

Buckley Town Council

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Our Ref/Ein Cyf

Your Ref/Eich Cyf

Date/Dyddiad

MBW/LG/TJR

17th July 2020

To: All Councillors

Dear Councillor,

I enclose Agenda papers for the Meeting of the Town Council to be held via a Zoom meeting on Thursday next 23rd July 2020 commencing at 7pm.

Yours sincerely,

Town Clerk and Financial Officer

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AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive and note any Declarations of Interest made by Members relating to the content of this Council Meeting Agenda.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To receive written questions from the public, if any, and for the Mayor and/or relevant Chair to respond to those questions. Please note the questions and answers will be delivered without debate in accordance with Addendum 4 to the Council's Standing Orders.

4. MINUTES

To approve and to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 25th February 2020 (6702 - 6704) as previously forwarded to you with the March 2020 Agendas.

5. MAYORAL AND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements.

6. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

To approve and to sign as a correct record the Minutes of meetings of the undermentioned Standing Committees of the Council held on 25th February 2020 as previously forwarded to you with the March 2020 Agendas.

	<u>Committee</u>	<u>Page Nos.</u>
(i)	General Purposes	6705 – 6707
(ii)	Finance & Economic Development	6708 – 6710
(iii)	Planning	6711 – 6713
(iv)	Highways and Leisure	6714 – 6716

7. INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS (ADDENDUM 1) TO THE COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS

Members will be aware that the Clerk reviews all the Addendums to the Standing Orders on an ongoing basis. The Clerk advises the Council that upon reviewing the Internal Financial Controls Document (Addendum 1) there are some minor amendments that are required to be made. Those words that need deleting are shown in red, those words that require including are shown in blue. The amendments are in the main due to the Clerk's recommendation contained in Agenda item 9 below for the Council to consider new Standing Orders and a new document entitled Financial Regulations.

The Council is requested to receive and note the above report, to approve the amendments to the Internal Financial Controls Document and to be advised that if approved, the revised document will be included as Addendum 1 to the new Standing Orders due to be approved under Agenda item 9 below.

8. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY (ADDENDUM 2) TO THE CURRENT STANDING ORDERS, THE RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT (ADDENDUM 3) TO THE CURRENT STANDING ORDERS AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (ADDENDUM 4) TO THE CURRENT STANDING ORDERS

Members will recall that the Agenda for the March meeting (which had to be postponed due to the Coronavirus Lockdown) advised that following a revision of the three documents, no alterations or additions were required. Since then, there has been an amendment required to the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy (Addendum 2) to the Standing Orders, this amendment refers to note number 2 on page 3 of the document. The amendment provides an update on the investment which matured on 29th June 2020.

With regard to the Risk Assessment Document, again there was no revision required as at March 2020, however, since then we have had the Covid 19 Lockdown and in anticipation of the Staff returning to work, an additional Risk Assessment is provided on pages 9 and 10 of the Risk Assessment Document.

There is no revision required to Addendum 4, Public Question Time.

The Council is requested to receive, note and approve the above report and revisions to Addendums 2 and 3 to the Standing Orders and upon the new Standing Orders being approved under Agenda item 9 below then the above documents would be attached to them.

9. NEW STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

In 2019 the National Association of Local Councils substantially revised their model Standing Orders to take into account new legislation introduced after 2013. The model Standing Orders do not include Financial Regulations whereas the old Standing Orders did.

The Clerk has reviewed in detail the model Standing Orders and has substantially adapted the Town Council's current Standing Orders to incorporate the relevant additional information contained in the model Standing Orders.

With regard to Financial Regulations, the Clerk places before the Council a detailed document entitled Financial Regulations, which incorporates all the relevant current advice and guidance.

The Clerk's normal practice when revising Standing Orders is to highlight in red and/or blue alterations to the Standing Orders. This, however, is not feasible with the substantial alterations the Clerk is recommending to the Council's Standing Orders document. The Financial Regulations are a new document and therefore are presented as a single document.

Members of the Council will be aware that a copy of the new Standing Orders and Financial Regulations documents were forwarded to them on 3rd March 2020 with a covering letter. This action was taken in order that every Member could have the opportunity to comprehensively study the documents prior to this meeting. The new Standing Orders provided to you with this Agenda show minor amendments to ensure compliance with GDPR when dealing with Staffing matters. The amendments are made in the new Standing Order 33, Members are advised to familiarise themselves with the amendments.

Members are earnestly requested to bring the revised new Standing Orders (July 2020) document enclosed with this Agenda item and the Financial Regulations document which was provided to them on 3rd March 2020 to the meeting as to provide copies will be particularly expensive. Members will note that enclosed with the Agenda items is a new Financial Regulations front cover showing them to be effective from 23rd July 2020.

The Council is requested to receive and note the above report, the documents entitled Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and to approve both documents with an effective date for the documents of 23rd July 2020.

10. INTERNAL AUDIT UPON THE FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2020

Members will be aware that the Internal Audit of the Council's Financial Affairs is conducted by J D H Public Sector Services. The Internal Audit is now conducted on two occasions during the Financial Year. The Interim Internal Audit looks at the standard of Internal Control within the Town Council and the results of that Audit were placed before the Finance and Economic Development Committee on 28th January 2020. The Final Account Internal Audit was conducted over a period through June and July 2020 (this was a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic) and concentrated on the Financial Accounts of the Town Council. The Internal Audit Report of the Financial Accounts for year ended 31st March 2020 is enclosed. There were only two matters arising from the Audit, those being that there appeared no evidence that the Council had carried out an Annual Risk Assessment in 2019/20 and that the Asset Register included a coin counter at a value of £150 that had been

removed from the Asset Register in 2018/19. The Internal Auditor has completed Section 4 of the Local Councils in Wales Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2020.

Members will note on page 9(a) of the Notes to the Financial Accounts, which will form part of the enclosures to the Annual Return (copy of page 9(a) enclosed) are the responses to the Internal Audit upon the Financial Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020 are listed.

The Council is requested to note the completion of Section 4 of the Local Councils in Wales Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2020 (see Agenda item 11 below) and to acknowledge receipt of the Internal Audit report of the Financial Accounts for the year end 31st March 2020 and approve the Clerk's actions in relation to the recommendations as listed above.

11. LOCAL COUNCILS IN WALES ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2020

Enclosed with this Agenda item is the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2020, which requires submission to the External Auditor for them to report upon.

The figures on the Accounting Statements for 2019/20 are all extracted from the Final Accounts as detailed on the Agenda item 12 below, the figures being netted by the VAT element. With regard to the Annual Governance Statement (Parts 1 and 2), evidence will be provided to the External Auditor to substantiate the responses as listed. Members will also note that the Annual Internal Audit Report Section has been completed by J D H Public Sector Services.

Members are advised that the Annual Return for 2017/18 and 2018/19 have now been returned by the External Auditor and can be seen as Agenda item 13 below.

The Council is requested to note that the Council/Board/Committee Approval and Certification Section of the Annual Return as placed before it requires approval for signature prior to the Annual Return being forwarded to the External Auditor. Approval is therefore sought for the Mayor to sign the Approval and Certification Section of the Annual Return. The External Auditor's Report when received will be placed before the Council or the Finance and Economic Development Committee dependent upon the circumstances prevailing at the time the Annual Return is returned.

12. ANNUAL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Enclosed with this Agenda item are the Annual Financial Accounts for the Town Council for the year ending 31st March 2020. Members will note that the Accounts will form part of the accompanying Annual Return to BDO.

The Council is requested to receive, note and approve the Annual Financial Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020 and to confirm its acknowledgement that they will form part of the documentation provided to BDO (the External Auditors) with the Annual Return.

13. THE LOCAL COUNCILS IN WALES ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEARS ENDED 31st MARCH 2018 AND 2019

Members are advised that the Certified Annual Returns for the years ended 31st March 2018 and 31st March 2019 have now been returned.

Members will note from the enclosed documentation that the Wales Audit Office have mislaid the 2017/18 Certified Audit and therefore have provided a reconstructed Annual Return.

Members are also advised that following this meeting a Notice of Conclusion of Audit and right to inspect the Annual Returns will be posted on the office notice board and be placed on the website following this meeting.

The Council is requested to receive and note the above report and enclosed Certified Annual Returns for the Financial Years ending 31st March 2018 and 31st March 2019.

14. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members will recall that in the autumn of 2019, reference was made to the potential for the Town Council to create a Scrutiny Committee. As a result of the above the Clerk has prepared a series of notes in respect of the potential creation of such a Committee. Please see enclosed the Clerk's notes.

The Council is requested to receive and note the above report and particularly the enclosed "Notes Regarding the Potential for a Scrutiny Committee for the Town Council" and to decide whether or not it wishes to consider creating such a Committee. Should the Council move to consider creating such a Committee the Clerk will prepare formalised terms of reference for such a Committee to be presented at a subsequent meeting of the Council.

15. CREATING A HUB FOR INFORMATION ON EVENTS ETC IN THE TOWN

Some months ago certain Members expressed a desire for the Town Council's website to become the Hub for information when people wished to find out about events etc. within the town. The Clerk, with a small number of Members, has discussed the matter and also discussed the potential with a lady who is currently running a similar Hub on Facebook. The Clerk has also held discussions with the Company that created and maintains the Town Council's website.

The Company provided a tabulated analysis of three potential solutions. The first solution looked at merely putting a section on the existing Town Council website, however, in order to operate this option, the public would have to have access to the website to post various items. This would, therefore, compromise the security of the website. A second option was for a sub-site to the existing website, however, there is still the same security risks in respect of this option. The final option was for a separate website. This would allow the platform to grow and have its own domain name with an independent Administrator looking after the website. There is a cost implication of between £400 to £850 creation costs with additional hosting and support costs of approximately £20 to £30 per month. (Please see enclosed).

In preliminary talks with the lady who operates the current website events platform, the lady has indicated that she would be more than happy to act as the Administrator of option 3. It should be noted that options 1 and 2 would create significant additional administration activities within the staffing structure of the Town Council.

The Council is requested to receive and note the above report and to approve the potential for the use of the third option to create a Hub for information in Buckley and the Clerk to report back to the Council when a full final proposal is available.

16. RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENTS SCHEDULES

Members will recall that during the Covid 19 Lockdown the Monthly Payment Schedules have been approved by the Clerk, Mayor and Vice-Chair of the Finance and Economic Development Committee. All Members have been provided with copies of each month's schedules.

Enclosed with this Agenda item are the respective Payment Schedules approved during Lockdown and the July 2020 Payment Schedule.

Members are requested to receive, note and retrospectively approve the March, April, May and June Payment Schedules and to approve the July Payment Schedule.

17. BANK RECONCILIATIONS

The Council is requested to acknowledge that the Bank Reconciliations for the months ended during the Covid 19 Lockdown have been distributed to all Members each month.

18. BUDGET TO ACTUALS WITH PROJECTIONS 2020/21

Enclosed with this Agenda item are the summarised Financial Accounts for the Town Council for the period to 30th June 2020. Members will note that included in the figures are the Budget for 2020/21, the Actual Income Expenditure to 30th June 2020, the Projections of Income and Expenditure to 31st March 2021 and the Variance Analysis between the Budgeted and Projected Income and Expenditure for the Year.

Attached to the summarised Financial Accounts there are a number of notes explaining certain significant variances identified, Members attention is drawn to those notes.

The Clerk will provide a verbal report upon the figures if required.

The Council is requested to receive and note the above summarised Financial Accounts and Analysed Data and to note the significant variance information provided.