



Chichester City Council

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Minutes

<b>Date</b>	30 January 2023
<b>Time</b>	2.00pm – 3.59pm
<b>Location</b>	The Council Chamber - The Council House • North Street • CHICHESTER • West Sussex • PO19 1LQ
<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Scicluna (Chairman), Councillor Barrie (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Chant, Dignum and J Hughes
<b>EX-OFFICIO:</b>	Deputy Mayor (Councillor Plowman), Councillor Quail (Chairman of Planning & Conservation Committee), Councillor Apel (Chairman of Community Affairs Committee)
<b>ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Councillors Corfield and Gershater, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk (Responsible Financial Officer), Member Services Support Officer, Acting Property Manager, West Sussex County Councillor Simon Oakley

96. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED to accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence from the meeting from the Mayor (Councillor Joy).

97. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING**

The Deputy Mayor and Councillors Apel, Barrie and Dignum declared an interest as Members of Chichester District Council.

Councillor Scicluna and the Deputy Mayor declared an interest as members of the Murray Club.

Councillor Quail declared an interest as Chairman of the Westgate Residents Association.

The Deputy Mayor declared an interest in the Section 106 public art (Woolstaplers) funding item.

98. **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2022, having been circulated; be approved and signed as a correct record.

99. **UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

a) **Charter dinner (minute 97 refers)**

The Town Clerk reminded Members that the Charter Dinner would be taking place on Tuesday 25 April 2023 in the new format as agreed by Councillors and that the two course meal would cost £17 per head. Wine would be on a bring-your-own basis.

It was confirmed that all Councillors would be attending and that the dress code would be lounge suit or equivalent.

b) **Annual Awards 2022 presentation (minute 88 refers)**

Members were reminded that the Annual Award 2022 presentation event would be taking place on the evening of Tuesday 7 February 2023.

It was confirmed that all the citation readings had been allocated and Members were reminded to bring their citations with them on the evening.

c) **Annual Awards criteria (minute 89 refers)**

See minute 108

d) **Woolstaplers Section 106 funding for public art (minute 90 refers)**

See minute 105

100. **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO DECEMBER 2022**

The Deputy Town Clerk introduced the budget monitoring report that had been circulated with the agenda.

Members were informed that, to date, the accounts were showing a projected surplus of £37,304 for the year 2022/2023.

They were further informed that this was due to better than expected income from room hirings, the purchase of the new boilers being funded from CIL and the increase in income from the City Council's investments.

The Deputy Town Clerk highlighted the income that had been received from CIL with a total of £900,298 being transferred to the City Council in 2022.

In response to a question from Councillor Chant, she explained that CIL had a time limit for being spent and that the CIL spending to date had started with the oldest receipts, working forward in time and that projects funded so far had included the city centre bike racks, the new lights in Litten Gardens, the electric van and the Neighbourhood Plan.

Members were asked for suggestions for projects given the large amount of money that had been received and the relatively limited time for spending it.

The Committee agreed that it would be appropriate to form a Working Group to take forward the discussion and present ideas to the Finance Committee.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that CIL funds were intended for spending on mostly capital projects.

Councillor Chant suggested that the decisions for which projects to promote should be deferred to the new Council but other Members suggested that the planning process could start now and, in line with the Business Plan process, the ideas could be passed to the next Council with final decisions being taken by the new administration.

Councillor Barrie suggested that this was a good opportunity for a cross-party consensus to create a lasting legacy for the City Council.

Councillor Gershater expressed the opinion that there should be a strong link between the CIL projects and the Business Plan.

The Chairman asked for volunteers to join the Working Group with all Members present indicating they would like to be involved.

#### **101. EARMARKED RESERVES**

The Deputy Town Clerk summarised the Earmarked Reserves report that had been circulated with the agenda and informed Members that it only mentioned the Council House Reserve as this was the only reserve that had had money spent from it.

She further informed Members that the current balance on the reserve was £94,500.77 but that this would increase once the regular transfer in to the reserve for 2023-2024 had happened.

Members discussed areas of concern with the Council House including the decorative state of and lighting in the Council Chamber as well as the Chamber chandelier itself. It was agreed that both these items would be taken to the Property Sub-Committee for further discussion.

#### **102. PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS**

The Deputy Town Clerk introduced her report that had been circulated with the agenda and summarised the information it contained, highlighting the City Council's contribution to the Chichester BID Rangers as well as potential upcoming public realm projects such as the Murray Sculpture, bike racks and the City Centre Task Force.

Councillor Quail asked about the City Council's ability to fund improvements to the public realm with particular reference to West Street.

The Deputy Mayor advised that some of her concerns may be addressed by the City Centre Task Force and both he and Councillor Dignum suggested that there may be scope to fund such work from CIL monies.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that a possible piece of work in West Street would be a revamp of the Cathedral flowerbeds. It was agreed that this should also be discussed at the Property Sub-Committee.

#### **103. RISK MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN**

The Deputy Town Clerk summarised the risk assessment process and advised that the Finance Assistant had recently updated the City Council's Risk Assessment Report which had generated the action plan that had been circulated with the agenda.

She advised that this would now be signed by the Mayor and actioned as appropriate.

Councillor Gershater expressed interest in the full risk assessment and how it would connect with the City Council's Business Plan.

**104. SWANFIELD AND BOGNOR ROAD BUS SHELTERS**

The Member Services Support Officer summarised the progress to date regarding the proposed installation of bus shelters in Swanfield Drive and Bognor Road.

He informed Councillors that Chichester District Council and the City Council had now signed the necessary paperwork for the transfer of the land for the bus shelter and that the paperwork had been sent for signing to A2 Dominion.

He also informed Councillors that an informal consultation had taken place in Swanfield Drive with no negative feedback received and that no formal Section 115 consultation was required as the shelter would not be located on the highway.

Members were informed that West Sussex County Council Highways had suggested that, once the land transfer had been completed, a second consultation should take place with the results being taken for final signoff to full Council.

The Member Services Support Officer informed the Committee that it was hoped that the land transfer would take place in time for the second consultation to be completed so the bus shelter could be signed off at the Council meeting on 22 February 2023.

He advised that West Sussex County Council had informed the City Council that a contribution from Section 106 funding may be available for this shelter.

He then reported that the formal Section 115 consultation had taken place at the Bognor Road location and that there had been no negative comments fed back from the County Council.

The Committee was advised that West Sussex County Council Highways had also suggested a second consultation with sign off at full Council and that City Council Officers had letter dropped in the area around the proposed site of the shelter with a deadline for comment of 22 February 2023.

The Committee was further advised that the Section 106 funding from the Bartholomews site had already been transferred to the City Council.

**105. SECTION 106 PUBLIC ART FUNDING (WOOLSTAPLERS) – CHICHESTER RAILWAY STATION**

The Deputy Mayor reminded Members that a sum of Section 106 money had been made available for public art and that the deadline for spending it was very tight.

He further reminded Members that it had been agreed that a series of 16 large format photographs of Priory Park would be purchased through Chichester Rotary for display in the waiting rooms at Chichester Railway Station.

Members were informed that there had been a very positive meeting with Officers from Chichester District Council who had approved the proposal.

The Acting Property Manager reported that the Deputy Town Clerk had obtained quotes for the necessary frames for the photographs with prices ranging from £95 - £180 each. It was agreed that a single unit of the lower priced option would be purchased for a quality check as it was only available online.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the available budget was £3950.88 and that the deadline for spending it was 16 March 2023.

The Deputy Mayor informed Members that feedback from the Railway Station and the public who had seen the photographs had been very positive.

In response to a question from Councillor Chant, it was confirmed that Section 106 funding for public art was now ending and that, instead, the CIL allocations being received may be a possible funding source for similar projects going forward.

Councillor Chant advised that he felt it would be preferable for the City Council to create a formal policy on public art and the kind of projects it would support in the future.

Councillor Dignum supported this suggestion.

In response to a question from Councillor Quail, it was confirmed that CIL funds could be used to fund public art and it was agreed that this would be an appropriate topic for the proposed CIL Working Group that had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### 106. **CITY CENTRE TASK FORCE UPDATE**

The Deputy Mayor summarised the actions to date that had been taken in progressing the City Centre Task Force and confirmed that Councillor Dignum had been made Chairman of the group.

He informed Members that a meeting had been arranged for Wednesday 1 February 2023 to discuss the programme and allocate tasks to the various organisations that had volunteered. Members were also informed that it was hoped that an event could be arranged in the near future to say thank you to the volunteers for their support.

The Deputy Town Clerk and the Acting Property Manager clarified the planning process for the work and how the tasks would be allocated across the city centre.

He suggested that some of the work may involve tidying up shop fronts and other private property which would need to be handled with care in case it was perceived that public money was being used for this process.

The Chairman asked about insurance for the volunteers.

Councillor Dignum confirmed that it was hoped that the task force would be an ongoing process with groups asked to focus on particular parts of the city. The Deputy Mayor agreed and expressed the opinion that he hoped that a sense of civic pride generated by the project would help support it on an ongoing basis.

He also agreed with Councillor Quail about the difficulty of recruiting volunteers and suggested that CIL funds could be used in part to support the work.

Councillor Quail responded to Councillor Dignum's points and reiterated her view that some of the possible project work was too large to be tackled by volunteer groups.

#### 107. **WHITEHOUSE FARM - PHASE TWO PLANNING APPLICATION AND THE SOUTHERN ACCESS ROUTE (SAR)**

The Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee, Councillor Quail, summarised the discussion that had taken place at the Special Meeting of the Committee held on 26 January 2023.

Members discussed the issue and agreed that there was a need to compile further documentation to present to Chichester District Council's Planning Committee in support of the City Council's objections to the SAR proposals.

Members also expressed concerns about the proposed staggered junction as well as the wider issues of heavier traffic on St Pauls and Sherborne Roads and increased traffic volume from developments further outside Chichester.

After a short further debate, it was RESOLVED to place an order to a maximum value of £5000 with PJA Traffic Consultants to undertake further work on the SAR proposal as per the decision made at the Special Meeting of the Planning Committee on 26 January 2023 (**minute 116 refers**):

- An updated assessment of the highways impact reflecting and focussing on the new information provided by the applicants, and specifically addressing the issue of the capacity at the SAR junction.
- An assessment of the SAR junction layout as proposed, in terms of safety, capacity and traffic flow.
- An assessment of the comparative potential suitability of a “Paul Wreyford”/“Option 2” SAR junction layout in terms of safety, capacity and traffic flow (notwithstanding that there would be a land ownership issue which the applicant would have to overcome to implement such an option).

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the additional work would be funded from the projected surplus on the City Councils budget for 2022-2023.

#### **108. CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL AWARDS WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Chant summarised the minutes of the Annual Awards Working Group meeting that had taken place on 12 December 2022.

He outlined the proposals for the assessment of the nominations, the method for voting and also the proposed new award categories, namely an Arts, Science and Culture Award as well as a Small Business Award.

The Committee was also advised that the Working Group had agreed it would be inappropriate for a new award category to be created relating to long service by a Councillor or an Officer.

The Deputy Mayor advised Members that he disagreed with significant parts of the proposals that had been put forward by the Working Group and expressed the opinion that the existing categories were sufficient for the purposes covered by the new awards.

He also expressed concern that the idea of an award of “thanks” for long service had been rejected.

Members discussed the report at length, including how they felt it may or may not be affected by the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

As strong feelings had been expressed on both sides, it was then AGREED to defer the matter to the next meeting of the Finance Committee on 11 April 2023, at which time the Deputy Mayor stated that he would be presenting a counter-report for discussion alongside the Working Group’s proposals.

Councillor Quail thanked Councillor Chant and the Working Group for their efforts in the matter.

#### **109. ADOPTION OF THE MURRAY-NELSON STATUE BY THE CITY COUNCIL**

Councillor Chant presented a summary of his report that had been included with the agenda.

The Chairman informed the Committee that the issue being discussed was ownership of the resin version currently installed in front of the Council House and not a bronze that had yet to be commissioned.

Councillor Apel and others expressed the opinion that, during a previous discussion, she had been given the impression that it was the bronze sculpture that had been offered.

The Deputy Mayor reminded Members that the proposal had been made by the City Council to simplify the ownership under one organisation rather than the current situation of split ownership where the City Council owned the plinth and the Murray Club owned the sculpture itself.

The Chairman and the Deputy Mayor advised the Committee that the sculpture had proved to be a very popular attraction since its installation in North Street. The Deputy Mayor also reminded Members that it had recently been recognised with an award from the Sussex Heritage Trust.

Councillor Chant informed Members that there was a growing movement to review sculptures and installations and their appropriateness for public display given the connections to what some perceived as difficult or controversial periods in history.

Councillor Corfield agreed that the sculpture was a work of art but that it was not necessarily a revered work of art and that she had received negative comments about it from the public. She expressed the opinion that, going forward, it might be better to ask the community whether this was the type of art they wanted to see on display in the public realm.

After further discussion, Councillor Dignum proposed, and it was seconded by Councillor Apel, that the City Council should adopt the resin Murray-Nelson sculpture.

The Chairman called a vote and it was RESOLVED that the City Council take ownership of the resin sculpture, as proposed.

Councillor Chant voted against the proposal.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Chant for his report.

#### 110. **PETER BUDGE BRONZE**

The Committee was shown the bronze bust that had been offered to the City Council by former Mayor and Councillor, Peter Budge.

After some discussion about whether the offer should be accepted and, if it was, where the bust might be located; it was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that the meeting go in to private session further to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Members continued to debate the matter and after further discussion it was RESOLVED that the bust be accepted in to the City Council's ownership and that it would be placed in to storage until a decision on its siting had been made by the Picture Conservation Working Group.

Councillor Dignum abstained from the vote and Councillor Chant voted against.

*The meeting returned to public session*

*Councillor Barrie left the meeting*

#### **111. CIVIC REGALIA AUDIT**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the four-yearly Civic Regalia audit was due to take place in the spring.

Members were informed that this regular inspection was a full audit of all the items of value held by Chichester City Council and that this would form part of the insurance schedule which was also due for review.

#### **112. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING (APM)**

The Town Clerk introduced his report that had been circulated with the agenda.

Members were reminded that the date of 24 April 2023 had been pencilled in for a possible APM but that there was no rule in law that stated that the City Council had to call such a meeting and that there was no penalty if one was not called.

Members were further reminded that, in addition to the City Council being able to call the meeting, the APM could be called by either two City Councillors or six local government electors from the Parish.

The Committee discussed past APMs and the difficulties that had been experienced in creating interest in the event and attracting strong attendance.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that, if an APM was going to be called, it had to take place between 1 April and 1 June.

Members agreed that, given the closeness of the suggested date to the local elections, it could prove difficult to hold a meaningful meeting and that it would be logical to leave the calling of the meeting to a decision by the new Council after the 4 May elections.

It was also agreed that the pre-election letter sent to all candidates standing should be updated to include mention of the APM so that they were aware of the possibility of calling one once the election results had been announced.

#### **113. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

a) **MONTHLY RECONCILIATION WITH EVIDENCE OF BANK STATEMENTS TO END DECEMBER 2022**

RESOLVED to note the monthly reconciliations with evidence of bank statements until end of December 2022.

b) **LIST OF PAYMENTS MADE FOR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2022**

RESOLVED to note the list of receipts and payments made for October, November and December 2022.

c) **LIST OF BARCLAYCARD PAYMENTS FOR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2022**

RESOLVED to note the list of Barclaycard payments for October, November and December 2022.



**114. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

- Annual Awards criteria review

**115. DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING**

DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY 11 April 2023

The meeting closed at 3.59pm