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UTTOXETER TOWN COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE ARISING FROM ITS MEETING HELD IN THE ALAN DEAN SUITE, UTTOXETER TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2026 AT 5.30 PM

Chair – Councillor R Hawkins

Councillors: T Ashby, D Boot, D Holland (Vice-Chair), J Glandfield, B Houlihan, C Sylvester,
Officers in attendance: T Jeffery, Town Clerk

It was noted that there was 1 member of the public in attendance in the meeting

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair provided a brief on the fire procedure in the event of a fire, the provisions of the Recording and Filming of Meetings as in accordance with "The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014", a reminder that the Council has Signed up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and regarding the use of mobile phones during the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(a) The Clerk reported that approved apologies had been received from Councillors Z Krupski (ex-officio) and A Mansfield (ex-officio).

RECOMMENDED that the same be accepted and approved.

(b) The Clerk reported that all other Members were in attendance.

RECOMMENDED that the same be noted.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with Standing Order 3(e-h), the meeting be adjourned for up to 15 minutes to allow for public participation where members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they were entitled to attend in respect of the business on the Agenda. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting as in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed (3) minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting. It was noted that members of the public may not take part in the Council meeting itself.

It was noted that the member of the public did not wish to address Committee on an Agenda item on this occasion.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting, and which was not included in the register of interests. Members were reminded that they were required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they had a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest was entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

None received.

5. TOWN HALL – REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

The Clerk reported that during a recent storm, it was brought to Councils' attention that the guttering located upon the Town Hall (Carters Square side) had blocked guttering and water was running down the side of the Town Hall and into Carters Square. She reported that the Office Manager had taken a video of the issue and advice had been sought from Council's Architect, who confirmed that the guttering was in need of some remedial and exploratory works. He had suggested that the Clerk obtain costings for a suitable lift which would be an alternative to

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23 JUNE 2026

The Clerk reported receipt of a quotation in the sum of £699 plus vat for the hire of a Hinowa narrow track machine for 1 Day (£350) plus delivery/collection (£100) plus diesel (£25) plus up to 4 hours for a Qualified Operator to be in attendance (£224). She confirmed that the company had attended site and assessed the access to the side of the building and assessed the height of the guttering and they had recommended the Hinowa narrow track machine.

Committee was advised that the Clerk was liaising Evolve regarding permission for the works to be carried out via Carters Square. Committee instruction was sought.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The quotation received from D&D Ltd in the sum of £699 plus vat for the hire of a Hinowa narrow track machine for 1 Day (£350) plus delivery/collection (£100) plus diesel (£25) plus up to 4 hours for a Qualified Operator to be in attendance (£224), be accepted and approved, funded by the Town Hall Repairs and Maintenance budget allocation.
- (ii) Greenheart Construction Ltd be tasked with carrying out the necessary unblocking/repairs, funded by the Town Hall Repairs and Maintenance budget allocation.

6. TOWN HALL GAS CONTRACT PROVISION FROM 1 JANUARY 2027

Committee were advised that the Chair and Vice-Chair of F&GP and the Clerk had been seeking quotations for the Council's gas contract commencing from 1 January 2027, as in accordance with the associated costings incorporated within the Precept for 2026-27.

The Chair reported that a number of providers had been approached. The Clerk reported that she had further liaised Council's current Total Energies and received a revised offer of 3.3900 pence per kWh and 742.0000 p/per day. It was noted that the quotes received from other providers were significantly higher. It was noted that Members agreed that these costs were very competitive. Following due debate, it was

RECOMMENDED that the Chair of F&GP and the Clerk/RFO be tasked forthwith with accepting the offer from Total Energies for a 3-year Contract commencing from 1 January 2027 at 3.3900pence per kWh and 742.0000 p/per day, funded by the Town Hall Gas/Electric budget allocation.

The Chair expressed his thanks to the member of the public for their attendance at the meeting and it was noted that they left the meeting at this time.

7. COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE – PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act it was requested that the public and press were not present due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and were asked to withdraw.

RECOMMENDED that the same be accepted and approved.

8. WIDGIT SYMBOLS FOR INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY WITHIN UTTOXETER TOWN HALL

The Chair requested that Committee gave consideration to Item Nos. 8(a)-(b) collectively.

(a) Committee gave consideration to the quotation received from Widgit, for a basic software package as follows:

- *Following a review of the Council's requirements, Widgit wishes to offer the Council a basic standard Widgit Online Plus license in the sum of £664 plus vat for 3 years plus a distribution/licence fee of £400 plus vat for 3 years, revised total of £1064 plus vat.*
- *Council is advised that there would be some limitations to making signage however this package would create internal facing documents however it would not be permitted to make external documents like Stories to Help, Communication Boards, etc.*
- *The templates are set at A4, but you can blow them up to print A3, or you can print 2 to a page to create an A5 document.*

- *As a basic package, the Council would not become a Symbol-Friendly Organisation.*
- *They would be agreeable to split the costs and invoice the Council £354.67 per annum.*

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23 JUNE 2026

- (b) The Chair and the Clerk requested that Committee give consideration to the draft posters and the draft signage style that had been produced in house by the Clerk and Council's FT Admin Assistant. The Clerk reported that the in house signage produced had different images to those used by Widgit. It was noted that Committee were in full support for the draft posters and signage as produced in house.

Committee instruction was sought. It was noted that any in house signage would be printed and laminated for ease of use for visitors to the Town Hall and to its events. Following due debate, it was

RECOMMENDED that:

- The Clerk express Committees thanks to Widgit for their informative presentation and to advise that, due to costings, the Council is unable to progress this matter at this time.
- The Clerk and Council's FT Admin Assistant be tasked with updating the draft Posters and Signage for use within the Town Hall (inc. CAB logo and potentially photos of the areas within the Town Hall to personalise the signage).
- Members continue to liaise with the Clerk regarding any feedback on the signage incorporated within the Town Hall.
- The Clerk and Events Team discuss if formal signage provisions, if required, in due course.

9. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS 2027-2030

The Chair asked Committee to review the draft Grounds Maintenance Contract Specification and Programme of Works for the Cemetery and St Mary's Closed Parish Churchyard commencing from 1 April 2027-31 March 2030, as previously approved by the former Working Committee and as circulated to Members with their Agenda pack.

The Clerk reported that following Council's ratification of the Minutes, the Tender would be duly advertised by the Office Manager and as in accordance with Standing Orders, the Tenders will be received by the Clerk as Proper Officer, and opened by the Clerk, the Chair of F&GP and the Office Manager in readiness for inclusion within the F&GP Committee meeting on 22 September 2026.

It was noted that Committee perused the documents, page by page.

A lengthy debate ensued which included the Specification and the current quality of service level as provided by the current Grounds Maintenance Contractor along with the positive comments received from the public on the improvements to the Cemetery grounds maintenance, the Cemetery Grounds Maintenance Contractor being awarded the Heart of England in Bloom Award Grounds Maintenance Contractor Award in 2025 together with costings and the service level expectations for the town residents.

The Clerk reported that the costings for the Grounds Maintenance Contract would form part of the Estimates debates/Precept and costings would be taken into consideration when setting the Cemetery Fees and Charges for 2027-28. Committee instruction was sought. Following due debate, it was

RECOMMENDED that:

- The Clerk liaise with Council's Office Manager to update the Specification and Programme of Works for the following:
 - Item No. 1 – amend wording for 'weeding in June or July' and not in September as currently stated.
 - Item No. 6 - amend wording for 'weeding in June or July' and not in September as currently stated.
 - Update the Programme of Works to reflect the above mentioned amendments.
 - Item No. 17 - Check Operatives number of working hours (states 40 hours per week per Operative) given changes to Contracted working hours (noting

that the Operatives are employed and responsible to the external Contractor).

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23 JUNE 2026

- (ii) Subject to the above mentioned amendments, the Specification and Programme of Works for Uttoxeter Cemetery and St Mary's Closed Churchyard commencing from 1 April 2027-31 March 2030, be accepted and approved, and duly advertised by Council's Office Manager.
- (iii) The Tenders to be received by the Clerk as Proper Officer, and opened by the Clerk, the Chair and Vice-Chair of F&GP and the Office Manager in readiness for inclusion within the F&GP Committee meeting on 22 September 2026.

10. GRAVE DIGGING CONTRACT 2027-2030

The Chair asked Committee to review the draft Grave Digging Contract Specification commencing from 1 April 2027-31 March 2030 as previously approved by the former Working Committee and as circulated to Members with their Agenda pack. Committee instruction was sought.

The Clerk reported that following Council's ratification of the Minutes, the Tender would be duly advertised by the Office Manager and as in accordance with Standing Orders, the Tenders would be received by the Clerk as Proper Officer, and opened by the Clerk, the Chair and Vice-Chair of F&GP and the Office Manager in readiness for inclusion within the F&GP Committee meeting on 22 September 2026.

It was noted that Committee perused the documents, page by page. Committee instruction was sought. The Clerk responded to queries from Members regarding the seeding of graves and sunken graves being addressed by the Grave Digger and not the Grounds Maintenance Contractor.

The Clerk reported that the costings for the Grave Digging Contract would form part of the Estimates debates/Precept and would be taken into consideration when setting the Cemetery Fees and Charges for 2027-28. Following due debate, it was

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The Specification for the Grave Digging Contract for Uttoxeter Cemetery commencing from 1 April 2027-31 March 2030, be accepted and approved, and duly advertised by Council's Office Manager.
- (ii) The Tenders to be received by the Clerk as Proper Officer, and opened by the Clerk, the Chair and Vice-Chair of F&GP and the Office Manager in readiness for inclusion within the F&GP Committee meeting on 22 September 2026.

11. FORMER, FORMER DPS STOCK INVENTORY UPDATE

The Chair reported that as Recommended by Committee on 28 April 2026, the Events Team had carried out a detailed inventory on 1 June 2026 of the remaining stock left by the former, former DPS as issued to Members with their Agenda pack. Committee instruction was sought. Following due debate, it was

RECOMMENDED that the F&GP Committee authorises the Events Team to:

- (i) Due to the hazardous nature/out of date stock, all stock be disposed of with the assistance of Council's DPS.
- (ii) Dispose of all glasses, jugs, etc that cannot be repurposed, with these items being donated to local charity shops.

The meeting closed at 6.15 pm.