

**BRIGHTLINGSEA TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE & PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Parish Hall, Victoria Place, Brightlingsea
on Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:

Councillors

D Atkinson (Chairman)

J Chapman (Vice Chairman)

J Carr, M Court, R Morgan and C Paveley

Also in Attendance:

Tracey Pulford - Town Clerk

Councillor M Judson

3 Members of the Public

F.094 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Howard.

F.095 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 10TH DECEMBER 2024, RECEIVED BY COUNCIL ON THE 12TH DECEMBER 2024:

Councillor Paveley briefed members that now the CCLA Bank Account is open, and receiving interest, he asked members for guidance on how much of the Councils reserves should be invested into the account. Members agreed an amount of £80,000.00. The Clerk was asked to check on the terms and conditions of the account.

Councillor Chapman gave an update on the Standing Annual Grants, and that she and the Clerk had met and all recipients of a Standing Annual Grant have been contacted to ask for a copy of their audited accounts, and how the grant money is spent. Responses have been received from All Saints Churchyard, Blessing of the Waters, Brightlingsea in Bloom, Brightlingsea Carnival and Brightlingsea Museum. The YMCA have confirmed that they will not be applying for a grant in 2025/2026.

The Minutes were then accepted as a true record.

F.096 DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS:

Members were reminded of the requirement to disclose any interest in relation to items on the agenda when these are discussed.

F.097 BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REPORT UP TO 31ST DECEMBER 2024, INCLUDING:

- **CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY**

A copy of the Chairman's Summary – December 2024 and Budgets & Actuals 2024/25 had been circulated to all members. Councillor Atkinson briefed members on the figures and advised that the Harbour Commissioners have now signed the lease for the Jetty. A discussion took place.

- **FINANCIAL MONTHLY OVERVIEW:**

The Town Clerk informed members that:-

Income for December 2024	£3,387.10
Expenditure for December 2024	£32,159.86
Bank Balances as at 31 st December 2024	£159,152.38

- **DEBTORS LIST AS OF 31ST DECEMBER 2024:**

A copy of the Debtors List as of 31st December 2024 had been circulated to all members. Councillor Atkinson informed members that the biggest debt is Tendring District Council, for £19,235.85.

This report was then noted.

F.098 EXAMINING OF ACCOUNTS:

The Town Clerk informed members that there are 19 payments in the sum of £7,440.61, 9 of these payments were paid before Christmas, totalling £2,554.94 to be authorised for payment. The Clerk also advised that we are now using Unity Bank for the monthly salaries and the January salaries need authorising today, for payment into the bank tomorrow 15th.

Councillors Chapman and Carr agreed to examine the accounts after the meeting.

Recommendation: 19 payments in the sum of £7,440.61, are authorised for payment, with Councillors Chapman and Carr signing off the invoices.

F.099 BUDGETS FOR 2025-2026:

A copy of a Draft Budget for 2025/26 had been circulated to all members. The Chairman briefed members on this report and much discussion took place.

It was then proposed by Councillor Morgan that the Precept request for 2025/2026 would be £247,500 (a 5% increase), with a Council Tax Band D rate of £79.91 (an increase of £3.84/year or 0.07p/month). Seconded by Councillor Chapman. **Agreed** by all present.

Councillor Atkinson informed members that the budgets still needed amending to reflect the above, and these would be available as soon as possible.

Recommendation: The Precept request for 2025/2026 would be £247,500 (a 5% increase), with a Council Tax Band D rate of £79.91 (an increase of £3.84/year or 0.07p/month).

F.100 FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY:

Councillor Morgan briefed members that the Council spends a lot of time scrutinising the budgets, but not on cost cutting and we owe it to the rate payers to scrutinise all costs and to look at cheaper alternatives. After discussion it was agreed that a small sub-committee would be formed, consisting of Councillors Atkinson, Court, Morgan and Paveley.

Recommendation: A small sub-committee would be formed, consisting of Councillors Atkinson, Court, Morgan and Paveley, to scrutinise all costs and to look at cheaper alternatives.

Before closing the meeting to the public, the Chairman invited questions from the public:-

Q1) The Heritage Pier, now you cannot put a hammerhead on the jetty, what is the future of the jetty? Also, if the MMO insist you pay back the grant money, have you the reserves to do so?

A1) Councillor Carr replied that a lot of information that has been posted on Social Media is not correct. He said that the jetty was built as per the grant application and the approved planning permission. Councillor Morgan responded that the Council are answering the questions raised by the MMO.

Q2) The Heritage Pier, if Gigs are moored on there, will they be charged?

A2) Councillor Carr and Morgan both replied that they have never been charged.

Q3) I do not agree with the Council paying extra for the Police, when you receive the same level of service.

This comment was noted.

Q4) The Town Council carry out maintenance jobs for other authorities – you should charge them for carrying out this extra work.

This comment was noted.

Q5) When Devolution happens, the Mayors will be in charge of the Police. There is a possibility that Town and Parish Councils will get extra funding under this system.

This comment was noted.

F.101 CLOSE OF MEETING: There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.20 a.m.

Received by Council on: 16.01.25

Approved by Committee on:

Signed by Chairman:

Signed by Chairman: