

Responsible Financial Officer Reports (9-15)**9. RFO Report** - (for information – bank balances, external audit, VAT advice, IT update)

Bank balances - as at 31 May 2024 are as follows:

HSBC	37,037.83
Lloyds Debit card	1,744.69
Cornwall Council deposit	450,560.80
HSBC Money Market Deposit	250,000.00
TOTAL	<u>£739,343.32</u>

External Audit

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return and all the required supporting documents were submitted to the external auditor, BDO LLP on 6 June and have been acknowledged. They cannot complete the external audit until the period of public rights has ended on Monday 15 July 2024.

VAT advice

The Town Clerk and RFO met with VAT advisers from Parkinson Partnership LLP on 10 June. Draft partial exemption calculations have been done which need final amendments before they are checked by the advisers. They indicate an approximate repayment due to HMRC of £16,000 in respect of works at the Public Hall and Guildhall. This should be finalised before the first quarter VAT return is due for the current year on 7 August, however we are advised an extension to September may be granted if needed.

IT Update

Most works have been successfully completed and we are already seeing the benefits with faster and more streamlined systems. There are some final scratch items to complete, mostly at Foresters Hall.

In December 2023 the Council agreed to switch the broadband supply at Foresters Hall from BT to Wildanet. Rather than taking over the BT line as expected Wildanet installed a new line which needed a change to the cabling to connect to. When Acronyms tried to connect to this, they could not detect a supply and Wildanet engineers have returned to resolve this. Foresters Hall is now using the Wildanet supply. The BT supply has been cancelled and Wildanet have been asked to make a refund for the period their supply could not be used.

10. Schedule of Payments - To receive and approve the schedule of payments.

Attachment: 10. Schedule of Payments

Recommendation: to approve the schedule of payments

11. Budget Monitoring 2024/25 – To receive and accept a draft budget report to **30 April 2024** for monitoring purposes

Attachment: 11. Budget Monitoring to 30 April 2024

On target spend should now be at 8.33%

The following points should be noted on the Administration (101) budget (other budgets monitored within the relevant committees):

- Subscriptions & Memberships (4190) the annual CALC and NALC subscriptions have been paid

Recommendation: to note and approve the budget monitoring report

12. Aged Debtors - To receive a report on aged debtors and agree any further action required

As at 31 May 2024 the following amounts were outstanding:

Outstanding	31 - 60 Days		61 - 90 Days		91+ Days	
	No. of customers	Amount	No. of customers	Amount	No. of customers	Amount
Public Hall	2	45.00				
Guildhall rents	1	312.75				
Guildhall utilities						
Allotments						
Miscellaneous						
Totals	3	£357.75	0	£0.00	0	£0.00

All customers have been in contact and none of these are a cause of concern.

Recommendation - To accept the report on aged debtors

13. Bank Mandates – To review the signing mandates for the HSBC and Lloyds Bank accounts as per financial regulation 6.1

6.1 The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with HSBC and Lloyds Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

Current signatories on the bank mandates are as follows:

- HSBC: Councillors Brooks, S Cassidy, Pascoe, Smith, Taylor and Whitty
- Lloyds Bank: Councillors Brooks, S Cassidy, Pascoe, Smith, and Whitty

Recommendation - To confirm the existing bank mandates for HSBC and Lloyds Bank

14. Direct Debits - To confirm the use of variable direct debit mandates as per financial regulation 7.8

7.8 With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

The current list of variable direct debit mandates are as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Acronyms	IT Support
American Express	TIC Card Fees
Concorde	Copier
Cornwall Council	Business rates - 3 properties
EE Limited	Caretaker Mobile
Evo Payments	TIC Card Fees
GBC re Concorde	Telephones
Information Commissioners Office	Annual Registration (discount for DDR payment)
Pennon Water Services	7 Supplies
Rackspace	Email - Final Payment Due
Sage	Payroll & Historic Accounting
South West Water	Fountain
SSE	Electricity & Gas
Suez R&R	Waste
TV Licence	Public Hall - annual licence
Wildanet	Foresters Hall Broadband
1&1 Internet	Museum Website Hosting

Recommendation - To approve use of variable direct debit mandates for the suppliers listed.

15. Internal Controls - To agree a member to review payroll reports half yearly as per financial regulation 11.6

11.6 Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by a member half yearly to ensure that the correct payments have been made. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.

A member is requested to make half yearly checks on payroll reports as part of the Council's internal controls, as per the financial regulations based on the new recently adopted template. Training can be provided by the RFO.

Recommendation - To nominate a member to make half yearly checks on payroll reports

16. Employee Handbook - To approve the updated Employee Handbook incorporating legislation changes to flexible working, paternity leave and carer's leave

Attachment: 16. Employee Handbook June 2024

In April 2024 new legislation was introduced relating to flexible working, paternity leave and carer's leave and these changes have been incorporated into the Employee Handbook on the advice of our HR advisers, Worknest.

Recommendation - To approve the updated Employee Handbook

17. Safeguarding Policy - To approve the updated Safeguarding Policy

Attachment: 17. Safeguarding Policy June 2024

The Safeguarding officer has recently returned from maternity leave and carried out the annual review of the Safeguarding Policy. Some minor amendments have been made.

Recommendation - To approve the amended Safeguarding Policy