



"Stronger together"

**Minutes of the
Finance Committee
Tuesday 7 January 2025**
held in Grantham Museum

Grantham Town Council
Town Council Parlour
The Guildhall
St Peter's Hill
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Members

Present:

Cllr Paul Stokes – Chairman
Cllr Marie Reid – Vice-Chairman
Cllr Tim Harrison
Cllr Linda Jackson

Cllr Lee Steptoe
Cllr Paddy Perry
Cllr Bruce Wells

**Personnel Committee
Members Present**

Cllr Steve Billingham – Vice Chairman of Personnel Committee
Cllr Elvis Stooke
Cllr Nik Pattison

Officers Present:

Clerk to the Town Council, Anita Eckersley

Other Councillors:

None

Public:

None

F18 Welcome by the Chairperson

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting

F19 Apologies for absence

The following apologies for absence and reasons from Cllr Charmaine Morgan and Cllr John Morgan.

F20 Declarations of Interest

F10a To receive disclosures by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and any other interests under the Members Code of Conduct.

None were declared.

F10b To receive and decide upon requests for dispensations to councillors to take part in discussions and votes where they have declared disclosable pecuniary interests.

None were requested.

F21 Minutes for the 12 November 2024 Meeting

As no comments, Cllr Tim Harrison proposed the minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting held on 12 November 2024 and this was seconded by Cllr Marie Reid and agreed by those who had been present at the meeting.

Resolved: That the minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting held on 21 June 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

F22 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved: Even though there were no press and public present, it was agreed that further to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public to be excluded from the discussion of Agenda Item 6 through by virtue of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Due to the discussion involving Staffing matters the Clerk left the meeting.

F23 Pension Provider Calculations / Information

Members from the Finance and Personnel Committees held a fair and frank discussion around the financial implications to the Town Council (differences to the proposed Precept) of the NEST and LGPS (West Yorkshire Pension Fund) schemes and the benefits each of them provided the employee.

It was felt that as a fledgling Town Council it was important to be fair to its' employees whilst at the same time being mindful of the implications to the Precept and the effect this would have on the cost to each household.

Following further consideration Cllr Paddy Perry proposed the NEST pension scheme be adopted with an increased employer contribution of 5% rather than the legal minimum of 3%. This was seconded by Cllr Tim Harrison. A vote by the Finance Committee was then taken resulting in 4 in favour, 2 abstentions and 1 against.

Resolved: That Finance Committee recommends to Town Council that the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) would be the preferred Pension Provider and should be included within the 2025/2026 Precept.

The Clerk returned to the meeting, which returned public session.

F24 Financial Accounting Package

The Clerk informed the Finance Committee that the current Financial Accounting System was an excel spreadsheet. She noted that an appropriate Financial Package would be required for the Council as it developed.

Packages consider were Rialtis, Scribe which were both packages recommended for local authority use. Quick Books was also being considered but was more appropriate for Businesses and not Local Authorities. The Clerk explained that a package was required that would link into the AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) form that had to be submitted at the end of each financial year. Also required was the ability to present accounts in an appropriate format which currently was not available.

Resolved: That the Finance Committee, recommend to Town Council that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Town Council and the Chairman of the Finance Committee, is delegated to look at:

- i. The most appropriate financial package.
- ii. Identify any additional costs that might be incurred should the Pay roll package require additional costs significantly above the agreed figures included in the proposed Budget Setting and Precept for 2025-2026. (The figure proposed figure being £1100 for both install and recurring charges.
- iii. If the cost is too great in respect of an interlinked PAYE Roll package with the Financial Package, then to remain with the current PAYE Money Soft package used.
- iv. If there are no significant additional costs, arrange for the appropriate Finance Package and Pay Roll Package, the Clerk should arrange for the preferred Financial Package to be installed as soon as possible.

F25 Proposed 2025-2026 Budget Setting and Precept Submission

The Finance Committee considered the proposed 2025-2026 Budget Setting and Precept Submission, and discussed funding for events which could potentially assist with seed funding, ring fencing monies for elections and other areas. Also discussed was whether an additional £9500 should be included and ringfenced for the 2027-2028 elections.

- Resolved:** a) That the Finance Committee recommend to Town Council that the 2025-2026 Budget Setting and 2025-2026 Precept figure of £137,489 is agreed.
- b) That Town Council consider whether an amount of £9,500 should also be included in the Precept Submission and ringfenced for the 2027-2028 Town Council Elections.
- c) That the Clerk is delegated to submit the Town Council Precept request to South Kesteven District Council.

F26 Update on the Lease

The Committee considered the feasibilities of staying in the parlour and potentially moving to another location such as the Museum. Also discussed was the payment of the outstanding SKDC Invoice for the Maintenance, the signing of the Tenancy at Will document and officers and councillors being trained in Fire Warden Training and First Aid Training which should help address issues around accessibility to the parlour for meetings.

Following a full discussion, Cllr Tim Harrison proposed that the Town Council should remain in the Parlour, that the outstanding invoice should be paid and recommended to Town Council, this was seconded by Cllr Lee Steptoe and agreed by those present at the meeting.

Also proposed and agreed was a recommendation to Town Council that the Clerk should be delegated to sign the Tenancy and Will document for the interim period between the ending of the previous lease and the start of the new lease and that First Aid and Fire Warden training should be provided.

Resolved: That the Finance Committee recommends to Town Council:

- a) The Town Council remains in the Parlour.
- b) The Maintenance/ Rent invoice is paid.
- c) That the Clerk is delegated to sign the Tenancy at Will for the interim period between the ending of the previous lease to the start of the new lease.
- d) That Town Council agree that appropriate Officers/Councillors as appropriate as key holders are trained in Fire Warden Training and First Aid Training.

F27 Work Programme

Resolved: That the Work Programme would be considered at the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

F28 Date of next meeting

Date of next meeting to be arranged in February or March.

The meeting closed at 20.50