

KESGRAVE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting, held on 3 March 2025 at the Town Council office

Councillors present:

Cllr N Beecroft-Smith
Cllr A Comber
Cllr R Gibson
Cllr G Lynch
Cllr J Ogden (Chair)
Cllr A Skinner

Officers present:

J Abbott – Town Clerk
A Dougall - Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Ogden welcomed all those present, no apologies.
2. **Declaration of Interests** – Cllr Comber, agenda item 7 – Scout Leader and Director of RFC, non-pecuniary. Cllr Ogden, agenda item 7 – Scout Leader, non-pecuniary.
3. **Minutes of the last Meeting** held on the 11 November 2024, the Committee received, considered and agreed following the vote.
4. **Clerks/Officer Report/Update** –
J Abbott gave an update for the additional street lighting proposed for Dobbs Lane. SCC have to conduct a cable ID as the site is adjacent to both high and low voltage cables.
5. **Members of the Public** – none present.
6. **Bank Reconciliation to 31 January 2025** – These were received, considered and agreed following the vote.
7. **Receipts and Payments for January 2025** – These were received, considered and agreed following the vote.
8. **Detailed Income and Expenditure to 31 January 2025** – The report was received and reviewed.
9. **Trial Balance for January 2025** - The Committee reviewed and noted the report.
10. **Flagstone Deposit Account** – A Dougall confirmed the transfer of funds from the matured fixed 12-month deposit account with Hampshire Trust Bank to the fixed 12-month deposit account with Charter Savings Bank as agreed at the Full Council meeting 17 February 2025. The new account opened 27 February 2025 at 4% gross interest for £103,691.11 (includes £3,691.11 interest payment). The F&G committee can view the transactions on their Flagstone Account. It was noted that Cllr Beecroft-Smith was unable to gain access to this account – A Dougall agreed to contact Flagstone.

11. **New KTC Grant Policy (Draft)** – to be reviewed at the next meeting.
12. **Grant Requests –**
 - a. **Footsteps, Walking with You** – The charity telephoned J Abbott with further details on 31 January 2025. It was confirmed they have not received funding from schools for the 2024/25 academic year. A walk and talk therapy, face-to-face and on-line counselling is offered by 4 counsellors for a contribution by clients only. Cllr Gibson proposed, seconded by Cllr Beecroft-Smith to donate £500 towards core costs to support the children and young people, recognizing that there are a growing number of Kesgrave residents using this service. All agreed (Cllr Skinner abstained) to award a grant of £500, following the vote.
 - b. **Headway Suffolk** – The committee reviewed the grant application. Cllr Gibson proposed, seconded by Cllr Comber, to award a grant of £500, all in favour following the vote.
13. **Just 42 Service Level Agreement (Draft)** – J Abbott presented the draft agreement for discussion. Cllr Comber proposed, seconded by Cllr Lynch, for the Clerk J Abbott to conclude and agree sign off with Just 42 for 1 April 2025.
14. **KTC Policies –**
 - a. **Draft KTC Standing Orders 2025/26** – J Abbott confirmed date changes only, existing guidance has not changed. All agreed to accept, following the vote.
 - b. **Draft KTC Terms of Reference 2025/26** – All agreed to accept, following the vote.

Cllr Gibson agreed to update the policies due to be reviewed in June 2025 for the next meeting.
15. **KTC Website; maintenance update review** – Cllr Beecroft-Smith explained that the current website was 9 years old with many add-ons no longer supported by their manufacturers. Currently, all amendments are manually actioned for the 750+ static pages and then require linking to other files. Moving forward this is not manageable and proposed a new website with AI search capabilities, especially for specific text. For example, ChatGPT allows the user to ask a question and an answer is provided. This technology can be restricted to checking data confined to specified areas, e.g., KTC, ESC, SCC, Gov.uk to provide accurate responses only. Cllr Beecroft-Smith offered to research costs, proposals and examples of suitable website formats. Further requirements need to be compatibility to use the gov.uk domain, purchase tickets for KTC events and the website needs to be progressive. Following the vote, all agreed for Cllr Beecroft-Smith to proceed to obtain costs etc. for further discussion.
16. **Other/Urgent Communications** – J Abbott received correspondence from Daniel Harvey, Suffolk Libraries, explaining the current contract for the library service ends June 2025. The procurement process has been withdrawn by Suffolk County Council and future funding of the Library remains unconfirmed. This may affect the grant provided by KTC in 2025/26.
17. **Date of Next Meeting** – Monday 2 June 2025 at 7.15pm in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices.
18. **Agenda Items for Next Meeting** – none
19. **Resolution to exclude the Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960** – none present.

Agenda items 20 and 21 were then discussed in the CONFIDENTIAL part of this meeting.

This part of the meeting finished at 7.53pm

Chairman.....

Date.....