



**Council Committee Minutes**  
**Minutes of the meeting of Langport Town Council's**  
**Finance & Personnel Committee**  
**held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.00pm**

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>Present:</b> |             |
| Cllr Crumb      | Cllr Donald |
| Cllr Wilson     | Cllr Glas   |

**FP2024/1 To receive Apologies for Absence and to approve the reasons given.**

(LGA 1972 s85 (1)) Apologies were received from Cllr Dromgoole - Holiday

**FP2024/2 Declarations of Interests -**

Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). *(NB this does not preclude any later declarations)* There were no declarations of interest

**FP2024/3 Election of Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee.** Cllr Donald proposed Cllr M Crumb, seconded by Cllr Glas. There being no other nominations, Cllr M Crumb was duly elected Chair.

**FP2024/4 To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024** (LGA 1972 sch 12, para 41 (1)). The minutes of the previous meeting were considered accurate and were duly signed by the Chair as being a correct record of the meeting.

**FP2024/5 To receive requests for Grant Awards**

**Community Grant applications – Regular funding of amounts /ess that £1,000**

1. Huish and Langport Cricket Club – Amount requested £500

The application received is to support the clubs costs and their ambition of promoting more players to join the youth section. The intention is to liaise with the schools in the vicinity of the club. Funds will go towards required equipment and ensuring the ground and playing areas are kept in their superb condition by the club volunteers.

*The committee unanimously recommends that a grant of £500 be awarded.*

**FP2024/6 To receive a report on a proposal to upgrade the financial accounts package to a different provider (currently Rialtas).**

The Locum Clerk had prepared a report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report highlighted the difficulties of the current accounts programme – Rialtas, in particular the need to employ the services of a book keeper to operate that system, as it is quite a difficult programme to

use. Cllr M Crumb and the Locum and Deputy Clerks had received a presentation from Scribe which was well received. Of the many advantages is the fact that many of the budget headings are presented in a pie chart or block chart format, which are easier to interpret. The licence to use Scribe allows multiple users, where as Rialtas only permits one user. Other advantages of the system include the fact that Cemetery Management is an additional programme that can be purchased.

The Locum Clerk presented the costs of both systems. The first year 'on-boarding' costs for Scribe, compare favourably with Rialtas, particularly when the employment of a Rialtas qualified bookkeeper are taken into consideration.

Cllr Wilson proposed, seconded by Cllr Glas and unanimously **AGREED** that a recommendation is put to Full Council requesting consent to purchase the Scribe software programme.

#### **FP2024/7 To receive a proposal for the installation of 2 x throwlines to improve river safety.**

The Deputy Clerk informed that she had met with the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (D&SFRS) and received a recommendation that the existing life rings are replaced with Throwlines. These are protected by a locking mechanism which is released on demand having previously contacted the emergency services. The cost of two throwlines is £1,345 plus VAT. The D&SFRS will contribute, yet a contribution from the Town Council is expected. The Locum Clerk informed that the Canals and Rivers Trust have a small grants programme which could be applied for to contribute. Councillors also considered that a third throwline at Black Bridge would be useful and that an application is submitted to Huish Episcopi Parish Council for a contribution also. If no other funding streams are available, the committee recommends that £675 is made available to contribute to the purchase of throwlines.

#### **FP2024/8 To receive financial statements including expenditure against budget for the year to date.**

The expenditure against budget has been prepared and was shared with the council. The information had only been available earlier on the day of the meeting and members had insufficient time to digest and comment. The Locum Clerk informed that there were no areas of concern, particularly as we are only two months in to the financial year. The full detail will be presented to Full Council in June. There were no questions raised.

#### **FP2024/9 To receive reconciled bank reports for all accounts**

Reconciled amounts for each of the three accounts were presented to the committee. At the 31st May the LTC current account had £6,730.95, LTT current account had £6,303.79 and the LTC capital reserve account had £121,519.60. The accounts balanced with no differences.

#### **FP2024/10 Staffing – To consider filling the vacant position of Town Clerk**

The Locum Town Clerk informed the Committee that he had previously been appointed in May 2023 to assist the council during sickness absence. The previous expectation was for four months cover, which was extended to the present time. The position of Town Clerk needs now to be filled and the Locum Clerk has indicated that he would be prepared to accept this position if offered.

Cllr M Crumb informed that SALC had been contacted to enquire if the current Locum Clerk could transfer to the Town Clerk without the need to advertise. In response, they considered that as the previous appointment was undertaken correctly, that the Locum Clerk is qualified and that there have been no issues or concerns raised regarding performance in the past year, then this appointment can be made without advertising the position. A further recommendation is that the current self-employment should be changed and the Locum Clerk, if offered the position should become employed.

The Locum Clerk informed that he has a few holidays booked in the next year, which would be over and above the permitted holiday allowance. Cllr M Crumb suggested that a flexible system be adopted where more hours are completed when here to cover the shortfall when absent. The intention is to continue with providing 15 hours per week cover and when/if the accounts programme is changed, the number of hours required will rise to 22 per week. Committee members welcomed the suggestion and recommended that a request is presented to the next Full Council meeting in June

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed