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To All Members of the Finance & Policy Committee: Martin Burton, Edmund Cannon, Chris Davis, Clive Fricker, Alan Greenfield, Caroline Leonard and Andy Wait (Chair).

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a **MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE** to be held in **the Town Council Office on TUESDAY 12th NOVEMBER 2024 commencing at 6.30 p.m.**

Signed on 7th November 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Hazell'.

Amanda Hazell – Responsible Finance Officer

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by the exit and proceed to the assembly point: Grassed area past St. Cadoc House, Temple Street.

Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

THIS MEETING MAY BE FILMED OR RECORDED (PLEASE REFER TO THE TOWN COUNCIL'S PROTOCOL ON THE FILMING AND RECORDING OF LOCAL COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS (adopted August 2014)).

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA 12th NOVEMBER 2024

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive apologies for absence.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any Declarations of Interest under Keynsham Town Council's Code of Conduct (adopted on 16th April 2019) issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, SI No. 1464 and as per Standing Order 3(v).

3. DISPENSATIONS

In accordance with Standing Order 13, to consider any requests for dispensations (for disclosable pecuniary interests) prior to the item (s) being discussed, that Members may only become aware of during the meeting itself and to receive any disclosures of decisions as per item 7 of Keynsham Town Council's Dispensations Policy and Procedure Guide.

4. RECORD OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 8th October 2024 (previously circulated) be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- (a) In accordance with Standing Order 3(e) (i), Members of the public may make representations, answer questions, and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda with the permission of the Chairman.
- (b) In accordance with Standing Order 3 (e) (ii) Members of the public will have the opportunity to ask the Chairman any question concerning, or make observations upon, the business of the Council, at the start of the meeting, provided notice of the question along with the name and address of the member of public has been given to the Town Clerk at least 4 clear days before the meeting where possible and in any case to the Chairman before the meeting and this applies to all committees of the Council.
- (c) In accordance with Standing Order 3 (e) (iii) Members of the Public may also speak on one single item only on the agenda, just prior to that item being discussed, unless otherwise agreed by the Chair, or Chair of a Committee. Each person may speak for not more than two minutes, with a maximum of two speakers per item in favour and two speakers per item against or at the Chairman's discretion. To facilitate the smooth running of the meeting Members of the Public will be asked to register their interest with the Town Clerk prior to the start of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Chairman respond to any questions/observations. If the matter is not already tabled on the Agenda, the Council may move a motion to refer the matter to be itemised on the agenda of a successive meeting, but it cannot make any decisions on any matters raised at this meeting unless considered under a further item on this particular Agenda.

6. TO NOTE AND RECEIVE UPDATES ON THE FOLLOWING DELEGATED ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ON 15th OCTOBER 2024

In accordance with the Schedule of Delegation approved on 22nd April 2021, to note the delegated decision made in advance of the November 2024 scheduled payments taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with Members.

- (i) That the Clerk used delegated authority in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair for the Youth to purchase tickets and food for the trip to Thorpe Park being funded by the lottery grant. Tickets - £936 and Food £332.44.
- (ii) That the Clerk used delegated authority to purchase the tickets, transport and refreshments for a Youth trip to Wake the Tiger. Tickets - £277.50 bus fare and refreshments - £110 funded from the budget for youth day trips.

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the delegated decisions.

7. UPDATES FROM THE RFO

1. We have received correspondence from the external auditor. They could not sign off our accounts as they have received an elector's question from a resident of Keynsham South. They are in the process of establishing if this person is an elector of Keynsham by confirming they appear on the electoral roll. I have spoken to the auditor, and she has confirmed the question asked will not cause us a problem, but she cannot elaborate further.
2. We have now received the corporate card and pin for the Unity Trust account. We are planning to move accounts between the 2nd and 11th of December. There are no direct debits during this time, and we can use the Unity Trust corporate card so there will be no transactions between those dates. We are waiting for the funds withdrawn from Flagstone to be paid into the Barclays bank account. Flagstone has been informed of the change of bank account, but our Flagstone account is still showing with the Barclays bank account. As we do not want to be responsible for losing £80,000, we feel it's best to wait until we have received the payment.
3. Due to the Internal Auditors report we have now introduced a more robust working practise for policies. The RFO will scrutinise every policy before it is included in the Finance agenda and make any changes made by Council. The signed document will then be passed to admin for inclusion on the website and filed in the signed policy file.

8. BUDGET REVIEW REPORT - MONTH 7 (attached)

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the Budget Review report for Month 7.

9. FINANCIAL MONTHLY REPORTS – MONTH 7 (attached)

- (i) Budget Monitoring (Month 7 – October 2024)
- (ii) Bank Cash and Investment Reconciliation (Month 7 – October 2024)
- (iii) Balance sheet (Month 7 – October 2024)
- (iv) Bank Reconciliations for Cash Books 1 - 8 (Month 7 – October 2024)
- (v) Receipts and Payments Report for Cash Books 1-8 (Month 7 – October 2024)
- (vi) Bank Statements – Cash Books 1,2,5,6,7 and 8 and the Public Sector Deposit Fund (Month 7 – October 2024)
- (vii) Nominal ledger reports for codes 6000 and 6001, transfers to and from EMR's (Month 7 – October 2024)

RECOMMENDATION:

To recommend to Town Council to approve the monthly financial reports.

10. FLAGSTONE INVESTMENTS

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note that:

- (1) Santander – 95 days' notice at 4.7%, account opened 01.06.23 and as at 31.10.2024 has now been transferred to the Barclays bank account with a final interest income of £5,288.72.

11. INTERNAL AUDIT (attached)

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the report from the Internal Auditor.

12. POLICIES (attached)

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) To receive and consider the following Policies:
 - (i) Standing Orders (changes in blue)
 - (ii) Financial Regulations (changes in blue)
 - (iii) Youth Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (new policy).
- (ii) To recommend to Council to approve the Policies.

13. GRANT APPLICATIONS (attached)

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) To receive and consider the large grant application form for the following:
 - 1. Keynsham Music Festival
 - 2. Dial-a-Ride (to follow)

To recommend to Council to approve the applications for Keynsham Music Festival and Dial-a-Ride.

14. WELLBEING TRAINING

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) To receive and note the 3 quotes for the Wellbeing training.
- (ii) To decide on a course provider to run the course.
- (iii) To inform the Council of the decision made.

15. UNITY TRUST INTEREST RATES

The following information has been received from Unity Trust:

We wanted to remind you that the interest rate for our Instant Access Saving account is changing. This will come into effect on the 05/11/2024. Please see your new interest rates below.

Your new interest rate

Account type	Existing rate Gross rate*/AER**	New rate from 5.11.24 Gross rate*/AER**
Instant access		
All balances	2.75% / 2.77%	2.60% / 2.62%

If you are happy with the change, you do not need to take any action and we'd like to thank you for continuing to save with us.

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the information received from Unity Trust bank.

16. HALLOWEEN TRAIL

The following request has been received from a resident of Keynsham:

I would like to ask the council for money to support the annual Keynsham Halloween Trail please.

The origins of the trail date back to when we were all social distancing, due to Covid 19. Vicky Burford, and I believe, yourself, planned trails across Keynsham, where children could safely collect letters, displayed in windows, and then be given sweets at the last house on the trail, thus ensuring that fun could be had, as safely as possible.

The event was so positively received that it has now become a Keynsham tradition. Every Halloween, there are five trails across the town, with children visiting participating houses. The benefits of this are great: people who have no wish to be involved in Halloween, simply do not participate in the trails, and they can enjoy a quiet, uninterrupted evening; children can go to houses on the trail, knowing they will be safe and welcomed.

The event has grown over the years. As Keynsham has expanded, so have the number of trails. We now have: the old town; Chandag; The Meadows; Somerdale and Hygge Park. Each trail has 7-12 houses and an average of about 200 children participating in each. This gets very expensive for the volunteers who organise the trail.

We rely on donations from individuals and local businesses. Every year we, the organisers, end up spending a considerable amount of money (one average £50-100) from our own pockets, to ensure we don't have disappointed children. This is simply unsustainable.

In order to support this established, successful and highly popular community event, please can we have £250 of council money (just £50 per trail) to buy sweets for local children.

The event has already taken place as the request arrived too late for the October Finance and Policy meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

To decide whether to fund the trial and inform Council of the decision made.

17. YOUTH PLANNING NOV/DEC 2024 (attached)

As per the new Youth Financial Regulations the Youth Team have produced a financial plan for October/November 2024.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) To receive and approve the financial plan for October/November 2024.
- (ii) To inform Council of the decision to approve the plan.

18. YOUTH ACTUAL SPEND OCT/NOV 2024 (attached)

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the actual spend from October/November 2024 for Youth.

19. ACCESS GRANT (attached)

The Youth Team have been awarded an access grant to enable the Youth Development Worker to have assistance in completing a grant application form from Youth Music. Attached is a copy of the application form, the next steps and the terms and conditions of the grant.

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the information attached for the access grant.

20. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS – QUALIFIED PERSON

A question has been asked of ALCA as to who the qualified person is for deciding if a Freedom of Information request can be refused due to an exemption.

ALCA has replied with the following:

In the case of Town and Parish Councils, whoever is named and confirmed by resolution of the Council as the Proper Officer will be the Qualified Person with regard to the Freedom of Information Act and the Exemptions. It is worth checking that as a Council this resolution has been documented, as it is this legally binding statutory requirement that can be used to challenge authority linked to other pieces of legislation if it has not been correctly implemented.

RECOMMENDATION:

To recommend to Council to resolve that the Town Clerk is the Proper Officer therefore the qualified person to deal with Freedom of Information Requests.

21. KTCRFM PROMOTION OF KEYNSHAM TOWN COUNCIL (attached)

Attached are the stats for the promotion of Keynsham Town Council by KTCRFm.

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the information supplied by KTCRFm.

22. BANK SIGNATORIES

At present we have three bank signatories on Unity Trust. The Clerk and RFO believe there should be at least 5. If two are on holiday payments cannot be authorised.

RECOMMENDATION:

For 2 Councillors of the Finance and Policy Committee to become signatories on the Unity Trust bank accounts.

23. INCREASE IN NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRUBITIONS

The following update from ALCA has been received regarding the increase in Employer National Insurance Contributions:

Following the Budget announcement in the last few days, we have received queries from a number of our members regarding the increase being applied to National Insurance Contributions by Employers.

NALC is currently liaising with the Government and will provide us with further information regarding the increase, but also how Public Sector Bodies might be able to mitigate against the increased financial exposure moving forward.

I will be attending a meeting of County Associations and NALC next Wednesday and will report back to all members with a briefing note as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and note the information received from ALCA.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RECOMMENDATION:

To note that the date and time of the next meeting is Tuesday 10th December 2024 at 6.30 p.m. in the TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE.