



MINUTES

Finance and Democracy Committee

Date:	Monday, 18 March 2019
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes.
Committee Members Present:	Councillor Karen Buckley (Chairman) Councillor Neil Harvey (Vice-Chairman) Councillors David Donaldson, Sue Fazackerley, Tony Ford JP, Richard Redcliffe, Vince Settle, Elaine Silverwood.
Officers Present:	Allan Oldfield, Paul O'Donoghue, Andrew Turpin, Graeme Ruse, Katharine McDonnell
Other Attendees:	One member of the public were present.

A minute's silence was held in memory of Councillor Christine Akeroyd, who had sadly died on 13 March 2019

Public Platform

There were no speakers under the public platform arrangements on this occasion.

1. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Finance and Democracy Committee meeting held on 18 February 2019 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute Members

The following substitutions were reported under Council procedure rule 23(c):

Councillor Sue Fazackerley for Councillor Roger Small

Decision Items

4. Write-Off of Uncollectable Debts 2018/19

Paul O'Donoghue, Chief Financial Officer presented a report detailing the write-off of uncollectable debts. He explained that this was an annual report, which proposed write-off for two uncollectable business rate debts over the £25k limit. He explained that write-off only occurred after every avenue to retrieve the debt had been exhausted. He advised that the Council had a high collection rate, which for 2018/19 had been 98.8%.

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In addition to approving the two write-offs, committee were requested to note a write-off taken under delegated powers as the amount was under the £25k threshold.

In response to questions, Mr Turpin advised that processes and procedures were regularly reviewed throughout the year, and this year was one of the highest collection rates achieved.

It was RESOLVED to:

1. Approve the write-off of the two uncollectable Business Rates debts in excess of £25,000 details of which are provided at Appendix A of the agenda report; and
2. Note the write-off by the Chief Financial Officer under delegated powers of the one uncontrollable Business Rates debts below £25,000 of which was also set out in Appendix A of the agenda report.

Information Items

5. Weddings at Fylde – Progress Report

The committee received an update regarding the Weddings at Fylde service.

The committee asked a number of questions, in response, Mr Oldfield undertook to provide information to the committee regarding the events company who had been assisting with the organisation of the wedding fairs. Mr Oldfield also explained that marketing and promotion of the service had been through social media and online networks. He further advised that the service had not yet been operating for a full year, there had been a small investment of approximately £2000 made for room decorations and other ancillary products for the ceremony and no profit was expected in the first year however, current advanced bookings are already sufficient for a profit to be realised in the 2019/20 fiscal year. He also advised that the wedding service was intended as a modest income stream. Councillor Silverwood – Lytham St Annes Events company – they have used our venue but we haven't been charged for the service. Allan to provide further details about the company.

The committee commented that the team responsible for delivering the service were wonderful.

6. Outside Bodies

The committee received reports from those members who represented the council on outside bodies.

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