



# Frodsham

## TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes from a meeting of the **Policy, Process & Revenue Committee** held on **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023** in **Gallery 2, Castle Park Arts Centre**.

### POLICY, PROCESS & REVENUE COMMITTEE AGENDA

#### Meeting 5

Attended by: Cllr McKeown (Chair), Cllr Hayes, Cllr Sumner and Jo O'Donoghue (Town Clerk)

Also attended by: Jack Higginbotham (Account Manager, Prism IT)

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#### 1. Apologies for absence

To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

**RESOLVED:** It was resolved to accept apologies from Cllr Griffiths (ill health), Cllr Eakin (work) and Cllr Stockton (personal)

#### 2. Declarations of interest

To note any declarations of interest

**NOTED:** There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. Requests from the public to speak

Members of the public are invited to speak on items which are on the agenda.

**NOTED:** No member of the public attended the meeting.

#### 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022

To accept and sign the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** The minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

*Standing orders were suspended to allow a report from Jack Higginbotham, Account Manager, Prism IT.*

#### 5. Prism IT

(a) To receive a report from Prism following security breach of the Town Clerk's email.

**NOTED:** The security breach was caused by a "brute force attack". Malware was installed forwarding specific emails to a little used folder on the system. There was little in place, at the time, to prevent this occurrence. Had this not been discovered then a route could have been found to install more malware. The resolution is to improve security to the Outlook mail application using Proofpoint and multifactor authentication. This will require all members of FTC to use Outlook to send and receive council emails using their [councillor@frodsham.gov.uk](mailto:councillor@frodsham.gov.uk) email addresses.

(b) To consider installing additional security/anti hacking software.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to install the software recommended by Prism to all [councillor@frodsham.gov.uk](mailto:councillor@frodsham.gov.uk) email addresses which must be accessed using Outlook. All councillors will be provided with the software to facilitate this. All councillors and members of staff will be required to book time with Prism support to set up the system.

**ACTION: CLERK TO ACTION**

## 6. Frodsham Town Council accounts

(a) To approve and sign the total monthly BACS and direct debits.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to approve and sign the total monthly BACS and direct debits

(b) To note the monthly income and expenditure report.

**NOTED:** The report was noted.

(c) To approve and sign the bank reconciliation reports to end January 2023.

**RESOLVED:** The bank reconciliations for CCLA, Co-operative current account and Co-operative savings account were approved and signed.

## 7. Finance procedure update

To note the report provided by the clerk.

**NOTED:** The report was noted (Appendix A)

## 8. Charities

(a) To resolve that Frodsham Town Council has met with its obligations as Trustee of Friends of Hob Hey Wood and note that the Annual Return for the period 1/04/2021 to 31/03/2022 has been filed in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved that Frodsham Town Council has met with its obligations as Trustee of Friends of Hob Hey Wood and note that the Annual Return for the period 1/04/2021 to 31/03/2022 has been filed in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission.

(b) To resolve that Frodsham Town Council has met with its obligations as Trustee of Frodsham Recreation Grounds and note that the Annual Return for the period 1/04/2021 to 31/03/2022 has been filed in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved that Frodsham Town Council has met with its obligations as Trustee of Frodsham Recreation Grounds and note that the Annual Return for the period 1/04/2021 to 31/03/2022 has been filed in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission.

(c) To resolve that Frodsham Town Council has met with its obligations as Trustee of Overton Hill Memorial Field and note that the Annual Return for the period 1/04/2021 to 31/03/2022 has been filed in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved that Frodsham Town Council has met with its obligations as Trustee of Overton Hill Memorial Field and note that the Annual Return for the period 1/04/2021 to 31/03/2022 has been filed in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission.

## 9. Interim internal audit report

(a) To note the revised report provided by Frodsham Town Council's internal auditor following response from the Town Clerk.

**NOTED:** The revised report was noted.

(b) To note that the council is obliged to use Contract Finder if the contract has a value of over £30,000<sup>i</sup> and is being publically advertised.

**NOTED:** The information was noted.

(c) To note that the council is not obliged to use Contract Finder if the contract has a value of over £30,000<sup>ii</sup> and individual companies/organisations are invited to tender providing Frodsham Town Council's financial regulations are followed.

**NOTED:** The information was noted.

## 10. External support from DCK Accounting

To note that the 2023/24 budget overview and advice meeting took place on 19<sup>th</sup> January and revisions were made to the accounting system to reflect committee income and expenditure.

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**2022-2023 Committee Members:** R McKeown (Chair), P Eakin (Vice Chair), P Griffiths, L Sumner, H Hayes, B Stockton

*NOTED:* The meeting was noted.

### 11. Finance regulations

To consider revision to the finance regulations following advice from DCK Accounting.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to adopt the revised finance regulations.

**ACTION: CLERK TO POST ON WEBSITE**

### 12. Festival of Walks

(a) To consider granting an additional £500 to the working group under budget code 4710 for the 2023 Festival of Walks.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to grant an additional £500 to the working group under budget code 4710 for the 2023 Festival of Walks.

**ACTION: CLERK TO ACTION**

(b) To consider administrative support for the 2024 Festival of Walks.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to withdraw administrative support for the 2024 Festival of Walks and noted that the budget for 2024 event is £2,000.

**ACTION: H HAYES TO INFORM GROUP**

### 13. Year end audit (2022-2023)

To note that DCK Accounting will be closing down year end (Rialtas software) on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and the internal audit will be carried out by JDH Business Solutions on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

*NOTED:* The dates were noted.

### 14. Cemetery

To note that Northwich Town Council has carried out tople testing, identified headstones in need of attention which the Cemetery Clerk is actioning.

*NOTED:* The information was noted.

### 15. Liverpool Airport Consultative Committee

To receive a report from the Clerk following the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

*NOTED:* It was noted that the Clerk had attended the meeting on behalf of Frodsham Town Council as Cllr Eakin was unable to attend due to work commitments.

### 16. Cleaning contract Office 1 - Castle Park House

To consider quotation for contract cleaning from the existing provider following the removal of the current service by Castle Park Trust.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved to accept the quotation for contract cleaning (Office 1, Castle Park House) from the existing provider.

**ACTION: CLERK TO INSTRUCT**

## PART B

### 17. Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve to exclude press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved to exclude press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

## 18. Staffing

- (a) To consider a request from the Town Clerk to reduce hours of work from 37/week to 30/week (flexible).

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved to reduce the hours of work of the Town Clerk from 37 per week to 32 (flexible) per week. Date of revision to be confirmed.

- (b) To consider increasing the hours of work for the Administrative Assistant from 13/week to 21/week (flexible).

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved to increase the hours of work of the Administrative Assistant from 13 per week to 21 (flexible) per week.

- (c) To note that employment contracts allow for a maximum of 5 days leave to be carried over from one year to the next.

**NOTED:** The information was noted.

- (d) To consider payment of annual leave not taken (above the 5 days carried over) in the leave period January 2022 to January 2023.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to pay staff for annual leave not taken in the leave period January 2022 to January 2023.

- (e) To consider setting up a standing order to ensure payment of regular staff salaries are made according to contractual agreements.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved to set up a standing order to ensure payment of regular staff salaries are made according to contractual agreements.

**ACTION: CLERK TO ACTION**

## 19. Date of next meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## 20. Close of meeting

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<sup>i</sup> As amended 21/12/2022

[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/1390/pdfs/ukxi\\_20221390\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/1390/pdfs/ukxi_20221390_en.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> As amended 21/12/2022

[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/1390/pdfs/ukxi\\_20221390\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/1390/pdfs/ukxi_20221390_en.pdf)

## APPENDIX 1 ITEM 7 – FINANCE PROCEDURE UPDATE

This report is provided following the brute force attack of the Town Clerk's email in June 2022. A brute force attack uses trial-and-error to guess login info, encryption keys, or find a hidden web page. Hackers work through all possible combinations hoping to guess correctly.

These attacks are done by 'brute force' meaning they use excessive forceful attempts to try and 'force' their way into account(s).

1. Co-operative Bank have increased their security on payments and each payment must be authorized individually giving the user multiple opportunities to verify each payment.
2. The Co-operative Bank verify the sort code and account number of the receiving organisation.
3. FTC has requested dual authority on the existing account to ensure that a council employee sets up a payment which is subsequently authorized by a named signatory to the account. The Co-Operative Bank will supply fobs to enable transactions to be authorized. In the event of the Clerk being unable to access the accounts another member of staff will be able to access the accounts to set up payments.

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4. Every invoice is recorded on a spreadsheet and given a unique reference number.
  5. All new payees account details are verified via a phone call to a trusted number. The details are recorded.
  6. All existing payees who request changes to their sort code and account number are verified via a phone call to a trusted number. The details are recorded.
  7. The Town Clerk has contacted the IT service provider to request further security on FTC email accounts to prevent a further brute force attack. A quote has been provided.
  8. The Town Clerk has completed the following relevant training:
    - FILCA (SLCC) 16/12/22
    - Introduction to cyber security (University of York) 15/12/22
    - Budget overview (DCK Accountants) 19/01/23
    - Internal controls (ChALC) 16/02/23
  9. The Town Clerk will be attending the following relevant training:
    - Managing your cyber security (SLCC) 03/03/23
    - Quotes, Tenders & Contract Management (SLCC) 6th, 13th & 20th July 2023
  10. The Administration Officer will be completing ILCA and FILCA by the end of December 2023.

SIGNED:

DATE: