

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD
ON 27 JUNE 2023**

Present: Councillor F Hartland (in the Chair)
Councillors S Ball, A Batey, M Domingue, J Ord, A Smith and L Williscroft-Ferris.

FC20 23/30	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr D Bell, T Cessford, S Fairless-Aitken, G O'Farrell, P Grennan, D Kennedy and T Pearson.		
FC20 23/31	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest.		
FC20 23/32	<p>ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT: It was noted that the Council must approve annual governance and accounting statements for the year ending 31 March 2023 and then submit them to its external auditors, Mazars.</p> <p>It was AGREED to approve the following annual governance statement and annual accounting statement:</p>		
	Annual Governance Statement 2022/23		
	<p>We acknowledge as the members of Hexham Town Council our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:</p>	<p>The statements below mean the Council has:</p>	
	<p>We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.</p>	<p>Prepared the accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
	<p>We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.</p>	<p>Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

	We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	Has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.	Yes	
	We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	During the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.	Yes	
	We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	Considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.	Yes	
	We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.	Yes	
	We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	Responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.	Yes	
	We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	Disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.	Yes	
	Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	The Council is not a sole managing trustee of any local trust or trusts.	N/A	

Annual Accounting Statement

	Y/E 31/03/22 (£)	Y/E 31/03/23 (£)	
Balances brought forward	83,755	56,553	Balance at year start
+ Annual precept	340,000	439,000	Precept received
+ Total other receipts	124,851	179,112	All income less precept
- Staff costs	183,290	196,412	All costs for staff
- Loan interest/capital repayments	9,903	9,903	Capital & Interest on loans
- All other payments	298,860	331,099	Payments less staff and loans
= Balance carried forward	56,553	87,251	Balance at year end
Note: vat debtor			
Total value of cash/short term investments	42,886	61,293	Bank balances
Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	1,577,058	1,577,673	Fixed assets (Premises etc.)
Total borrowings	175,445	173,376	Total due PWLB loans
Trust funds	None	None	

The annual accounting statement is certified and signed: *"I, Jeanette Dodd, RFO, certify that for the year ending 31 March 2023 the accounting statement presents fairly the financial position of the Council and its income and expenditure."*

Annual Internal Audit Report for 2022/23

During the financial year ended 31 March 2023, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls to be in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority. The internal audit for 2022/23 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

	Internal control objective	Agreed?	
	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	Yes	
	This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	Yes	
	This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	Yes	
	The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	Yes	
	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	Yes	
	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	Yes	
	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	Yes	
	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	Yes	
	Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	Yes	
	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	Yes	
	The authority published the required information on website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	Yes	
	In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	Yes	
	The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2020/21 AGAR	Yes	
	Trust funds. The Council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	N/A	
	Internal Audit carried out by Mark Bradley (Stokoe Rodger LLP) Signed this 25 th day of June 2023		
FC20 23/33	DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL: The next meeting of the Town Council is to be on Monday 10 th July 2023 in the Priors Hall at Hexham Abbey.		

Chairman

Signed as a correct record of the minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 27 June 2023.