

ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2023 – 11:00 HOURS

To all Members of the Accounts Sub-Committee:

Cllrs Marriott (Chair), Birch, Hibbert and Purser

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Accounts Sub-Committee to be held in the Committee Room at the Town Council's offices at the Guildhall, Northampton on Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 11:00 hours. when the business set out below will be transacted.

This Sub-Committee meeting is open to the public and press to attend and those attending the meeting shall be informed that they may be recorded. Public participation is in accordance with the Town Council's public participation policy.



**Stuart Carter
Town Clerk
7th December 2023**

**Guildhall
Northampton
NN1 1DE**

Cc: Electronically to all Members of the Council for information

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as correct and give authorisation to sign the minutes of the last Accounts Sub-Committee held 13th November 2023

Pages 3 -6

4. REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

To receive the budgetary report for the month ending November 2023 (copy to be circulated at the meeting)

5. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

To approve accounts for payment (schedule of accounts to be circulated at the meeting)

6. BANK RECONCILIATION

Bank reconciliation and supporting documents to be tabled and signed

7. INTERNAL CONTROLS

Finance Officer to give a verbal update

8. FORWARD BUDGET

Finance Officer to speak to this

9. RISK REGISTER

Clerk to give a verbal update

10. FURTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION FOR INFORMATION ONLY

ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE – 13TH NOVEMBER 2023

MINUTES OF THE ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2023 AT 11 AM
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ROOM LOCATED IN THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON

PRESENT: Councillors Marriott (Chair), Birch, Hibbert and Purser

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr S Carter (Town Clerk) and Miss F Barford (Democratic Services Officer).

11. APOLOGIES

No apologies were submitted.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

13. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous Accounts Sub-Committee meeting held on 9th October 2023 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

14. REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

The Town Clerk stated the following budget codes had seen an increase of 10% or more:

- 4010 Payroll Costs had increased to 93.3%

The Town Clerk explained that there had been funds committed to this budget codes however, invoices were yet to be received.

- 4101 Office Supplies Photocopying had increased to 46.4%

The Town Clerk explained the increase was due to the purchase of supplies. A Councillor commented that this increase was expected.

- 4125 Telephone and Internet had increased to 77.5%

A Councillor raised that telephone and internet continued to increase. The Town Clerk explained Horizon provided our telephone and internet services however, once the contract ceases other quotes would be sourced.

- 4155 Accounting Support had increased to 88.5%

The Town Clerk stated that accounting support had increased due to assistance being sought with month end.

- 4156 Audit Fees had increased to 63.0%

The TOWN CLERK explained that the internal audit had been completed henceforth the expenditure.

- 4159 Legal & Professional Costs had increased to 24.7%

ACTION: Stuart to provide clarification on the expenditure under this budget code.

- 4210 Mayoral Allowance had increased to 74.5%
The Town Clerk stated the increase was due to the Mayoral Allowance instalment had been paid.
- 4211 Mayor's Transport had increased to 101.1%
The Town Clerk explained that there had been an open purchase order place however, the fund was not committed yet.
- 4212 Councillors Allowances had increased 89.6%
The Town Clerk further explained that Councillors' allowance had been paid.
- 1190 Interest Received had increased to 920.7%
The Town Clerk stated that the amount of interest received continued to exceed expectations due to the increase in interest rates.
- 4400 Repairs and Maintenance had increased to 27.8%

In response to a question, the Town Clerk explained monthly water metre readings were taken by Idverde and this was to check for any water leaks.
- 4170 Community Grants Scheme had increased to 41.0%
The Town Clerk explained that Community Grant had increased due to the applications approved at the Grants Sub-Committee had been paid.
- 1536 Contribution to Service
A Councillor requested clarification on what budget code 1536, Contribution to Service was. The Town Clerk explained we had received monies from West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) to contribute towards Northampton in Bloom project and Events programme and this perhaps was the surplus.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated that was the last instalment from WNC had been received and the Town Council had prepared for the end of the tapering grant through saving and earmarking funds in the General Reserves that equated to two-years.
- 4500 Diwali had increased to 80.3%
The Town Clerk stated that most of the invoices had been received however, was unsure if any further invoices be received for the event.
- 4502 Fireworks had increased to 100.4%
The Town Clerk explained that Fireworks had fallen slightly over budget however, funds may receive as revenue from the stallholders to offset this.
- 4519 Armed Forces Day
The Town Clerk stated that the Armed Forces Day budget had overspent however, this was

Armed Forces Day had overspent however, this was due to being the first year the Town Council organised the event independently from WNC so therefore was a lack of clarity on the total costings. In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated there was a great response to Armed Forces Day however, next year there would not be the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant therefore, the event may change next year. A Councillor highlighted that the event received sponsorship from Travis Perkins.

RESOLVED: The revenue budgetary report for month ending October 2023 was circulated and reviewed.

15. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk highlighted the first box of the payment of account included items that required retrospective approval. In response to a question posed, the Town Clerk explained he had requested a copy of the initial contractual agreement with Idverde that was agreed when the assets were transferred. He added, that the Town Council may be required to complete any remedial work or repairs at the allotments if required.

The Town Clerk explained that the Cost of Living pay award had been agreed with NIVCA and would be an increase. In response to a question, the Town Clerk explained that the Councillors Allowance would be increased again and we do tend to follow the lead of West Northants Council however, we were not tied to follow their lead. The Town Clerk added, that the amount paid to Councillors varies as it was dependent on the amount tax each individual paid.

The Town Clerk stated November was a busy time for the Events & Projects team as demonstrated within the payment of accounts. A Councillor stated that Tangerine Red should be benchmarked against other suppliers as their services seem costly.

A Councillor raised that there seems to be a duplicate payment itemised on the payment of accounts for Wave Utilities for the same amount.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated that he would clarify if the bollard covers for Diwali were stored and not disposed. In response to another question, a Councillor explained that the Events & Projects Officers were authorised to purchase items for events as long as it was within budget.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated that former Mayor Badges were a gift and therefore do not remain within the responsibility of the Town Council for repairs. A Councillor commented that the Mayor's chain remains within the ownership of the Town Council and we as an organisation responsible for the payment of any repairs.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated he benchmarked the costs of the two Dell laptops purchased against two other suppliers and ultimately WNC were the cheapest option.

A Councillor commented that the purchase of teas and coffees should only be utilised if there was a large volume of people attending the Mayor's Parlour. The Town Clerk explained that if it was a small meeting then Officers were able to provide refreshments internally.

In relation to the Trinity & Semilong Neighbourhood Plan payment, a Councillor stated that the invoice received from Tangerine Red included services/items that were paid within funds from the Central Government Grant.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk explained the unapproved invoices were itemized on the second page as these items were received after document was completed.

RESOLVED: The Payment of Accounts were circulated and authorised for payment.

16. BANK RECONCILIATION

The Town Clerk circulated and presented account statements from Unity & CCLA Deposit Fund. The Town Clerk added that it would be reoccurring item at Policy and Finance that the Bank Reconciliation documents would be signed by Cllrs who were not members of the Accounts Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: The Bank statements and cashbooks for Unity Bank and the CCLA Deposit Fund were presented and signed.

17. RISK REGISTER

In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated that the risk register included risk mitigations within it. A Councillor suggested that Staffing should be considered a higher risk especially with Officers picking up additional workload.

18. FURTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION FOR INFORMATION ONLY

No discussions were held under this item.

MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 12:02PM