

Sandwich Town Council Finance and General Purposes Committee



Agenda

Chair: Cllr C Wiles

Councillors: P Carter (Mayor), P Breen, D Carter, E Csuka, J Franklin, N Gray, M Pennington, and C Ungerson

Councillors and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting in the Council Chamber, Guildhall on Monday 18th August 2023 at 18:30 to transact the business on the agenda below.

Gill Gray - Town Clerk

Date: Wednesday 13th September 2023

1	Apologies for absence received:	
2	Declarations of interest: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of business to be transacted on the agenda.	
3	Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee: To receive the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 th July 2023 and to consider any matters arising from those minutes not covered elsewhere in this agenda.	Attach 1
4	Public Participation: A 15-minute session is set aside for members of the public to make representations at the meeting in respect of the business on the agenda. Individual representations should not exceed 3 minutes. (Written notice of the desire to exercise the right to speak, together with the topic to be addressed, must be given to the Town Clerk prior to 9:00 on the Friday preceding the meeting)	
5	Report of the Information Technology and Digital Communications Working Group Cllr Mallett to share a report with Committee who are asked to consider this report and to agree that the purchase of the microphone set up to enable the recording and live streaming of Council meetings: Decision required	Attach 2
6	Facebook Page for STC Town Clerk to share a report on the newly launched Facebook page for STC; Members asked to note the report.	
7	Priorities for F&GP Committee for 2023/2024 Members to consider a report from Cllr Wiles with recommended actions for prioritising for the F&GP Committee in 2023/2024: Decision required	Attach 3
8	Confidential Matters: Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972) the public may be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local	

	<p>Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.</p> <p>1. Information that is commercially sensitive</p> <p>Decision required</p>	
9	<p>Report of the Information Technology and Digital Communications Working Group: The Committee is asked to consider this report and to consider the recommendations to progress the tender exercise for the procurement of an IT Managed Support Service for the Town Council:</p> <p>Decision required</p>	Enc 1
10	<p>Date and time of Next Meeting: Monday 16th October 2023 at 18:30 within the Guildhall.</p>	

**Minutes of Sandwich Town Council
Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held
in the Council Chamber on 17th July 2023 at 18:30 hours**



Chair: Cllr C Wiles
Councillors: Cllrs P Carter (Mayor), J Franklin, D Carter, C Ungerson, M Pennington, P Breen, E Csuka
Officer: Town Clerk
Observing Councillors: Cllr S Mallett and Cllr M Moorhouse

FG.07.23.1	Apologies for absence received: Cllr N Gray sent apologies due to a travel commitment.	
FG.07.23.2	Declarations of interest: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of business to be transacted on the agenda. None received.	
FG.07.23.3	Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee: Members received minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 19 th June 2023. Cllr Csuka to draft a Business Continuity Plan for the F&GP Committee meeting in September. Town Clerk to provide a report with an update on the play areas for the F&GP Committee meeting in September. Town Clerk to seek clarification on the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benches on the Butts and future maintenance position • Funding contribution from Southern Water explanation from DDC in relation to suspended parking • If partial refurbishment option for play area what is the expected life of items not replaced • When and how will full consultation be undertaken It was moved by Cllr P Carter and seconded by Cllr M Pennington and RESOLVED: to receive and approve the minutes of the meeting of F&GP Committee on 19th June 2023 and the actions agreed.	
FG.07.23.4	Public Participation A 15-minute session is set aside for members of the public to make representations at the meeting in respect of the business on the agenda. Individual representations should not exceed 3 minutes. (Written notice of the desire to exercise the right to speak, together	

	<p>with the topic to be addressed, must be given to the Interim Clerk prior to 09.00 on the Friday preceding the meeting)</p> <p>There were no speakers.</p>	
FG.07.23.5	<p>Report of the IT and DC Working Group The Committee considered the report from Cllr Csuka and the recommendations contained therein. The purpose of the report to agree a proposal for undertaking a Tender exercise to procure a new website for the Town Council. Cllr S Mallett provided a verbal report on the options identified to date for live streaming. It was agreed that there will be control from the STC office for information sharing on any new website platform.</p> <p>Town Clerk to ensure that all tenders for new website are prepared for evaluation report to go to STC September meeting. Town Clerk to check if all historic minutes are available as there are gaps that appear to be on the website prior to 2021. Cllr P Carter to seek advice from the History Society on using Zoom to record meetings and livestream.</p> <p>It was moved by Cllr P Carter and seconded by Cllr M Pennington and RESOLVED: that the Tender exercise to be run to procure a new website for the Town Council. That the Requests to Bid, using the Tender document be issued to the five website providers. That the evaluation of bids and the selection of a preferred website provider should be referred to STC for a decision due to financial commitment.</p> <p>Cllr C Ungerson commented that the iPads were not an ideal device for Cllrs to use, following a short debate: It was moved by Cllr P Carter and seconded by Cllr P Breen and RESOLVED: that the IT&DC Working Group will consider the options including the replacement of devices and using two factor authentication for Office 365 for the Council.</p>	
FG.07.23.6	<p>Financial Risk Assessment and Management Scheme Update Cllr E Csuka provide a verbal report update on the progress of a review of the risks that fall under the headings, property, insurance, security, finance, and financial administration. The template is being redesigned and the final draft should be completed by 11th August 2023. The reviewed and updated Financial Risk Assessment and Management Scheme proposed will be presented to the F&GP Committee meeting held in September 2023.</p>	
FG.07.23.7	<p>Priorities for F&GP Committee for 2023/2024 Cllr C Wiles presented a report with recommended actions for prioritising for F&GP Committee in 2023/2024. A debate followed with the following ideas/actions identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation is needed for the use of space in the Guildhall • It was suggested that the H&T Committee could be delegated the care of assets for STC • Health and safety concerns should be addressed urgently; items included routinely on future Agendas 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding bids sought to support management of STBF assets • The grants process for STBF needs a review as it is not sustainable; this will need to be a separate Committee under STBF • It was agreed that the sequence of priorities were important for STC and a deep dive of finance twice a year should be undertaken • A governance pipeline could be implemented and a worksheet to evidence the progress and timeline • September will be the commencing of budget setting for 2024/2025 • Review the statutory declarations for the AGAR • A Forward Plan to be draft with priorities for the F&GP Committee meeting in September; Cllr Wiles to draft <p>It was moved by Cllr C Wiles and seconded by Cllr P Carter and RESOLVED: that the report was received and the additional priorities identified be incorporated.</p>	
FG.07.23.8	<p>Confidential Matters: Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972) the public may be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.</p> <p>1. Information relating to a particular employee, former employee, or applicant to become an employee of, or a particular officeholder, under the authority</p> <p>It was moved by Cllr P Carter and seconded by Cllr J Franklin and RESOLVED: that the public were excluded from the remainder of the meeting as the information related to an existing employee(s) and interim staffing arrangements.</p>	
FG.07.23.9	<p>Staffing Interim Arrangements Update Town Clerk provided an update to Members on the current interim staffing arrangements for the Guildhall and other activities that STC manage including public conveniences and the market. It was moved by Cllr P Carter and seconded by Cllr D Carter and RESOLVED: that an interim administration support role was agreed with the proposed five hours a day from Monday to Friday; Town Clerk to recruit as soon as possible.</p>	
FG.07.23.11	<p>Meeting closed 20:14 hours</p>	
FG.07.23.10	<p>Date and time of Next Meeting: Monday 18th September 2023 at 18:30 within the Guildhall.</p>	

Report to Councillors and Members of: Finance and General Purposes Committee**Meeting scheduled for 18 September 2023****Report from: Cllr Simon Mallett****Date: 11 September 2023****Subject: Online recording of Council Meetings****Classification: General****Purpose of report:**

Consider the recording and display of Council meetings online.

Report on experience of recording and transmission

Recommend a way forward that can be used in the medium to long term without prejudicing the replacement of this system with a more elaborate system.

To state the limitations and potential

Content:

The recording of meetings by this means is to enable Christina who is a resident to cease from being relied upon to attend all meetings to undertake the recording and transmission of meetings online.

The process must be simple.

The quality: we are not making a TV programme; this is simply so that people can listen online.

The system proposed will mean an outlay of about £120 maximum for a working system. Using an existing laptop. Recordings go on to YouTube. Both live in standard quality then HD when processed.

It is proposed that the Town Clerk manages it, and it is simple and quick so that it is not an onerous task.

Experience is that setup takes about 2 minutes.

Voices are identifiable, not all participants are in camera view, including the Mayor and Town Clerk.

This should also be regarded as an interim solution. The significantly low cost means that a replacement can be looked at and introduced without any calls that money is being wasted. This has been a deliberate target of mine.

Audio: The challenge with our recording audio is the same as experienced by the BBC some years back when it was proposed to record (I believe) Gardner's Question Time in the main hall. They found that even with their equipment, the noise of cars buses and people outside was too intrusive. They moved the recording to the sports hall at Manwoods. We do not have that option. So, I am proposing multiple (5 max) short range microphones. Normally lapel but mounted on what might appear 'Heath Robinson' stands to limit the desk noise. While we could have a single wide area microphone, this will also ably record the traffic and loud conversations on the forecourt.

Recommendations:

Purchase by STC of microphone setup. The RRP of that assessed is about £120.00. This is within the delegated expenditure for the Town Clerk under the publicise functions as per Appendix 1 for STC Financial Regulations.

Configuration and link to YouTube in the name of STC / Town Clerk. By Cllr Mallett alongside Town Clerk.

Training of Town Clerk.

Cllr Mallett to assist in short term then hand over when Town Clerk confident.

Review the system after 6 months (single meeting working group) to agree success or contemplate further work on a more sophisticated system.

**SANDWICH TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS
APPENDIX 1**

(Also to be adopted by Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund regarding items relating to the Charity)

Additional Regulations under BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND (Discharge of functions by an officer of the authority S101 1972 LGA).

Updated by Resolution of Town Council Meeting on 11th May 2023

Approved by the Trustee of Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund on 11th May 2023

Sandwich Town Council Financial Regulations, Section 3.1, delegates power to the Town Clerk to incur expenditure on behalf of the Council for the following **statutory provisions up to £1,000.00**

Expenditure	Statutory Provision
Maintenance and running costs of the Black Lane & Sandown Road Allotments	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, Section 26
Maintenance and running costs of the Bulwarks and Poulders Play Areas	Open Spaces Act 1906, Sections 9 & 10; Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Section 19
Maintenance of the bus shelter	Local Government (Misc. Provision) Act 1953, Section 4; Parish Councils Act 1957 Section 1
Repairs to the war memorial	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, Section 1, as extended by LGA 1948, Section 133
Incidental Expenses, such as stationary, office equipment, legal publications etc.	LGA 1972 Section 111 Subsidiary powers
Tourism: Power to contribute to the encouragement of tourism	Local Government Act 1972, Section 144
Maintenance and running costs of the Monks Wall Nature Reserve	Open Spaces Act 1906, Sections 9 & 10
Maintenance and running costs of the Quay and Cattle Market Public Conveniences	Public Health Act 1936, Section 87
Newsletters: Power to provide information relating to matters affecting Local Government	Local Government Act 1972, Section 142
Publicise functions: Power to publicise council and local authority functions	Local Government Act 1982, Section 142
Entertainment and the Arts: Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972, Section 145
Power to provide and equip premises for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives (for use in relation to the Drill Hall).	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976, Section 19

Sandwich Town Council Financial Regulations, Section 3.6, delegates power to the Town Clerk to incur expenditure, **up to £1,000**, when it is necessary to carry out repair or replacement, or other works, which are of such extreme urgency that they must be done at once. However, in relation to the property listed below, the Town Clerk will consult with the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman and, if deemed to be an emergency, the Town Clerk will authorise such works up to a cost of £1,000.

Expenditure	Statutory Provision
Repairs to the Curfew Bell	LGA1972, Section 145
Repairs to Boatman's Hill Chapel	LGA 1972, Section 215
Fixtures and fittings of the office	LGA 1972 Section 111 Subsidiary powers
Repair works at the public conveniences	Public Health Act 1936, Section 87
Repair work at the Drill Hall / Fishergate	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Section 19

The Town Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council for the following statutory provisions **up to £2,000.00**

Expenditure	Statutory Provision
IT / Social Media	LGA 1972 Section 111 Subsidiary powers
Maintenance and running costs of the Monks Wall Nature Reserve	Open Spaces Act 1906, Sections 9 & 10
Fixture and Fittings of the Guildhall	LGA 1972 Section 133

Delegated power for expenditure up to £1,000 per item relating to the Museum and Archives should be given to the Museum Co-Ordinator.

Additions to Section 10, CONTRACTS:

- The Town Clerk, in conjunction with the RFO, to approve and execute all new utility and office contracts (e.g. gas, electricity, photocopier, internet) within the approved budget.
- The Town Clerk, in conjunction with the RFO, to approve and execute all new maintenance contracts (e.g. the Guildhall lift, CCTV) within the approved budget.
- The Town Clerk to re-authorise and execute renewals of contracts / licences (e.g. grazing licence at Monks Wall Nature Reserve).

Additional Regulation under BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS (Sandwich Town Council Financial Regulations, Section 4.2):

- Two payment schedules should take place, the mid-month one containing only payments which are within officers delegated powers.

Additional Regulation under PAYMENT OF SALARIES (Sandwich Town Council Financial Regulations, Section 6)

- The Town Clerk will be given delegated power to full-fill staffing requirements within the agreed budget – i.e. delegated authority to recruit to seasonal vacancies, deal with items of annual leave / paternity leave etc, complaints and disciplinaries (**in consultation with the Personnel Group**).
- **Dismissals must be a decision of Full Council.**

Report to Councillors and Members of: F&GP Committee**Meeting scheduled for 18th September 2023****Report from: Cllr Colin Wiles****Date: 12th September 2023****Subject: Priorities for 2023-2024****Classification: General****Purpose of report:**

To consider and to provide an update on priorities for the Finance and General Purposes Committee in 2023/24.

Content:

At the July meeting the Finance & General Purposes Committee (FGP) set priorities for the coming year. These are listed at Appendix 1, with the amendments made at the meeting highlighted in italics. Progress to date is shown.

Several of the priorities relate to the Town Council's future funding and viability, its income and expenditure and its ownership and management of assets. Given the need for the Council to conduct a fundamental review of its future finances it is proposed that this Committee, in consultation with the Toll Bridge Fund, set up a Working Group to conduct a thorough analysis of these matters and to make recommendations to Committee, Town Council and Toll Bridge Fund. The Working Group should include five councillors, the Town Clerk and RFO as co-optees and up to two outside experts. The proposed Terms of Reference are:

To review the relationship between the Toll Bridge Fund and the Town Council, including a review of the Guildhall lease from Dover District Council and the impact that this has upon STC and STBF finances.

To carry out a deep analysis of future income streams and expenditure for Sandwich Town Council, including a review of all income raised by the STC and STBF estate, including Guildhall and forecourt fees, rents and other charges.

To review all assets owned by STC and STBF to ensure that they are serving the best interests of the town.

To consider the viability of obtaining grant funding from the National Lottery or other public sources to improve STBF assets such as the cinema.

To make recommendations to FGP Committee, Council and Toll Bridge Fund on the way forward

Recommendations:

To note the priorities for Finance & General Purpose Committee for 23/24.

To set up a Working Party to conduct a thorough analysis of the Council and STBF finances as set out in the Terms of Reference above.

To appoint the following members to the Working Group: Cllrs Breen, Csuka, Gray, Ungerson, Wiles, with the Town Clerk and RFO as co-optees.

Appendix 1

ITEM	PROGRESS TO DATE
Consider in depth a new staff structure for STC and make recommendations to full Council.	Town Clerk's proposals considered by Council. Three appointments underway. Review of progress to be provided at September Council meeting.
Investigate, purchase and implement a new financial software system for the RFO.	Town Clerk and RFO to report back
Improve the presentation of accounts.	Town Clerk and RFO to report back
Tender for a new IT system and website.	Report to FGP Committee in September. Tenders for website returned.
Explore the relationship between STC and STBF	Working Group proposed.
Review the Guildhall Futures Plan, and the current lease with DDC <i>including the use of space within the Guildhall</i>	Working Group proposed.
Review all assets owned by STBF and STC.	Working Group proposed.
Put in place new standing orders and terms of reference for committees.	Standing Orders agreed, Town Clerk to propose Terms of Reference.
Review payroll and consider whether this should be outsourced	RFO and Town Clerk to report back.
<i>Health and Safety items should be regularly reviewed</i>	Town Clerk to report back.
<i>Funding bids to support for STBF assets</i>	Working Group proposed. New Assets Officer to consider grant applications for TBF assets.
<i>Deep dive of finance twice a year.</i>	Working Group proposed
<i>Review statutory declarations for AGAR</i>	Town Clerk to report back.
<i>Annual review of governance</i>	Town Clerk to report back.