Sherwood Avenue Project Funding

All Newark & Sherwood District Councillors declared an interest in this Agenda Item.

Cllr B Corrigan proposed the Recommendation and Cllr P Taylor seconded. Following a vote, Members **AGREED** to authorise the release of funds from reserves to support the furtherance of the project.

FGP106/23/24 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Cllr B Corrigan proposed, Cllr D Moore seconded, that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972) the press and public be excluded from the next Agenda Item debate on the grounds that the Committee's remaining business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, and the public interest in disclosing the information.

The members of the public present left the meeting.

FGP107/23/24 Buttermarket / Colonnades Rent Reviews and Future Use

Cllr B Corrigan proposed, Cllr D Moore seconded Recommendation 1.1 in this Agenda Report:

'Renewal of licence to the Police Office'

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

General discussion then followed with regard to rent reviews and future use of the Buttermarket and Colonnades.

The overall feeling was that all tenants should pay for their own utility bills.

During the debate rent rates were also discussed – a 'sliding scale' was suggested – rents could be put up in phases, to assist tenants with this phase and make them sustainable and affordable.

Cllr B Corrigan proposed:

'All tenant should be paying for their own utilities.'

The Clerk should have the responsibility for negotiating rents with the tenants'

This was seconded by Cllr P Taylor.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

Recommendation 4 – Cllr D Ledger proposed, Cllr M Skinner seconded, that this proposal should be accepted, and the fees waived on this occasion.

The proposer should be further informed that the Town Council would be unable to offer any further support 'in kind' i.e., painting, boarding, staffing etc.

A vote was held, and this was **AGREED**.

At this point, the Chairman proposed that the meeting be extended for a further 30 mins. A vote was held, and this was **AGREED**.

Following on from the above, Cllr B Corrigan proposed, Cllr N Ross seconded that the Recommended Charging Structure proposed on page 73 of the Agenda be accepted.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

Cllr N Ross then proposed that the proposals contained at Recommendation 5 be investigated; this was seconded by Cllr G Rix.

A vote was held and Members **AGREED** to an 'in principle' decision in relation to the proposals.

FGP10823/24 Fleming Road Land

The Clerk informed Members that since writing the Agenda Report it had become apparent that some kind of decontamination work would be required on the site.

A question was raised as to whether the land could be used in the future for allotments.

Cllr J Kellas proposed that this item be deferred until any further work required had been carried out. This was seconded by Cllr D Ledger. A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

FGP109/23/24 London Road Public Toilets

The Clerk began discussion of this item. He informed Members that the offer had now been reduced.

Cllr L Geary proposed, Cllr N Ross seconded, that the original offer that had been made (as in the Agenda Report) should be sought.

Discussion followed with various options given as to what the consideration should be regarding the price.

The Chairman proposed that the meeting be extended for another 30 mins. A vote was held, and this was **AGREED**.

Cllr L Geary then proposed that the Clerk be asked to negotiate with any potential purchaser(s) to get as high a price as possible; this should not, however fall below a certain level.

This was seconded by Cllr D Ledger. A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

FGP110/23/24 Tolney Lane

Cllr N Ross proposed that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of this Committee along with himself and the Clerk, should pull together a proposition and proposals with indicative costs for both the sale or the repair of the land to bring back to a future meeting of this Committee.

Cllr P Taylor seconded the proposal.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

Meeting Closed:	9.55pm	Next Meeting:	Wednesday 17th April 2024
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