

MEETING OF THE STAFF, POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE
held in the Oakfield Room, Blaby Civic Centre, 22-24 Leicester Road, Blaby
at 7pm on Tuesday, 22nd November 2022

PRESENT: Mr G Harding (Chairman),
Mr P Akroyd, Ms L Bolton, Mrs M Broomhead, Mr G Harding, Mrs S McFadden,
Mrs S Skeemer, Miss M Small, Mr M Wareham, Mrs S Clifton (Deputy Manager) &
Mrs V Jepson (Manager).

S/P.443 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - None.

S/P.444 2. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The following disclosure of interests were made: -

Mr P Akroyd Agenda 14a) Personal

S/P.445 3. TO CONSIDER THE CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and One Voice Wales (OVW), believe now is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

By our Council signing up to the Civility and Respect pledge we are demonstrating that our council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles.

Signing up is a simple process, which requires councils to register and agree to the following statements:-

Statement	Tick to Agree
Our Council has agreed it will treat all councillors, manager and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers with civility and respect in their role.	✓
Our Council has committed to training councillors and staff	✓
Our Council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts and a dignity at work policy	✓
Our Council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise	✓
Our Council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens	✓

Our Council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model / champion council e.g., via Local Council Award Scheme	✓
Our Council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate	✓

AGREED: Adopt the Civility and Respect Pledge.

S/P.446 4. TO REPORT & CONSIDER THE OCTOBER 2022 HEALTH & SAFETY REVIEW

All members have been issued with a copy of the Health & Safety Assessment Inspection document dated the 4th October 2022.

AGREED: Add the high priority matters to the relevant committee agendas for further consideration.

AGREED: Source Health & Safety training course prices for staff members, these are to be considered at a future committee meeting.

S/P.447 5. TO CONSIDER QUOTATION RECEIVED FOR A NEW COMPUTER BACKUP SYSTEM

Members have been issued with quotations for a plan to improve and simplify our computer backup systems.

Our current backup system is extremely over complicated with multiple stages, most of which cannot be automatically monitored and some of which cannot even be monitored manually without our IT company being onsite.

Quotation 1	Quotation 2	Quotation 3	Quotation 4
Backup Upgrade: Installing new backup and keep the server without a Warranty Extension New Backup hardware Installation Labour Increase in Service Contract	Backup Upgrade:- Installing new backup and keep server for 1 year New Backup hardware Installation Labour Extend the manufacturer's warranty for 1 year Plus, Service Contact	Backup Upgrade:- Installing new backup now and remove server later New Backup hardware Installation Labour Remove the Server and configure the system	Backup Upgrade:- Installing new backup and remove the server at the same time New Backup hardware Installation Labour Remove the server at the same time

Total £1,127.08 + VAT	Total £1,497.08 + VAT	Total £1,897.08 +VAT	Total £1,697.08 + VAT
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RESOLVED: Accept quotation number 4 to instal a new computer backup system and remove the existing server. New backup hardware priced at £497.08 + VAT, Installation priced at £600 + VAT and the removal of the old server priced at £600 + VAT, all works are to be completed at the same time, at a total cost of £1,697.08 + VAT.

S/P.448

6. TO CONSIDER ELECTRIC GATE UPGRADE QUOTATION

A quotation has been received to supply and install a GSM switch for the Civic Centre electric gates along with annual maintenance charges:-

Quotation 1
<p>To supply and installation of ONE gsm gate switch with capacity to store up to 250 numbers for caller ID access.</p> <p>The GSM Gate Switch is supplied with WorldSIM card which has a monthly / yearly / multiyear option of payment as shown below.</p> <p>Users will be able to call or text the world SIM number which will trigger the existing gate to operate as required.</p> <p>Any existing fobs will continue to operate as normal</p>
<p>Supply & Install = £350.00 + VAT Installation = £240.00 + VAT GSM Annual Cost = £72.00 + VAT</p>

DECLINE: Members do not wish to change from the current supplier now.

Annual Gateway Service

Quotation 1	Quotation 2
Annual service cost for the electric gates	<p>Maintenance of GSM Gate Switch system</p> <p>Maintenance to include one annual visit to check operation of GSM Gate Switch and make any administrative amendments to system as required by the customer.</p> <p>Report back to customer any potential issued with gate operation and safety.</p> <p>Gate risk assessment to be reviewed prior to carrying out maintenance.</p>
Total = £115.00 + VAT	Total = £180.00 + VAT

RESOLVED: Accept quotation number 1 for the annual service cost for the Civic Centre electric gates priced at £115.00 + VAT.

S/P.449 7. TO CONSIDER CIVIC CENTRE ALARM SYSTEM REMEDIAL WORK QUOTATION

All members have been issued with a quotation in respect of remedial work to fit a new wireless alarm detector in the Civic Centre which will be connected to the existing Intruder Alarm priced at £175.00 + VAT.

DECLINED: Members do not require the additional detector to be installed.

S/P.450 8. TO CONSIDER & REVIEW COUNCIL POLICIES

All members considered the following policies:-

Standing Orders

In August 2022 members considered the Structure of Council & Committee meetings and it was requested that the Councils Standing Orders were considered by the Manager and the Chair of the Staff, Policy & Finance committee, once completed members of the Staff, Policy & Finance committee are to consider the contents for approval.

Members considered the revised Standing Orders.

AGREED: Adopt the revised Standing Orders with immediate effect.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct policy is considered by members as most of them have now attended the training course.

AGREED: Adopt the Code of Conduct document with the suggested changes.

Gift and Hospitality

All members have been issued with a copy of the LRALC and Blaby District Council 'Notification of offer of gift or hospitality' documents for members consideration.

AGREED: Adopt the wording from the LRALC 'Notification of offer of gift or hospitality' document.

S/P.451 9. TO RECEIVE THE COUNCILS ACCOUNTS AT THE 31ST OCTOBER 2022

RESOLVED: All members have been issued with a copy of the Councils accounts as of the 31st October 2022.

S/P. 452 10. TO REVIEW THE COUNCILS LEVEL OF INSURANCE – FIDELITY GUARANTEE

Members considered the Councils fidelity guarantee.

Our Council's Fidelity Guarantee is set at £600,000.00 which covers all members and employees against Fraud and Dishonesty.

The figure is based upon the following calculation: -

Half the total Precept 2022/23	£173,172 (£346,344)
Council Reserves	<u>£248,859</u> (End March 2022).

£422,031

RESOLVED: The Fidelity Guarantee Limit is to stay set at £600,000.00.

S/P. 453 11. TO CONSIDER RISK MANAGEMENT

All members have been issued with a copy of the 2022 risk management document; this was previously considered by the Council at their meeting on the 14th June 2022.

AGREED: The document is updated, when necessary, by the Manager.

S/P. 454 12. TO REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL AUDIT

All members have been issued with a copy of the Internal Audit Review Checklist – Part 1 – Meeting Standards & Part 2 – Characteristics of Effectiveness.

The Staff, Policy & Finance Committee is to carry out an Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit. This review is the responsibility of the Council and may not be delegated to the Responsible Financial Officer.

The Council's Financial Regulations were reviewed on the 16th August 2022, minute ref: S/P.439 and approved at the 13th September 2022 Council meeting, minute ref: 1525.

The Assets Register has been considered by each Committee during the fiscal year; the Policies are updated upon receipt of any new/replacement items.

The appointment of an Internal Auditor for the forthcoming 2022/23 Financial Year was made at the 14th June 2022 Council meeting, minute ref: 1490e).

The review must be balanced to the council's internal audit needs and usage. It should be designed to provide sufficient assurance for the council that standards are being met and that the work of internal audit is effective.

An assessment of each of the following is to be made: -

- The scope of internal audit
- Independence
- Competence
- Relationships
- Audit planning and reporting

Evidence of Achievement

- Internal audit work is planned
- Understanding the whole organisation its needs and objectives
- Be seen as a catalyst for change
- Add value and assist the organisation in achieving its objectives
- Be forward looking
- Be challenging
- Ensure the right resources are available

Internal Audit Review Checklist

Members are required to complete the Internal Audit Review Checklist Parts 1 & 2.

Approve Internal Audit Review Part 1 Meeting Standards & Part 2 Characteristics of Effectiveness

All Members have been issued with a copy of the Internal Audit Review (Parts 1 & 2).

Members completed the Internal Audit Review Checklist Part 1 – Meeting the Standards and Part 2 – Characteristics of Effectiveness: -

The Council appointed its Internal Auditor on the 14th June 2022, Min. 1490e).

The following reviews have been conducted during 2022/23.

Meeting the Standards – Part 1

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Scope of Internal Audit | Yes (14 th June 2022) |
| 2. | Independence | Yes |
| 3. | Competence | Yes |
| 4. | Relationships | Yes |
| 5. | Audit Planning and Reporting | Yes
(14 th June 2022). |

Characteristics of Effectiveness – Part 2

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Internal audit work is planned | Yes |
| • Understanding the whole organisation its needs and objectives | Yes |
| • Be seen as a catalyst for change | Yes |
| • Add value and assist the organisation in achieving its objectives | Yes |
| • Be forward looking | Yes |
| • Be challenging | Yes |
| • Ensure the right resources are available | Yes |

AGREED: That the Internal Audit Review Checklist Part 1 – Meeting the Standards and Part 2 – Characteristics of Effectiveness, as completed, is approved.

AGREED: The Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit is to be reviewed by the Staff, Policy & Finance Committee each November/December.

S/P.455 13. TO CONSIDER STAFFING MATTERS AND PAY & CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT

a) Deputy Manager – New Employment Contract

The Deputy Managers current contract of employment is based on the Blaby District Council contract rather than the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) contract of employment which the Manager is currently on.

AGREED: A vote is taken with all members voting in favor for the Deputy Manager's contract of employment to be revised to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) model rather than Blaby District Council's model.

b) SLCC Conference

The Manager & Deputy Manager attend the SLCC National Conference which was held at the beginning of November.

The conference was highly informative and as always, a good opportunity to network with other clerks and exhibitors.

c) Events

This year staff members have worked additional hours for the Summer Funday and the Christmas Lights Switch on.

RESOLVED: All staff working on these events are to be paid overtime as per their contract of employment.

d) Local Government Pay Award

The salary scales for 2022/23 have been confirmed. The GMB, Unite and Unison unions agreed the employers' offer on 1st November of an increase of £1,925 on every salary point for all staff employed on the NALC / SLCC contract of employment.

It should be backdated to April 2022 at the new hourly rate. If you are clerk to one of the smallest councils, this will be an increase of 9.8%. If you are clerk to one of the largest councils, this works out as 2.43%.

RESOLVED: All members approved the above local government pay award which is to be backdated to the 1st April 2022.

From 1st April 2023 all employees covered by the National Agreement will receive a permanent increase of one day (pro rata for part timers) to their annual leave entitlement. This is in addition to the (normally) 8 bank holidays and 2 extra-statutory days.

RESOLVED: Members approved the additional permanent increase of one day holiday to their annual entitlement as of the 1st April 2023.

e) Additional Bank Holiday 2023

An extra bank holiday has been announced for Monday, 8th May 2023 to mark the coronation of King Charles III. This is in addition to the existing bank holiday planned for Monday, 1st May 2023.

f) Staff Training

Members are asked to consider the following training courses for the ground staff:-

- Use of Pesticide

RESOLVED: Members are happy for the full-time grounds man to attend a use of pesticide training course.

- Chainsaw Maintenance & Cross Cutting

AGREED: Members wish to add this training course to the next staff, policy & finance committee agenda for further consideration.

- Brush cutter & Strimmer – Approx. £125

RESOLVED: Members are happy for the senior groundsman and the full-time grounds man to attend a brush cutter & strimmer training course.

- Through the Councils HR & H & S company there is an e-learning training option for all staff members

DECLINE: Members do not wish to sign up to the LearnNest platform training courses as they feel the training should be practical learning and not on-line training.

S/P.456 14. TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICATIONS:-

a) Citizens Advice

All members have been issued with a grant application and a copy of the last audited accounts from the Citizens Advice.

DECLINED: Members completed the grant application criteria document for funding for the Citizens Advice but unfortunately, they did not score enough so the request is declined.

S/P.457 15. TO CONSIDER 2023/24 BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS & POSSIBLE NEW PROJECTS

All members have been issued with a copy of the Staff, Policy & Finance committee budget document for members consideration.

BLABY PARISH COUNCIL				
Description	Precept 2022/23	Actual To 31.10.22	Est. to 31.03.23	Recommended Budget 2023/24
PARISH EXPENDITURE		£		
STAFF				
Office Staff Salaries	73,500.00	46,716.00	83,340.00	86,000.00
Expenses	200.00	0.00	150.00	200.00
Ground staff Labour & Weekends	70,352.00	40,734.00	75,000.00	77,500.00
Pension Scheme	39,000.00	28,223.00	49,500.00	51,000.00
Office Cleaner & Weekends	2,000.00	1,441.00	2,100.00	2,500.00

Total Salaries	185,052.00	117,114.00	210,090.00	217,200.00
Mobile Phone Top-up	200.00	70.00	150.00	200.00
Postage	500.00	120.00	300.00	400.00
Stationery	500.00	193.00	375.00	400.00
Annual Photocopier Rent & Running Costs	2,000.00	704.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Staff Training & Conference Fee's	1,000.00	1,292.00	1,800.00	2,500.00
Uniform	750.00	215.00	500.00	750.00
Total Staff	4,950.00	2,594.00	4,625.00	5,750.00
Total Recommended Budget for the Staff, Policy & Finance Committee				£222,950.00

RESOLVED: The Staff Committee budgetary requirements are agreed for 2023/24.

BLABY PARISH COUNCIL	
Description	Recommended Budget 2023/234
<u>POLICY, RESOURCE & FINANCE</u>	
Sundries & Room Hire	750.00
Catering	200.00
Subscriptions & Audit Fee	3,000.00
Council - Insurance	10,000.00
Website Provider	1,500.00
Grants to Other Bodies (Sect. 137)	1,000.00
RBS Computer Support (Accounts, Cemetery, Year End), ERUD (IT Support) & H & S	8,000.00
Elections	3,000.00
Inspection Fire Extinguishers - Cemetery	200.00
Inspection - Fire Extinguishers - BCC	200.00
Inspection Fire Extinguishers - Oakfield Park	100.00
Inspection Fire Extinguishers - Northfield Park	200.00
Electrical Installation - Oakfield Park (Due 2027)	0.00
Electrical Installation - Blaby Civic Centre (Due 2023)	500.00
Electrical Installation - Northfield Park (Due 2023)	200.00
Electrical Installation - Chapel Workshop (Due 2023)	200.00
Legal Appeals, Advice & HR Consultant (ELAS)	3,000.00

Chairman's Allowance	100.00
Councillor Training	500.00
Local Council Award Scheme	200.00
Emergency Lights - Oakfield Park	150.00
Contingency	0.00
Blaby Civic Centre - Cleaning Materials	500.00
Rates - Blaby Civic Centre	9,800.00
Rates - Cemetery	4,000.00
Rates - Oakfield Park	1,200.00
Telephone & Internet - Blaby Civic Centre	500.00
Gas - Blaby Civic Centre	2,500.00
Electric - Blaby Civic Centre	5,000.00
Electric - Cemetery	1,500.00
Electricity - Northfield Park	500.00
Electricity - Oakfield Park	500.00
Electricity – The Crescent	100.00
Water - Blaby Civic Centre	1,500.00
Water - Allotment	1,000.00
Water - Cemetery	650.00
Water - Northfield Park	500.00
Water - Oakfield Park	100.00
Maintenance - Blaby Civic Centre	5,000.00
Burglar Alarm, Fire Alarm & Emergency Lighting Maintenance - Oakfield Park	100.00
Burglar Alarm, Fire Alarm & Emergency Lighting Maintenance - Northfield Park	100.00
Burglar Alarm, Fire Alarm & Emergency Lighting Maintenance - Cemetery	100.00
Burglar Alarm, Fire Alarm & Emergency Lighting Maintenance - BCC	300.00
Cemetery - Servicing of the Toilet (2018/19)	300.00
Vehicle - Insurance	2,000.00
Vehicle - Running Costs - Fuel + Equipment Fuel	2,800.00
Vehicle - Road Tax	640.00
Vehicle - Maintenance	1,000.00
Loan Repayment - Western Drive (473428 - 18.08.2018)	0.00

Loan Repayment - Blaby Civic Centre (498869 - 10.08.2051)	22,745.00
Loan Repayment - Blaby Civic Centre (Phase Two) (503040 - 30.05.2024)	8,694.00
Total Policy & Finance	£107,129.00

RESOLVED: The Policy & Finance Committee budgetary requirements are agreed for 2023/24.

S/P.458 16. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AFTER ISSUE OF AGENDA: FOR INFORMATION ONLY

a) Office Tenants

Members were informed of a recent visitor to the Civic Centre from High Court Enforcement officers.

AGREED: Write to the tenant stating this is not acceptable behavior and if this was to happen again in the future the tenant would be evicted with immediate effect.

S/P.459 17. CHAIRMAN'S TIME

Councillors wished to thank all staff and volunteers for helping on the Christmas Light Switch on event stating it was a very good event and the staff were thanked for their hard work.

The Chairman thanked all members for attending this meeting.

MEETING CLOSED: 8.25PM