



Garstang Town Council

Town Clerk: Mrs E Parry
Tel: 07592 792 801
email: clerk@garstangtowncouncil.gov.uk
www.garstangtowncouncil.org

Garstang Police Station
Moss Lane,
Garstang,
PR3 1HB

FAO Cllrs Atkinson, Allan, Halford, Mitchell, Pearson and Ryder

I hereby give you notice that a meeting of the Finance Committee
will be held online
on Tuesday, 13 October 2020 at 7.30pm

E Parry
Town Clerk
8 October 2020

Cllrs you have been sent login instructions.

Members of the public and press are invited to attend the virtual meeting

Please contact the Clerk by 15.00, Tuesday, 13 October 2020, to express your interest in attending the virtual meeting.

Please be aware that the public meeting may be recorded for the accuracy of the minutes. As per standing orders 12g; for any meeting that has been recorded the recording will be kept for a period of 6 months after the minutes have been approved as accurate before the recording is deleted.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

3. Public Participation

The Chairman will ask Councillors to agree to adjourn the meeting to allow non-Councillors to speak and will ask Councillors to agree to reconvene the meeting on the conclusion of the public participation.

4. Receipts and payments account year 2020/21 (Q2) – for decision

The Committee are asked to consider and approve the following:

- a) Bank reconciliation year ending 30 September 2020 for the 4 cashbooks (copies of bank statements have been included).
- b) Summary receipts & payments to 30 September 2020.
- c) Detailed receipts & payments budget report (1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020)
- d) List of receipts & payments from the 4 cashbooks (1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020)

Cllrs are asked to be mindful of Financial Regulations 7.4; salary details are confidential.

5. Appointment of Internal Auditor – for decision

As per the Financial regulation detailed below, the Committee are asked how they want to proceed with appointing an internal auditor.

Background

- a) For the year ends 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017 the audit has been carried out by Jan Finch, (retired Town Clerk to Preesall Town Council). The fee for the audit for year end 2020 was £150,000
- b) Year end 2016 was carried out by a local lady (MATT), working in Finance.
- c) There are specialised internal auditors for parish councils for example Town Parish Audit, www.townparishaudit.co.uk. (see accompanying circulated letter)

The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.

2.6. The internal auditor shall:

- *be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;*
- *report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;*
- *to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and*
- *are not involved in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.*

2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- *perform any operational duties for the council;*
- *initiate or approve accounting transactions; or*
- *direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.*

2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

Details of what the Internal Report can cover are detailed in Appendix 1.

6. MTWG Expenditure against the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF), Cllr Allan – for information (and decision - are there any follow up requests?)

Cllrs we have requested a breakdown of the allocated funds and the spend against these allocations. These figures are currently subject to a confidentiality request as Wyre have not received budget authority as yet.

We have been advised that each of Wyre's 4 main centres have been allocated an equal share of the local funding allocation which for Garstang amounts to £12,428.20. Wyre have an additional amount of £45,500 retained centrally for across the borough spend.

So far we have requested funds for;

1. Bollard Covers and Pavement signage which we eventually decided against due to Highways issues and design issues
2. Across High Street Banners which again was dropped due to the need for LCC Highways approvals which we were told would not be permitted.
3. Market day stall holder signage which has been agreed and will cost £93.44
4. Market Day Road Closure which has been agreed and we have it minuted that the cost would come from Wyre central allocation. I note that the cost of £704.99 has been shown against the Garstang allocation. This is being queried.
5. On Road Barriers for queue management and road closures.
6. Quarterly Marketing material. Unfortunately, we have not been able to find a design to satisfy Wyre's policy.

Wyre have placed full page adverts in the Courier at a cost of £616.50 and these have been costed against our allocation.

Wyre have also reported that they want to install Webcams and a Sound System in each of the 4 Centres with a cost to Garstang allocation which has yet to be confirmed

at approximately £6000. We will be addressing this with Wyre as it is not something that we have requested.

What is clear to us is that although the money, £12,500, is ostensibly allocated to Garstang we do not have any authority to spend and we need to comply with Wyre policy and we are happy to do that as it will benefit Garstang.

7. Risk assessment, quarterly review – for decision

Cllrs are asked to consider the attached risk register (V1.12) and make any comments on the register. Items to review are:

Point 11	Tree surveys
Point 14 & 19	email
Point 22	working alone

8. Asset register – for decision

Cllrs are asked to consider the attached asset register (V1.17) and approve the additions to the register (additions in version control table on the front page).

9. Income fees – for decision

The Town Council's financial regulations state:

9. INCOME

9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.

Cllrs are asked to consider the fees, as detailed below and make recommendations for the Full Council to approve (October's meeting).

a) **Allotments rent**

Currently as per tenancy agreement (11th January 2010), annual increase of £1 (2020; £41)

b) **Scout Hut rent**

Currently the rent is £60 (approved Full Council 106 (2019-20)). The tenancy agreement states that the rent is to be reviewed every 5 year period. Next review May 2024.

c) **Kepple Lane Park**

Lease agreement states a yearly rent of £1 (if demanded) on the 5th July in each year. The Town Council has never 'demanded' the rent. Are the Committee minded to recommend to continue with the same agreement?

10. Dates of next meetings

12 January 2021 and 4 May 2021.

Budget/precept briefing (not committee) meeting 23 November 2020.

	INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR GARSTANG TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL YEAR:
Book Keeping	Is the cash book maintained and up to date?
	Is it arithmetically correct and balanced at regular intervals?
Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Has the Town Council formally adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations?
	Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specific duties?
Payment Controls	Have items or services above the de minimus amount been competitively purchased?
	Are all payments in the cash book supported by invoices, authorised and minuted?
	Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?
	Is S137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?
Risk Management	Does the scan of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity?
	Do the minutes record the Town Council carrying out an annual risk assessment?
	Is the insurance cover appropriate and adequate?
	Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?
	Are cancelled cheques accounted for?
Budgetary Controls	Has an annual budget been prepared in support of the precept?
	Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the Council?
	Are there any significant variances for the budget? Are these explained?
Income Controls	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?
	Does the precept recorded in the cash book agree with Wyre Council's notification?
	Are security controls over cash and near cash adequate and effective?
Petty Cash Controls	Does the Council operate on a petty cash basis?
	If so, is all petty cash spent recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts?
	Is petty cash expenditure reported to each Council meeting?

	Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?
Payroll Controls	Do all employees have Contracts of Employment with clear terms and conditions?
	Do salaries and wages agree with those approved by the Town Council?
	Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the Town Council?
	Has PAYE/NIC and pension, if appropriate, been properly operated by the Council as an employer?
Asset Controls	Is an Asset Register kept of all material assets owned by the Town Council or in its care?
	Is the Asset Register kept up to date?
	Is there an Investment Register? Is it kept up to date?
	Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the Asset Register?
Bank Reconciliation	Is there a bank reconciliation for each bank account?
	Is bank reconciliation carried out regularly on receipt of bank statements?
	Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?
	Are there any pre-signed cheques in the Town Council's cheque books?
	Are all bank statements present?
Year End Procedures	Are year end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments)?
	Do accounts agree with the cashbook and bank statements?
	Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?
	Where appropriate have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?
Auditor's Report	Do the minutes record that the Town Council considered the Internal Auditor's Report for the previous year and the matters being addressed?
	Do the minutes record that the Town Council considered the External Auditor's Report for the previous year and the matters arising addressed?