

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH,
DUNSTABLE**

ON MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2023 FROM 19:39

Present: Councillors Liz Jones (Town Mayor), Louise O’Riordan (Deputy Town Mayor), Peter Hollick (Chair), Gregory Alderman (Vice-Chair), Richard Attwell, Nick Kotarski, Matthew Brennan, Robert Blennerhasset, Philip Crawley, and Michelle Henderson.

In Attendance: Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager) and Lisa Scheder (Head of Finance and Responsible Financial Officer)

Apologies: Councillors Mark Davis, John Gurney, and Johnson Tamara.

Public: Nil.

189/23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12 June 2023 were approved as a correct record following one minor amendment and were signed by the Chair.

190/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

191/23 REFERRAL REPORTS

Members received and noted the report.

RESOLVED:

To approve the release of up to £40,000 from the New Cemetery Reserve to undertake the works identified in section 3 of the report.

192/23 FINANCE

RESOLVED:

- i. To agree the revenue budgetary control report for the financial year until 31 July 2023
- ii. To note the Council’s earmarked reserves as of 31 July 2023

- iii. To note the current investments
- iv. To adopt the updated Treasury Management Policy, which includes the recommendation to maintain the general balance (reserve) of £553,042 or 25% of the salary budget, whichever is the higher, to protect the Council from unforeseen events and to give time to respond to such events.
- v. To confirm the current Direct Debits listed as at August 2023

193/23 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive Officer summarised the report. A Member asked whether the Talk of The Town was delivered to businesses as well as residents. The Town Clerk and Chief Officer agreed to Investigate further into this matter.

ACTION: Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Councillor O’Riordan congratulated the Marketing and Communications Officer on the soft launch of TikTok and recent content.

Cllr Alderman asked whether the Council’s live streaming of meetings could take place on Facebook due to the higher numbers of followers. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive agreed to investigate this.

ACTION: Town Clerk & Chief Executive

194/23 CARBON NEUTRAL WORKING GROUP

Members received and discussed the report provided. Councillor Bater advised that since the last meeting she has passed over her position in the working group to Councillor Brennan. It was

RESOLVED:

That the working group consists of the following members:
Councillors Matthew Brennan, Gregory Alderman, Louise O’Riordan,
Peter Hollick, Nicholas Kotarski and Richard Attwell.

195/23 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- Citizen’s Advice Management Committee – Councillor Richard Attwell
Councillor Attwell attended one meeting back in August where he observed the working of Citizens Advice. He expressed what an excellent service CA provides to the local community and that the roll out of their social prescribing has been a massive success. Social prescribing has lifted the pressure off the doctors. Councillor Attwell advised he attended the AGM last week where he

represented CA to talk about the success of social prescribing and the potential to roll this out nationwide.

- Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Councillors Liz Jones, Peter Hollick and Kenson Gurney
Councillor Hollick advised the Council that as only one member of the association attended the visit to Germany. Councillor Hollick made a plea for other organisations, including schools, to join the Association and for any Members with ideas to contact him.
- Hospice at Home Management Committee - Councillor Liz Jones
Members were advised that the charity is doing well and are expanding into onset dementia patients.
- Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Louise O’Riordan and Gregory Alderman
Councillor O’Riordan advised the next meeting will be in November and also advised that a recent meeting with the organisation pointed out how excellent the work the charities are doing is.
- Ashton Schools Foundation - Councillors Peter Hollick and Gregory Alderman
Councillor Hollick updated members he had attended a visit for the trustees to Ashton St Peters which showed how well the money donated really helps to improve the schools.
- Chew’s Foundation - Councillors Matthew Brennan and Kenson Gurney
Councillor Brennan was awaiting details of the next meeting.
- Poor’s Land Charity - Councillors Hollick and Liz Jones
No Update.
- Lockington Charity and Marshe Charity - Councillors Kenson Gurney and Liz Jones
Councillor Jones advised that the next meeting would be held in November. The exterior of the houses was currently being decorated.
- Dunstable and District Scout Council Executive - Councillor Nick Kotarski
- Councillor Nick Kotarski updated Members that he had attended the AGM. The meeting had included a review of the previous year including the District Commissioner’s review of scouting in Dunstable District and making appointments for the year. Some declared it would be their last year in their posts. Subsequently it was announced the new District Commissioner is Matthew Slade-Pedrick.

The meeting closed at 20:26