

WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL

**A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WAS
HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH JUNE 2021 AT 6.00PM**

PRESENT Councillors Lynch, Robbins, Jackson, Armstrong, Ferriby and Scott

FIN/1/2021 TO ELECT A CHAIR

Nominations – Cllr Ferriby nominated Cllr Lynch and seconded by Cllr Armstrong
Cllr Lynch was elected as Chair

FIN/2/2021 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & RECORD REASONS FOR ABSENCE

None

FIN/3/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS

None

FIN/4/2021 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

None

FIN/5/2021 BARTON LAWS CAR PARK QUOTE

Following a site meeting by Cllrs Ferriby and Jackson an estimate has been received
£20,900

It was RESOLVED the Clerk contact other contractors for further quotes to include
Compacted Sub Base and a disabled access from the road. Also cost for new gates.

Cllr Jackson recommended the money received from the Bailey bridge (£3,000) is used for
works to the car park.

Cllr Lynch to look into sending letters to businesses in the town with Asst Clerk.

FIN/6/2021 REVIEW OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND INTERNAL
AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS**

1. Summary

1.1 There is a requirement under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations
2011 that the Council undertakes and approves a review of the effectiveness of
its internal control arrangements annually.

1.2 As part of this review Members should consider the level of fidelity
guarantee insurance cover in place

2. Recommendations

2.1 Council is asked to approve:

2.1.1 The review of internal control and internal audit arrangements.

2.1.2 The level of the Town Councils fidelity guarantee insurance of £500,000

3. Background

3.1 Local Councils are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of their affairs and the stewardship of the resources under their control. These arrangements should enable the Council to carry out its activities effectively whilst managing risk.

3.2 A system of internal control should be designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. Whilst it cannot eliminate the risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can provide reasonable assurance of effectiveness.

3.3 Regular reviews of internal control provide assurances on their effectiveness and where appropriate a management action plan can be used to address any identified weaknesses.

3.4 The review process includes:

- obtaining assurances to the extent that control systems have operated effectively throughout the year;
- reviewing Internal and External Audit Inspection reports;
- review of any issues arising from the last review of internal control.

4. System of Internal Control

4.1 A review checklist of the Internal Control systems currently in place is shown at Appendix 1. Members are asked to review this to ensure that the current Internal Control arrangement continue to be efficient and effective for the Council.

4.2 As part of the review Members are asked to consider the level of fidelity guarantee insurance, currently £500,000 with an excess of £100. Fidelity guarantee insurance helps safeguard the Council against dishonesty and the level of cover should be set by the Council taking into account the loss it could face.

4.3 The Town Council's External Audit indicates that they would expect the level of cover to be sufficient to cover the maximum amount of cash reserves held by the Council. The Town Council's highest level of cash reserves occurs following the receipt of its annual precept at the end of April each year.

4.4 When the Town Council receives its precept for 2021/2022, estimated to be in the order of £300,000, it is expected that its total cash reserves will be in the order of £150,000.

5. Review of Internal Audit Arrangements

5.1 Advice provided by the Joint Practitioners Council which includes members from the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks, states that as a minimum the review of internal audit should include an assessment of each of the following:

- the scope of the audit
- independence
- competence
- relationships
- audit planning and reporting

5.2 The Internal Auditor has no involvement in the financial decision making or management or administrative control of the Council. They are not asked to provide consultancy or advice on the Council's financial controls and procedures.

5.3 The current Internal Auditor is Jean Airey. She is appropriately qualified and has significant local authority finance experience and knowledge of accounting and auditing processes including the role of the internal audit and awareness of risk management issues. She understands accounting requirements and the legal framework and powers of local councils.

5.4 An internal audit is conducted twice a year.

5.5 The Internal Auditor's findings are reported to Council. These include a management plan showing recommendations with management responses. It is anticipated that Council will receive the report on the current year's Internal Audit findings early in the new financial year.

5.6 A review checklist of internal audit arrangements has been prepared and is shown at Appendix 2 for Members to review.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are none, unless Members decide to increase the level of fidelity insurance then the premium cost will increase, subject to the revised value agreed.

7. Environmental and Biodiversity Implications

7.1 None.

8. Crime and Disorder Implications

8.1 Internal Control, supported by an independent review from an External Auditor, is to put into place measures to ensure the risk of fraud is reduced. Whilst this might not be totally secure these measures minimise the potential with the intention of there being none.

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Review checklist - meeting standards Evidence of Achievement in place yes/no Areas for Development

Review checklist - meeting standards	Evidence of Achievement in place	yes/no	Areas for Development
Governance Framework	Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place and are reviewed annually or in conjunction with changes to working practices	Yes	
	Policies in place are: LCPS Discretions policy, Dignity at work, equal opportunities, filming and recording, health and safety, managing attendance, press and media, safeguarding	Yes	Being reviewed
	Procedures in place are: Grievance, Complaints, publication scheme, and risk management strategy.	Yes	Being reviewed
	All Staff employed on written contract	Yes	
	Members Code of Conduct regularly reviewed	Yes	
	Members declarations of interest and register have been updated and are displayed on the Allerdale Borough Council Website	Yes	
	Budget and precept set annually by council	Yes	
	annual year end return approved by council	Yes	By end of June

Financial Controls	Computerised financial management system in place	Yes	Scribe Accounts – New System
	Bank reconciliations completed on a monthly basis and reported to full council	Yes	
	Payment controls and payment details reported to full council	Yes	
	Quarterly budget monitoring reported to Finance Committee	Yes	
	£500,000 fidelity guarantee insurance	Yes	

Section 151 Officer	Clerk is appointed RFO	Yes	Asst Clerk updates Yearly Weekly by Grounds Maintenance Team Asst Clerk to Check
Review of risk management arrangements	Risk register updated regularly by office	Yes	
Regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets	Periodic inspections undertaken	Yes	
Insurance arrangement checked	Reviewed regularly and cross checked with Asset Register	Yes	
Asset Register	Reviewed regularly, inventory reviewed annually	Yes	

External Auditors	apart from an amendment, there were no issues raised by External Auditors, PFK, for the year ended 31st March 2020, report approved by full council	Yes	
internal Auditors - appropriate actions have been taken on all matters raised	matters highlighted by the internal auditor are reported to Council	Yes	
Scope of internal audit			
Independence	Internal audit does not have any other role within the council	No	
Competence	No evidence to suggest otherwise	No	
Relationships	RFO consulted on the internal audit plan. Respective responsibilities known. Responsibilities of Council members are understood.	Yes	
Audit planning and reporting	The annual internal audit plan properly takes account of all the risks facing the council.	Yes	Twice Yearly

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Review checklist - Characteristics of effectiveness

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement in Place	yes or No	Areas for Development
Internal audit work is planned	internal audit based on risk assessment and designed to meet councils need	Yes	

understanding the whole organisation its needs and objectives	The annual audit plan demonstrates how audit will provide assurances for the council ie annual governance statement	Yes	
Adds value and assist the organisation in achieving its objectives	The council makes positive responses to internal audits recommendations and follows up action where this is called for	Yes	
Be forward looking	In formulating the annual audit plan, national agenda changes are considered. Internal audit maintains awareness of new developments in the services, risk management and corporate governance	Yes	
Ensure the right resources are available	Adequate resource is made available for internal audit to complete its work. Internal audit understands the council and the legal and corporate framework in which it operates	Yes	

FIN/7/2021 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTIBILITY FOR SMALLER AUTHORITIES

Noted the publication of the Practitioners Guide 2021, which is mandatory for 2021/22. It was RESOLVED to find out about the secure emails system with a gov.uk domain, which was identified on the changes.

FIN/8/2021 PUBLIC TOILETS

Review the annual costs. It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that all toilets are open Monday to Sunday 8.00am to 5.00pm. Finance to look at options of employing staff.

FIN/9/2021 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of Next Meeting 5th July at 6.00pm

Meeting Closed at 7.00pm

WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL

A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WAS

HELD ON TUESDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2021 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT Councillors Lynch, Jackson, Armstrong and Ferriby

FIN/10/2021 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & RECORD REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Robbins

FIN/11/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS

None

FIN/12/2021 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

None

FIN/13/2021 GRANTS

To discuss a grant to the Citizens Advice Service

It was RESOLVED to grant £500

FIN/14/2021 BUDGET MONITORING 2021-22

To amend and approve the accounts for April to September 2021 – Members happy with the account, no changes to be made for the first 6 months.

FIN/15/2021 BUDGET 2022-23

To discuss the preliminary budget for 22-23 – Initial discussions took place. Discussed future projects and reserves.

FIN/16/2021 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of Next Meeting Thursday 2nd December 2021 at 6.00pm

Meeting Closed at 7.15pm

WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL

A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WAS

HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2021 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT Councillors Lynch, Jackson, Armstrong, Scott, Robbins and Ferriby

FIN/17/2021 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & RECORD REASONS FOR ABSENCE

None

FIN/18/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS

None

FIN/19/2021 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

None

FIN/20/2021 GRANTS

To discuss a grant to Wigton Theatre Club - £500

To discuss a grant to Wigton Youth Station – No grant form received

It was **RESOLVED** to grant £500 to Wigton Theatre Club

FIN/21/2021 BUDGET 2022-23

To discuss the preliminary budget for 22-23 – Changes were made to the budget for next year. One change was to grounds staff wages as it was pointed out that the minimum wage is set to rise and some staff wages were quite close to this. Clerk to send members a precept calculation sheet before the next meeting.

It was **AGREED** to send Andrew Berwick a small gift for all the work he does for the TC free of charge.

FIN/22/2021 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of Next Meeting Thursday 6th January 2022 at 6.00pm

Meeting Closed at 7.30pm

WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL

A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WAS

HELD ON THURSDAY 6TH JANUARY 2022 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT Councillors Jackson, Armstrong, Scott, Robbins and Ferriby (Chair)

FIN/23/2021 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & RECORD REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Lynch

FIN/24/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS

None

FIN/25/2021 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

None

FIN/26/2021 BUDGET 2022-23

To discuss the budget for 22-23 – Changes were made to the budget for next year.

Amendments made by the Clerk –

Income – Removal of the Innovia contract due to this being up for tender. Contract is more work than we do now with the inclusion of tree works which we would have to employ a contractor. There's also the removal of the grass from site. **AGREED** to remove this income stream.

Expenditure – The addition of £7k for an apprentice. **AGREED** to include this.

Cllr Armstrong wanted to confirm that the 10k carried forward for Festivals is coming out of 2021/22 budget. This was confirmed.

Agreed to show council 2 different precept figures for consideration - 340k and 350k. The Clerk to send out precept calculation sheet once base tax figure cost has been received from Allerdale Borough Council.

It was noted that Cllr Robbins was concerned that we have reduced the funding to the baths by 1k.

FIN/27/2021 ALLOTMENT AND PITCH CHARGES 2022

27/2021/1 To set Allotment Charges for Longthwaite Road, The Crofts and Burnfoot 2023/24

Members **AGREED** to recommend the following to full council

The Crofts - £45.00

Burnfoot - £30.00

Longthwaite Road - £60.00

27/2021/2 To set pitch charges for Barton Laws and Park 2022/23

Members **AGREED** to recommend the following to full council

Season Charges for all pitches

Adult - £500

Under 16's - £125.00

Under 10's - £62.50

Mini Football training - £62.50

Community Room – 3 hours = £30.00 and 1 hour = £20.00

FIN/28/2021 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of Next Meeting Thursday 24th February 2022 at 6.00pm

Meeting Closed at 7.15pm