

**Minutes of Finance & Staffing Meeting  
held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 at 6.30pm**

**Present at the meeting:** Cllrs: Campbell, Irven, Murphy (Chair), Johnson, Stevens and Whetlor

**In attendance:** Jo Grellier – Town Clerk

24/29C **To Receive Apologies for Absence:** (LGA 1972, section 85 (1))  
Cllr Murphy proposed that **'apologies given by Cllr Moss are approved'**. Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.

24/30C **To receive any Declaration of Interests** under Watchet Town Council's Code of Conduct (adopted on 9 July 2012) issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 SI No: 1464

Name	Minute no	Description of Interest	Pecuniary or Other	Action
None				

24/31C **To confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024** - circulated to members prior to the meeting via **Appendix 1**- (LGA 1972, Sch 12 Para 41)  
Cllr Murphy proposed that **'the minutes of the Finance & Staffing meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024 are a correct and true representation'**. Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.

24/32C **Voluntary work request:**

- (i) Update from the Clerk if further information received  
The Clerk informed members that contact had been made with Somerset Council to express an interest in volunteer work but to date there had been no response. Members noted.

24/33C **Financial Matters:**

- (i) Once per quarter, the Chair of this Committee shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations for all accounts produced by the RFO, the contents to be noted by this Committee, *as per regulation 2.2*  
The Clerk informed members that the July, August, & September 2024 Bank reconciliations were provided to the Chair of Finance at the meeting. Members noted.
- (ii) All payments above £500 and below £5,000 are itemised and reported to this Committee, *as per regulation 4.1 and displayed on the website. – tabled at the meeting*  
Members were provided with a copy of the £500+ payments from 17<sup>th</sup> September to 21<sup>st</sup> October and a brief report regarding underpayment of Pensions which has now been rectified. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'the £500+ payments from 17<sup>th</sup> September to 21<sup>st</sup> October and pension payment rectification are noted'**. Seconded by Cllr Campbell. Carried.

24/34C **Job Evaluation Review:**

- (i) Update report and recommendation from the Clerk - *circulated to members prior to the meeting via Appendix 2*  
Committee members commended the Clerk on the comprehensive report produced and an in-depth discussion of the report and recommendations provided by the Clerk ensued. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'the Committee accept the Job Evaluation review report and note that a Pay Policy needs to be devised to come back for approval at the next F&S meeting. Delegation is given to the Personnel Chair to contact SW Councils to gain validation of the Job Evaluation review report. Thankyou to the Clerk for hard work'**. Seconded by Cllr Johnson. Carried.

24/35C **Staff training:**

- (i) To approve enrolment of staff training - Update and recommendation from the Clerk  
The Clerk tabled a report detailing the staff training enrolment following approval at October's Full Council to increase the budget for staff training from £500 to £1750. A discussion ensued. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'The Committee approve the cost of £346 +VAT to enrol the Clerk & Grounds Person to attend a 1-day course in Taunton on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 and any accrued overtime from attending the course is duly paid'**. Seconded by Cllr Irven. Carried.



24/36C **Precept Proposals for 2025-26:**

- (i) To consider Committee budget requirements – 2025-26 precept proposals and budget spend for 2024-25  
 - circulated to members prior to the meeting via **Appendix 3**  
 The Clerk/RFO presented the proposals out detailed in Appendix 3.

Finance & Staffing Committee		Precept 2024/25	Predicted spend 2024/25	2025/26 precept Committee request	percentage increase on original 2024/25 precept budget (%)	percentage increase on predicted 2024/25 precept budget spend (%)
Grants		£7,000.00	£7,000.00	£7,000.00	-5.88	-13.75
Insurance		£11,000	£11,995.00	£12,475.00		
Training		£500	£1,750.00	£1,750.00		
Citizen Advice WS - SLA		£4,000	£4,000.00	£4,000.00		
IT services (moved to F/Council)		£4,300.00	£4,500.00	£0.00		
<b>Projects</b>						
<b>Total</b>		<b>£26,800.00</b>	<b>£29,245.00</b>	<b>£25,225.00</b>		

A long discussion ensued. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'the Committee precept proposals for 2025/26 are approved and recommended to Full Council'**. Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.

24/37C **Exclusion of Press and Public**

*"That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw"* (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

At 7.02pm Cllr Murphy, as Chair, proposed that **'in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw'**. Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.

24/38C **Precept Staffing cost proposals for 2025-26:**

- (i) To consider Staffing costs budget increase for 2025/26 financial year – Report & Recommendation from Personnel Committee – *tabled at the meeting*  
 The Clerk presented a report and recommendation for staff salary increases for the 2025/26 financial year

See Excluded note – **24/29EX**

At 7.17pm Cllr Murphy proposed **'the re-admittance of the public to the meeting'**. Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.

24/39C **Matters for the next meeting** – no discussion or decisions made

- Liaise with Clerk
- Voluntary work update
- Drafted Pay Policy

Meeting closed at 7.20pm

Signed.....

Date.....

*P. Murphy*  
 18 Nov '24