

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee Meeting held on Thursday 19th September

****Please note – These are draft minutes and will not be ratified until the next meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee**

For the papers discussed at the meeting, [please see the Finance & Policy Committee Agenda – 19th September 2024](#)

PRESENT Committee members: Cllr Robert Douglas (Chair)
Cllr Russell Chadwick
Cllr Liz Wardlaw

Ex- Officio Cllr K Wesley -Mayor
Cllr R Brittain -Deputy Mayor

Non-Committee Members Cllr Suzy Firkin

Also present:

Congleton Town Council Officers David McGifford- Chief Officer
Serena Van Schepdael - RFO
5 members of the public (Grant applicants)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllrs: Booth, Akers Smith, Edwardson, Pearce and Moreton

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

FAP/25/2425 RESOLVED To approve and [sign the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 6th June](#)

FAP/26/2425 RESOLVED To approve and [sign the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 15th August 2024](#)

3. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Douglas declared a Pecuniary interest in item 11.3 as the independent examiner for the Trust, and left the room during that item.
- Cllr Wardlaw and Chadwick declared an interest in any CEC matters
- Cllr Wesley declared an interest (at the time of the item due to further information from applicant) in item 11.6 as secretary of Bromley Farm Hub Group where some sessions have taken place, and did not vote.

4. Outstanding Actions

There were none.

5. Questions from Members of the Public

I am led to believe Congleton Council have over 1 million pounds in cash reserves held mainly in an account with "Cambridge & Counties" and two others , where did this money come from, why do you need some much in reserves and why don't they show in various council accounts ?

Our Response:

The £ 1 million Reserves in this question relate to both Earmarked Reserves and General Reserves and bank balances. We must keep 3 months of revenue expenditure as our General Reserves and this totals £ 287,000. This is kept in the investments which are with Cambridge & Counties and C.C.L.A.

Our Earmarked reserves balance is £ 477,806. We do have very substantial capital commitments and the Capital Contingency, Equipment and Property Maintenance Funds total £ 284,295, which is 59.5% of our total Earmarked Reserves.

Total Reserves stand at approximately £ 764,000.

In April and September, when Cheshire East Council transfer across to us six months' worth of our Precept, our bank balances may increase to over £ 1 million, but this decreases over the following six-month period as the Precept is our main source of income used for day-to-day operations.

Both the savings balances and details of the reserves are presented at every meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee and are regularly reviewed.

Reserves and cash balances are also part of the Annual Governance Report we complete and make public every year.

6. Presentations to the Committee

There were none.

7. Urgent Items

There were none raised.

8. Minutes of Working Groups

FAP/27/2425 Resolved to receive the minutes of the Regeneration working group on 1st March & 3rd June 24.

9. Committee Items Relating to Working Groups

There were none.

10. Grant Approvals and Commitments

FAP/28/2425 RESOLVED to receive a statement showing the current position as at 31st July 2024.

11. New Applications for Financial Assistance

FAP/29/2425 RESOLVED to approve the grants:

11.1- Congleton and District Horticultural Society: £500

11.2- Trinity Methodist Church: £1,000

Cllr Douglas left the room at 7.18pm and Cllr Wesley took over as chair for item 11.3.

11.3- Mossley Old School Trust: £500

Cllr Douglas returned to chair the meeting.

11.4- Congleton Harriers: £750, subject to receiving a grant activities monitoring form in respect of an earlier grant

11.5- Havannah PTA: £810

11.6- Wild Salt CIC: £1,000

11.7-St Peter's Church: £305

12. New Grant Activities Monitoring Forms

FAP/30/2425 RESOLVED to receive the grant monitoring forms:

12.1- The Old Saw Mill

12.2- Congleton Harriers

12.3- Friends For Leisure

12.4- Congleton Building Preservation Trust

Action: Officers to look at promoting the Grants Scheme

13. Management Accounts (Enclosed)

FAP/31/2425 RESOLVED to receive the management accounts to 31st July 2024.

14. Bank Reconciliation

FAP/32/2425 RESOLVED to receive and consider the bank reconciliation as at 31st July 2024.

15. Savings Account Balances

FAP/33/2425 RESOLVED to receive the Savings Account balances as at 31st July 2024.

16. List of Payments

FAP/34/2425 RESOLVED to receive and approve the List of payments from 1st April 2024 to 31st July 2024

17. Petty Cash Verification

FAP/35/2425 RESOLVED to note Petty Cash Verification on 4th September 2024 for balance up to 31st July 2024.

18. Standing Orders for Contracts (Tender Process) Policy Review

FAP/36/2425 RESOLVED to approve the updated Standing Orders for Contracts Policy and Standing Orders and recommend to Council for approval and adoption into the Constitution.

19. Financial Regulations Review

FAP/37/2425 RESOLVED To approve the updated Financial Regulations and the Updated Procurement Policy and recommend both to Council for approval and adoption into the Constitution, with the following amendments:

1.6: to add Council delegates that authority to Finance and Policy Committee as long as the sum written off does not exceed £ 150.

4.3: to update to: forecast for the following one financial year

20. Investment Policy and Strategy Review

FAP/38/2425 RESOLVED To approve the updated Investment Policy and Investment Strategy and recommend both to Council for approval and adoption into the Constitution, with the following amendment to the third resolution:

To approve the renewal and reinvestment for 12 months of the Cambridge and Counties 1 year investment subject to any three of the five authorised individuals, the Chief Officer, the R.F.O, the Chair, Vice-Chair of Finance and Mayor, being satisfied that the rate on offer is reasonably competitive. In the event that the rate on offer not being considered to be reasonably competitive, the matured funds to be reinvested at the best rate on offer in the instant access account with the CCLA or R.B.S. and for Council to be provided with a proposal on the best options available to reinvest these matured sums.

**Meeting closed at 8.21pm
Cllr Robert Douglas
(Chair)**

Managemnet Accounts <Item-13-Management-Accounts-and-Budget-Update.pdf> (congleton-tc.gov.uk)

Conaleton Town Council Management Accounts 2024-2025 Jul-24 Page 1/3			OK	Monitor	Overspent								
Month	4	ANNUAL BUDGET	BUDGET TO M4	ACTUAL SPEND TO M4	£ VARIANCE OF M4 BUDGETS	% SPENT AGAINST M4 BUDGETS	% SPENT OF ANNUAL BUDGET	% VARIANCE AGAINST M4 EXPECTED	NOTES				
Percentage	33.3%												
Finance and Policy Committee										Expenditure Variance 0-100% Green 101-115% Amber 115% over Red			
101	Corp Management								Income Variance 100% Green, 76% to 99% Amber, 0%-75% Red				
	Staff Costs (re-allocated)	229,293	76,431	74,656	1775	97.68%	32.6%	-0.74%					
	Travel	250	83	0	83	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Training / Conferences	1,500	500	309	191	61.80%	20.6%	-12.70%					
	Rent Payable	17,017	5,672	5,672	0	99.99%	33.3%	0.03%					
	Miscellaneous Office Costs	2,000	667	614	53	92.10%	30.7%	-2.60%					
	Telephone/Fax/Internet	3,000	1,000	901	99	90.10%	30.0%	-3.27%					
	Postage	1,000	333	178	155	53.40%	17.8%	-15.50%					
	Stationery & Printing	3,300	1,100	690	410	62.73%	20.9%	-12.39%					
	Subscriptions & Publications	5,100	1,700	4,480	-2780	263.53%	87.8%	54.54%	Most of subscriptions are due at start of the year				
	Insurance	14,310	4,770	15,754	-10984	330.27%	110.1%	76.79%	Paid start of the year, journal required as 3 months are 25-26				
	Computer/IT Costs	23,500	7,833	8,936	-1103	114.08%	38.0%	4.73%	Extra work completed on MFA and Security				
	Photocopy Charges	2,000	667	481	186	72.15%	24.1%	-9.25%					
	Recruitment Advertising	500	167	0	167	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Bank Charges	1,240	413	365	48	88.31%	29.4%	-3.86%					
	Audit Fees - External	2,100	700	0	700	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Audit Fees - Internal	1,900	633	0	633	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Accountancy Support	5,300	1,767	1,138	629	64.42%	21.5%	-11.83%					
	Legal & Professional fees		0	3,185	-2355		0.0%	0.00%	See EMR BELOW				
	HR & H&S support	4,800	1,600	2,447	-847	152.94%	51.0%	17.68%	2 of 4 payments made				
	Tsfr from EMR			-3,205					For legal & professional expenditure				
	Central Overheads reallocated	-70,984	-23,661	-33,520	9859	141.67%	47.2%	13.92%					
	Corporate Management:-Expenditure	247,126	82,375	83,081	-3081	100.86%	33.6%	0.32%					
	Precept 2024-2025	-1,182,221	-394,074	-591,111	197037	160.00%	50.0%	83.30%	50% paid				
	Interest Receivable	-29,000	-9,667	-10,003	336	103.48%	34.5%	67.79%					
	Miscellaneous Income	0	0	-83	83	0.00%							
	Corporate Management:-Income	-1,211,221	-403,740	-601,197	197457	148.91%	49.6%	16.34%					
	Net Income Over Expenditure	-964,095	-321,385	-618,116	194376	161.22%	59.7%	20.44%					
102	Civic												
	Staff Costs (re-allocated)	20,090	6,697	6,279	418	93.76%	31.3%	-2.05%					
	Training / Conferences	1,000	333	0	333	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Stationery & Printing	550	183	0	183	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Marketing/Promotions	1,200	400	208	192	52.00%	17.3%	-15.97%					
	Council Newsletter	8,700	2,900	2,582	318	89.03%	29.7%	-3.62%					
	Council Website	2,000	667	7,635	-6968	1146.25%	381.8%	348.45%	See EMR below actual spend 13.65% £361.. First instalment paid for website build o				
	Mayor's Allowance	3,000	1,000	0	1000	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Members Expenses	200	67	0	67	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Civic Expenses	7,500	2,500	1,034	1466	41.36%	13.8%	-19.51%					
	Civic Regalia	250	83	0	83	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Hall & Room Hire	6,500	2,167	2,076	91	95.82%	31.9%	-1.36%					
	Civic Artefacts and Treasures	3,400	1,133	0	1133	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%					
	Tsfr from EMR	0	0	-7,274	7274		#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!					
	Central Overheads reallocated	1,664	521	738	-217	141.56%	47.2%	13.89%					
	Civic:-Expenditure	55,954	18,651	13,278	5373	71.19%	23.7%	-9.57%					
107	Grants												
	Initial Grant Commitment	15,000	5,000	5,221	-221	104.42%	34.8%	1.51%	Dependant on awards/requests.				
	Subsidised Use	4,500	1,500	1,444	56	96.27%	32.1%	-1.21%					
	Tsfr from EMR Committed Grants	0	0	-7,976	7976			-33.30%					
	Specified Grants	22,333	7,444	18,011	-10567	241.94%	80.6%	47.35%	CCP invoice received in full.				
	Grants:- Expenditure	41,833	13,944	16,700	-2756	119.76%	39.9%	6.62%					
	Capital	46,776	15,593	25,000	-9407	160.33%	53.4%	20.14%	£25,000 to EMR processed				
	F&P Income - Income	-1,211,221	-403,740	-606,928	203189	150.33%	50.1%	16.81%	Full Committee Summary Includes Mayor cost centre Income £5,671				
	Expenditure	391,691	130,564	138,795	-8231	106.30%	35.4%	2.13%	Full Committee Summary Includes Mayor cost centre expenditure £116				

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Month 4
Percentage 33.3%

Community and Environment Committee

	ANNUAL BUDGET	BUDGET TO M4	ACTUAL SPEND TO M4	£ VARIANCE OF M4 BUDGETS	% SPENT AGAINST M4 BUDGETS	% SPENT OF ANNUAL BUDGET	% VARIANCE AGAINST M4 EXPECTED	NOTES	
215 Floral Displays Income	-4,000	-1,333	-3,759	2426	281.93%	94.0%	60.68%	Hanging baskets income arrives start of the year Costs due to this being a start of year operation.	
215 Floral Displays Expenditure	14,172	4,724	14,240	-9516	301.44%	100.5%	67.18%		
Total Floral	10,172	3,391	10,481	-7090	309.11%	103.0%	69.74%		
241 Allotments Income	-190	-63	0	-63	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		
241 Allotments Expenditure	1,200	400	19	381	4.75%	1.6%	-31.72%		
Total Allotment	1,010	337	19	318	5.64%	1.9%	-31.42%		
300 Public Realm	3,000	1,000	43	957	4.30%	1.4%	-31.87%		
Conoleton Partnership									
301 Conoleton Partnership Income	0	0	-15,045	15045	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		
301 Conoleton Partnership Expenditure	24,588	8,195	13,611	-5416	166.08%	55.4%	22.06%	Dependant on Partnership, details are issued in Partnership Executive meetings.	
301 Conoleton Partnership CF	0	0	-34,656	34656	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%	Carried forward balance	
Total Partnership	24,588	8,195	-36,100	44,295	-440.49%	-148.6%	-160.19%		
302 Community Development Grant Recd	0	0	-18,000	18000	0.0%	0.0%	-33.30%	Annual subscription paid	
302 Community Development Staff Costs	124,338	41,445	38,948	2497	93.97%	31.3%	-1.98%		
UKSPF- See Grant Recd	0	0	4,479	-4479	0.0%	0.0%	-33.30%		
Community Development Marketing/Promotions	3,750	1,250	940	310	75.20%	25.1%	-8.23%		
Green Initiatives	5,000	1,667	1,712	-45	102.72%	34.2%	0.94%		
Campaign Expenditure	1,000	333	526	-193	167.80%	52.6%	19.30%		
Tfr to EMR	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		
Tfr From EMR	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		
Community Development Overheads	9,876	3,226	4,569	-1343	141.63%	47.2%	13.91%		
Total Community Development	143,764	47,921	33,174	14,747	99.29%	23.1%	-10.22%		
303 Crime Reduction/CCTV Expenditure	11,428	3,809	0	3809	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		
Total Crime	11,428	3,809	0	3809	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		
305 Christmas Fayre/Lights Income	-3,000	-1,000	-304	-696	30.40%	10.1%	-23.17%		
305 Christmas Fayre/Lights Expenditure	16,000	5,333	661	4672	12.39%	4.1%	-29.17%		
Total Christmas	13,000	4,333	357	3976	6.24%	2.7%	-30.55%		
310 Neighbourhood Plan	0	0	2,430	-2430	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		Costs covered by ERM funds
310 Neighbourhood Plan Tfr From EMR	0	0	-2,430	2385	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%	No budget line set , Journal update required	
Total Neighbourhood Plan	0	0	45	-45	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%		
321 Tourism Income	0	0	-3,431	3431	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%	Costs dependant on timing of events	
321 Tourism Expenditure	13,800	4,533	9,909	-5376	218.58%	72.9%	39.56%		
Total Tourism	13,800	4,533	6,478	-1945	142.90%	47.6%	14.33%		
351 Luncheon Club	11,000	3,667	3,328	339	90.76%	30.3%	-3.05%		
C.E & S									
Income	-7,190	-2,397	-40,539	38142	1691.47%	563.8%	530.52%	Full Committee Summary	
Expenditure	238,749	75,774	68,984	17410	77.92%	24.4%	-8.65%	Full Committee Summary	

Town Hall, Assets and Services Committee

	ANNUAL BUDGET	BUDGET TO M4	ACTUAL SPEND TO M4	£ VARIANCE OF M4 BUDGETS	% SPENT AGAINST M4 BUDGETS	% SPENT OF ANNUAL BUDGET	% VARIANCE AGAINST M4 EXPECTED	NOTES
201 Paddling Pool	54,394	18,131	14,676	3455	80.94%	27.0%	-6.32%	See separate account sheet
221 Town Hall								
Town Hall - Expenditure	230,529	76,843	75,727	1116	98.55%	32.8%	-0.45%	See separate account sheet
Town Hall - Income	-119,760	-39,917	-55,084	15167	138.00%	46.0%	12.70%	
Net Expenditure over Income	110,779	36,926	20,643	16283	55.90%	18.6%	-14.67%	
225 Conoleton Information Centre								
CIC - Expenditure	164,101	54,700	46,923	7777	65.78%	28.6%	-4.71%	See separate account sheet
CIC - Income	-89,710	-29,570	-17,996	-11574	80.86%	20.3%	-13.01%	
Net Expenditure over income	75,391	25,130	28,927	-3797	115.11%	38.4%	5.07%	
263 Public Toilets	7,150	2,383	1,204	1179	50.52%	16.8%	-16.46%	
270 Canolach	319	106	83	23	78.06%	26.0%	-7.28%	
280 Streetscape								
Streetscape Expenditure	787,095	262,365	278,493	-16128	106.15%	35.4%	2.08%	See separate account sheet
Streetscape - Income CEC	-419,256	-139,752	-209,628	69876	150.00%	50.0%	16.70%	
Streetscape - External work income	-15,000	-5,000	-3,134	-1866	62.68%	20.9%	-12.41%	
Streetscape - Other	-12,000	-4,000	-36	-3964	0.00%	0.0%	-33.30%	
Streetscape - Misc. Income	-900	-300	-250	-50	83.33%	27.8%	-5.52%	
S/S Income	-447,158	-149,052	-213,048	63996	142.94%	47.6%	14.35%	
Net Expenditure over Income	339,839	113,313	65,445	47868	57.76%	19.3%	-14.05%	
THAS								
Income	-855,816	-218,639	-286,128	67,689	130.93%	43.6%	10.34%	Full Committee Summary
Expenditure	1,243,588	414,629	417,106	-2,577	100.82%	33.5%	0.24%	Full Committee Summary
Total Income	-1,874,027	-624,878	-933,695	940,432	149.46%	49.8%	16.52%	Overall summary includes mayor summary figures not on this sheet Overall summary Rounding allowed.
Total Expenditure	1,874,027	620,867	614,265	-1,269,762	98.94%	32.8%	-0.52%	
Net Income /Expenditure			-319,334	-319,330			-33.30%	
Personnel								
Staff Costs	1,141,489	380,496	359,692	20904	94.51%	31.5%	-1.80%	
Personnel with Pav Award for reference								
Permanent Staff Costs - Included budget pay award *1 *1 Budgeted pay award (5%)	1,057,591	352,530	377,572	-26041	107.10%	35.7%	2.40%	

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		01/04/2024	In	Out	Balance
Reserves as at 31st July 2024		CF Balance			45,504
310	General Reserve	287,256			287,256
Ear Marked Reserves					
318	Capital Equipment Fund	-	5,000	4,390	610
320	Capital Contingency Fund	104,421	20,000	3,204	121,217
321	EMR Elections	20,000			20,000
322	EMR Business Recovery Fund	3,204			3,204
324	EMR Crime Prevention/Traffic calming	4,357			4,357
326	EMR Congleton Partnership	10,000			10,000
327	EMR Covid/Crisis	3,333			3,333
330	EMR Ancient Treasures	3,000			3,000
331	EMR Website	30,151		274	29,877
333	EMR Training	6,000			6,000
334	EMR Town Centre (UKSPF)	1,688			1,688
337	EMR Toilets	24,012			24,012
339	EMR Public Realm	8,153			8,153
340	EMR Legal Fees	46,406		4,758	41,648
342	EMR Tourism	2,555			2,555
343	EMR Marketing	5,000			5,000
344	EMR Congleton Neighbourhood Plan	832		832	-
346	EMR Rotary Bonfire	5,000			5,000
348	EMR Civic	1,000			1,000
349	EMR CIL	21,684			21,684
354	EMR Carbon Offsetting	3,000			3,000
NEW	EMR Property Maintenance	162,468			162,468
EMR TOTALS		466,264	25,000	13,458	477,806