



Minutes of the Oversight Committee meeting, held on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 19:00 in the Bungalow, 8 North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT

Present: Cllrs Steve Huxtable, Jim Cairney, Guy Cochran, Giles Fawssett and Joyce Harris

Apologies: Cllrs Rachel Backhouse, Liz Brookes-Hocking and Natalia Letch

In Attendance: 3 members of the public

Minute Taker: Rachel Avery, Town Clerk

MINUTES

The meeting commenced with the Mayor, Cllr Cochran, requesting a moment of silence following the news that Cllr Frank Letch MBE had died in the early hours of Tuesday 08 April 2025

223 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cllr Huxtable opened the meeting at 19.03 and members introduced themselves.

224 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

One member of the public raised the following items:

- Concerns about the appointment of additional office roles due to high administrative costs and asked whether budgets and level of precept had been considered. Cllr Huxtable responded by affirming that costs, the annual budget, and the precept are taken seriously and are subject to thorough discussions
- Sought confirmation that MDDC is funding the paddling pool rather than the Town Council. Cllr Huxtable clarified that discussions with MDDC are ongoing regarding funding contributions for the paddling pool and potential refurbishment or creation of a splash park
- Whether the paddling pool would be open this year, with Cllr Huxtable confirming that he understood it would open despite funding uncertainties
- Expressed condolences to Cllr F Letch's family.

225 APOLOGIES

Decision: The apologies of Cllrs Backhouse (illness), Brookes-Hocking (holiday) and N Letch (personal) were **noted**.

226 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

226.1 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI'S) IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

226.2 TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)

There were no dispensation requests.

227 CLIMATE EMERGENCY

It was **noted** that decisions will be made with the climate emergency at the forefront of decision and policy making.

228 ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no changes to the order of business.

229 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

230 OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Cllr Huxtable **noted** a minor amendment to item 221, where the words 'if required' had been omitted but were now included to ensure the minutes read accurately.

Decision: The minutes from the Oversight Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 10 December 2024, were approved as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

231 FINANCE

231.1 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN 01 MARCH AND 31 MARCH 2025

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** transactions between 01 March and 31 March 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

231.2 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION TO 31 MARCH 2025

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the bank reconciliation to 31 March 2025 was received and approved.

231.3 TO NOTE BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES TO 31 MARCH 2025

The bank account balances as of 31 March 2025 were **noted**.

231.4 TO NOTE YEAR TO DATE SPEND

The year-to-date spend up to 31 March 2025 was **noted**.

231.5 TO REVIEW AND AGREE THE FIVE YEAR FORECAST

The committee reviewed the five-year forecast, which showed a consistent increase of approximately 3% annually.

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the five-year forecast showing a consistent increase of approximately 3% annually. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

232 REGULAR PAYMENTS 2025/26

The committee reviewed and approved the Schedule of Regular Payments for 2025/26.

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the Schedule of Regular Payments for 2025/26.
(Proposed by Cllr Harris)

233 SCHEDULE OF FEES 2025/26

The committee reviewed and approved the Schedule of Fees for 2025/26. This document consolidated all charges into one comprehensive list, a requirement noted during the 2023/24 internal audit.

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the Schedule of Fees for 2025/26. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

234 EARMARKED RESERVES

234.1 TO APPROVE AN ADDITION OF £920 TO PARISH PATHS EARMARKED RESERVES, FOLLOWING THE RECEIPT OF THE PARISH PATHS MAINTENANCE GRANT

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the addition of £920.00 to Parish Paths Earmarked Reserves. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

234.2 TO APPROVE TO SPEND £680.09 FROM ALLOTMENT EARMARKED RESERVES TO COVER THE COST OF THE WATER LEAK AT THE BARNFIELD ALLOTMENT SITE

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the spending of £680.09 from Allotment Earmarked Reserves to cover the cost of detecting and addressing a water leak at the Barnfield Allotment site. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

235 ASSET TRANSFER WORKING GROUP

235.1 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN CLERK'S REPORT REGARDING THE CREATION OF AN ASSET TRANSFER WORKING GROUP AND TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

The Town Clerk's report and recommendations regarding the creation of an Asset Transfer Working Group were received. It was **noted** that the working group aims to proactively address potential asset transfers from the District Council to the Town Council, ensuring readiness for such requests. The terms of reference for the working group were approved, and four councillors were appointed to the group: Councillors Harris, Brookes-Hocking and Harris.

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the creation of an Asset Transfer Working Group. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Terms of Reference for the Asset Transfer Working Group. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

235.2 TO APPROVE THE ASSET TRANSFER POLICY

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Asset Transfer Policy. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

236 LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on the Local Council Award Scheme, citing an aim to working towards new accreditation, with a target submission date in September

to allow adequate preparation time. The Town Clerk and Cllr Huxtable had reviewed the checklist and determined that most criteria were already met, with only minor adjustments required.

237 DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL PENSION FUND

Councillor Backhouse had confirmed, prior to the meeting, that she was unable to provide an update on the Devon County Council Pension Fund due to a lack of information from her contact. This item was noted and would remain on the agenda for the May meeting.

238 YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

The Town Clerk provided a verbal report on the Year 10 work experience programme. Students will engage in various activities, including setting up a mock council meeting, creating agendas, running the meeting, and minuting the proceedings. The Town Clerk requested councillors to participate in the mock meeting on Thursday, 17 July, to enhance the students' experience. The committee expressed enthusiasm for the programme and agreed to participate, with details to be finalised and communicated via email.

239 EVENTS AND TOWN CENTRE OFFICER

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the interview panel for the Events and Town Centre Officer position, with Councillors Huxtable and Brookes-Hocking as panel members, alongside the Town Clerk. (Proposed by Cllr Fawssett)

240 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **noted** that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 13 May 2025.

241 PART II

The committee resolved to move into Part II under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, excluding the public and press due to the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. This resolution was proposed and accepted, transitioning the meeting into a closed session.

Decision: The committee resolved to move into Part II under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, excluding the public and press due to the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information.

242 COUNCIL OFFICES

The Town Clerk provided a verbal report on the Council Offices.

Decision: It was **resolved** to seek legal advice and escalate the issue to resolve outstanding issues. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

243 REPORTS PACK

Signed

Dated.....