



**Minutes of a Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Offices, Manor Offices, North Road, Holsworthy, on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 at 5.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillors; N. Kenneally, P. Brown, D. De ste Croix, H. Parker

**In Attendance:** Town Clerk (TC) & Assistant to the Town Clerk (ATTC)

**Absentees:** Cllr. D. Cole

**1540. Elect a Temporary Chair**

Councillor H. Parker proposed Councillor D. De ste Croix be elected as the temporary chair be approved. This was seconded by Councillor N. Kenneally and agreed with amendments. (Unanimous)

**1541. Apologies for absences**

Councillors; J. Hutchings

**1542. Declaration of Interest**

Councillor D. De ste Croix asked Councillors to declare any relevant interests as they arose.

**1543. Public question time**

No members of public in attendance

**1544. Minutes of the last meeting –**

Councillor H. Parker proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 was a true record and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor P. Brown and approved.( 3 For, 1 Abs)

**1545. Matters Arising**

No matters arose

**1546. To review the Finance & General Purposes Committee Action Plan. (Appendix 1: Action Plan)**

The action list was reviewed and confirmed that all items are either in progress or completed. The Town Clerk (TC) has contacted the drone operator and is awaiting an update. Councillors D. de Ste Croix and Kenneally had an informal conversation with the drone operator, who has requested a meeting. Renovation investigations that were recommended to the Full Council have been referred back to the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) committee. A discussion took place regarding renovations to the Market Hall and Chambers, including the idea of using the Chambers for storage. The Scribe system will go live on 1st April 2025. F&GP meetings will now start earlier, at 17:00. The TC will arrange a meeting with Councillors N. Kenneally, P. Brown, J. Hutchings, and the TC to discuss cost centres.

**1547. Accounts due for Payment and Budget Review – To examine and agree the accounts due for payment**

Cllr. N. Kenneally has pledged to donate £100 towards a memorial bench at the Skateboard Park. The TC confirmed that income from Northam Town Council for training on Manual Handling and Risk Assessments is recorded under the second line from the bottom. Once the Scribe system is in place, VAT returns will be processed monthly. Cllr. D. de Ste Croix raised a question about the grant budget, and Cllr. N. Kenneally clarified that grants are open for applications year-round. Discussion ensued.

Cllr. N. Kenneally asked about the potential remaining funds from hiring the Memorial Hall for "A Night with Elvis" and whether they would carry over to the next year. TC clarified that the remaining funds would need

to be agreed and would not automatically carry over. Cllrs. were informed that they can purchase tickets for A Night with Elvis online with Eventbrite.

Cllr. P. Brown raised concerns about the vehicle and whether it was being used more than expected or costing more due to increased repairs. TC explained that the vehicle's age was greater than originally thought, and repairs have been increasing. Cllr. P. Brown suggested exploring other vehicle options due to these rising costs. Cllr. N. Kenneally recommended looking into vehicle options at the Holsworthy and Stratton Show, where various providers might offer discounts.

TC informed the committee that the Market is operating at a loss, with only eight stalls and the cost of paying two people to manage it. Additionally, it was noticed that a main column, legally required, is missing. A comparison with previous years' balances was provided. Cllr. H. Parker asked if it would be easier to set up the system with Scribe, to which TC responded that it might be. Discussion ensued.

**Councillor H. Parker proposed the accounts for December be paid. This was seconded by Councillor N. Kenneally and agreed. (Unanimous)**

**1548. To agree recommendation from Full Council to donate £1000 toward restoration of the St Peter and St Paul's Church bells.**

A brief discussion ensued.

**Councillor N. Kenneally proposed to donate £1000 to St Peter and St Paul's Church bells and be paid. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and agreed. (Unanimous)**

**1549. To agree the virement for the St Peter and St Paul's Church bells from the Town Centre Regeneration's Earmarked Reserve.**

A brief discussion ensued.

**Councillor P. Brown proposed to agree Virement Number 10 for St Peter and St Paul's Church bells. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and approved. (Unanimous)**

**1550. To update the status of the Scribe financial software rollout for the financial year 2025/26**

The TC asked for the availability of Cllrs P. Brown and N. Kenneally to discuss the cost centres for Scribe. Discussion ensued. The TC will invite Cllr. J. Hutchings for the meeting which is to take place in the Manor offices, Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 2pm.

The TC has contacted Torrington regarding their use of Scribe. Torrington has a part-time finance assistant who will be handling the data in the near future.

**1551. To review and agree the Christmas Event Budget 2024.**

The costs for the cherry picker and miscellaneous items are still pending. Discussions also took place regarding the costs for the Carols Around the Tree, the town carol service, and staffing. TC to note that the cherry picker arrived at 10:30 instead of the planned 10:00. Discussion ensued. Cllrs would like to consider/compare cheaper alternatives in the future.

**Councillor P. Brown proposed the Christmas Event Expenditure to be paid. This was seconded by Councillor N. Kenneally and agreed. (Unanimous)**

**1551. Town Clerk's Report**

The precept has been officially submitted to TDC on Tuesday. A media release has been sent out online, on the website, and to the press. The charity commission returns for Stanhope Park and Badock Gardens have

been submitted. Cllr. N. Kenneally asked whether he or Cllr. H. Parker need to sign any documents, to which TC responded that it's not necessary at the moment but will keep them updated.

V. Saunders will be leaving at the end of the financial year. The TC and V. Saunders have been exploring the demand for hiring someone new, in the upcoming financial year to handle data input. Cllr. N. Kenneally requested that TC, as the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), should ensure that the data is being checked during the day, if a new employee is hired. TC shared information about Bideford Town Council's model.

**1552. Close**

Councillor D. De ste Croix closed the meeting at 17:45

Signed..... Date .....

DRAFT

## FINANCE & GP ACTION LIST AS AT 22.01.25

ACTION	UPDATE	COMPLETED
1. To consider the hire of Drone services to produce a promotional film of the town.	Meeting held with Drone operator. Draft film to be circulated via Teams  Further meeting to be held with Drone operator re progress.	Drone operator to compile videos after Holsworthy Carnival and send draft to Committee.  TC to arrange meeting with drone operator.
2. Meeting with Play equipment suppliers re play equipment improvements/repairs	Stanhope Play area site visit agreed with Parks Committee to look at replacing the roundabout and new equipment for the bird's nest area (playhouse gym) that is accessible	As decided at Parks Committee November 13/24 Repairs completed Nov 7/24
3. 18.12.24 Recommend to Full Council to discuss renovations to the Market Hall	Full Council have recommended F&GP Committee investigate renovation options.	F&GP to investigate
4. 18.12.24 Implement Financial Software (Scribe) and import historic data.		Live on April 1, 2025
5. 18.12.24- Plan working a group to identify cost centres prior to the implementation of Scribe financial software	Mayor N Kenneally, Cllr. P Brown, Cllr Hutchings and TC to attend.	In Progress – suggested 30 <sup>th</sup> Jan 25 at 2pm / 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb 25 at 2pm.
6. 22.01.25 Donate £1000 to the restoration of the Church Bells at St Peter & St Paul's Church		
7. 22.01.25 Add column to finances to indicate the previous years balance to aid comparison		