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Launceston Town Council
The Town Hall
Launceston
Cornwall PL15 7AR

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
held on TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2020 at 7pm in the Guildhall

PRESENT Cllrs, Gordon (Town Mayor), Allen, Bullen, Conway, Gilbert, Harris, Heaton, Hogan, Keighley, Nolan, O'Brien, Tremain and Young
In attendance: Christopher Drake (Town Clerk)
1 x Press

2003/33 Apologies for absence
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Penhale (Deputy Mayor), Bailey and Nancarrow and Cornwall Councillors Farrington, Massey and Paynter

2003/34 Declarations of Interest
There were no declarations of interest

2003/35 Public Representation Session
There were no representations made

2003/36 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the last meeting, previously circulated
It was **resolved** to confirm and sign the minutes, previously circulated:
Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 18 February 2020 at 7.00pm

2003/37 To receive and adopt the minutes of committees and sub-committees, previously circulated
It was **resolved** to receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees and sub committees:
i) Planning and Economic Development held on Thursday 20 February 2020 at 7.00pm
ii) Lawrence House Management held on Tuesday 3 March 2020 at 4.00pm
iii) Tourism and Information Services held on Tuesday 3 March 2020 at 5.15pm
iv) Finance and General Purposes held on Wednesday 4 March 2020 at 7.00pm

2003/38 Reports from Cornwall Councillors
There were no reports to receive

2003/39 Reports and Questions from Town Councillors
Cllr Allen gave an update regarding the town CCTV and advised that there were no 7 operators and that all cameras were operational. Cllr Allen expressed thanks to the continued partnership working with the Street Pastors

Cllr Heaton gave an update on the Volunteer Services meeting and advised that the Connections and Service Group were now combined and that the organisation was looking at the issue of mental well being. Cllr Heaton also advised that lobbying had been undertaken following the closure of the Launceston dialysis unit but that the Launceston scheme had been deemed unviable. Cllr Heaton spoke about the works being undertaken ion the Link Road and concerns regarding the natural habitat and also asked about works being undertaken at the allotments.

Cllr Harris advised that details of the work of the Neighbourhood Plan working party would be included on the next agenda

Cllr Allen advised of the vandalism to the poem stones within the multi storey car park

2003/40 **Report from the Town Mayor**
The Mayor advised that a copy of his report was available from the office (copy attached)

2003/41 **Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elect 2020-21**
Members considered Notices of Motion received for the above
- i) It was resolved unanimously that Cllr Dave Gordon be elected Mayor of Launceston for 2020-21
- ii) It was resolved unanimously that Cllr Leighton Penhale be elected Deputy Mayor of Launceston for 2020-21

2003/42 **Coronavirus – Covid 19 policy**
It was **resolved** to agree the policy subject to all areas of the Council's functions being listed separately

2003/43 **Community Governance Review**
Members considered Report 10/20 concerning the above (previously circulated)
It was **resolved** that;
- i) the update regarding the proposed transfer of land at Upper Chapel be noted and the Council explore alternative sites for a town cemetery
- ii) the Council submit the same responses as previously to the Community Governance Review consultation
- iii) the Council explores if the Section 106 agreement can be altered so as it can be used at another site and if this is possible, the future use of the land at Upper Chapel can be re-considered

2003/44 **Council Policies Update**
It was **resolved** to approve the Operational and Financial Risk Assessment and the Council's Investment Strategy policy documents

2003/45 **Progress and Information**
Members considered Report 11/20 concerning the above (previously circulated)
It was **resolved** that;
- i) the Town Hall opening hours of a permanent 1.00pm closure be agreed
- ii) the request for committee Chairman reports for the Annual Town Meeting was noted

2003/46 **Correspondence and matters to note**
- i) The Town Council's venues usage was noted
- ii) That a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the Council's requirements for the new library hub building

2003/47 **Urgent Items**
There were no items for discussion

2003/48 **Exclusion of members of the press and public**

It was resolved that under s1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it may involve the likely disclosure of confidential information

2003/49 **Honoured Burgess**

To consider Report 14/20, concerning the above (previously circulated)

It was **resolved unanimously**;

i) to note the details regarding the Honoured Burgess nomination process

ii) that the required councillor panel to consider the nomination be councillors Gordon, Young, Nancarrow, Conway and Nolan

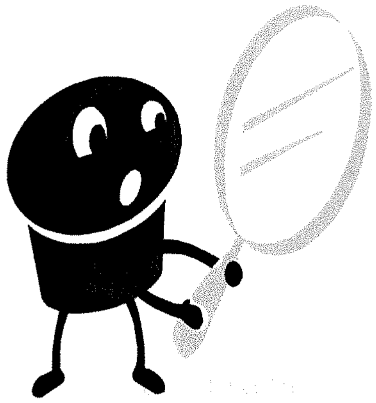
Date of the next meeting of the Council

The next Full Council meeting will be on Tuesday 21 April 2019 at 7pm

The meeting ended at 8.12pm

Signed .... Date ....

Agenda Item 8



HUDSON ACCOUNTING LTD.
INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT:
TO THE MEMBERS OF LAUNCESTON TOWN COUNCIL
YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020

ISSUE DATE: 10/07/2020
ISSUED TO: TOWN CLERK & RFO

INTRODUCTION:
Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance activity designed to improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

SCOPE:
The scope of the audit covers, as a minimum, the areas included in the Internal Audit Report contained in the Annual Governance & Accountability Return and the Transparency Code.

Areas not covered at the interim stage are included in this report as is any re-testing of areas already covered.

APPROACH:
Audit work is carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Internal Audit Standards and guidance issued by the National Association of Local Councils.

Where applicable we have included reference to 'proper practice' and the associated guidance as laid out in 'Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England' which is applicable to financial years from 1st April 2019.

Selective testing was carried out and the relevant policies, procedures and controls were reviewed. Visits were made to the Council's offices on 17th October 2019 and 11th March; final audit work was carried out remotely due to the coronavirus pandemic.

GENERAL COMMENTS:
We would like to thank the staff for their assistance and co-operation during the audit.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during our internal audit work and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist, or of all the improvements that may be required.

In giving our internal audit opinion, it should be noted that assurance can never be absolute. The most that the internal audit service can provide is a reasonable assurance that there are no major weaknesses in risk management, governance, and control processes. The audit does not guarantee that the accounting records are free from fraud or error.

The review undertaken obtained a level of assurance which has allowed us to complete the Internal Audit Report element of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return with no qualifications other than……., In all other significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

Also attached is a copy of the completed Internal Audit Report required as part of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.

AUDIT COMMENTARY:
Items in **bold text** within the body of the report represent our findings in respect of the application of controls, text in *italics* represent suggested actions and may not necessarily pertain to the application of internal controls.

Previous Recommendations
There are no outstanding recommendations.

Accounting Records
Accounting records have been properly maintained throughout the year.

Payments
Grants:
Grants paid were traced to the application process and the Minutes, there are no issues to report.

Payments:
Further testing revealed no issues to report.

The accounting system is now being used to raise most purchase orders.

Risk
Risk Assessment:
The Council reviewed its risk management arrangements and risk assessment at its meeting on 17th March 2020.

The Coronavirus pandemic has had significant impacts on local councils not only in terms of the way that work is carried out but for some there will be significant losses of income and potentially increased costs. The Council's experience should be reflected in its risk management arrangements and continuity planning as well as any financial impact being included in its budget management processes and reserves policies.
In addition it is suggested that a formal appraisal of the impact of the pandemic, including (the unlikely) possibility that there is an impact on the 2019/20 accounts, is carried out as part of the Councils approval of the Annual Governance Statement, specifically Assertion 8.

Insurance:
The Fidelity Guarantee is no longer adequate at £1 million.

It is generally accepted that the Fidelity Guarantee should equate to at least the sum of cash balances held plus half of the precept and council tax support grant. This calculation is used to estimate the highest level of cash held at any one time. To ensure that the Fidelity Guarantee covers the 'maximum' exposure to cash losses it is recommended that:

Recommendation 1
The Fidelity Guarantee should be increased.

Cash:
The Council's Investment Strategy has also been reviewed and re-approved for the 2020/21 financial year.

Budgets
Budget 2020/21:

The 2020/21 budget and precept were properly approved by Full Council following the production of detailed estimates and the consideration of reserve requirements, both general and earmarked.

Budget Monitoring:
Regular budget monitoring activity has taken place throughout the year.

Adequacy of Reserves:
After allowing for earmarked reserves of £505,557, the general reserve stands at £323,931 equating to 37% of gross expenditure in 2019/20. Within generally accepted parameters.

Income
Allotments:
Allotment rentals are well managed, and the vast majority of tenants have paid.

Tourist Information Centre:
November's income was traced to the ledger, till roll and bank; there were no issues to report.

VAT:
VART claims have been submitted for the year and the accounts reflect the outstanding claim at the year-end.

Library:
At The time of our visit difficulties in reconciling information from the Library till and the electronic reporting system used by Cornwall Council has meant that income has been captured in a holding account whilst the VAT status of transactions is clarified. We will test in 2020/21.

Petty Cash
Petty cash is properly managed, regularly reconciled and testing revealed no issues to report.

Payroll
Contract details for new employees, which we were unable to test at our last visit, were all in order baring one error on a spinal column point which is to be corrected. Payroll payments to the staff member concerned were correct.

Assets.
The asset register has been updated to reflect movements in the year and has been accurately reflected in the AGAR.

Bank Reconciliations
Bank reconciliations have been regularly performed throughout the year.

The year-end bank reconciliation was found to be accurate; there were no old unpresented payments.

Accounting Statements
The accounting statements were prepared on an income and expenditure basis and were in accord with underlying records.
The additional information required by the external auditor has been produced.

Charities & Trusts
The accounts for the Lawrence House Museum have been completed but Charity Commission Returns are now very considerably overdue.

AUDIT RESPONSE RECORD – LAUNCESTON TOWN COUNCIL

No	Recommendation	Management Response	Timescale/ Responsibility	Follow Up (for auditor use)
FINAL REPORT 2019/20				
1	**The Fidelity Guarantee should be increased.**			

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
  - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
  - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices.*
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
   - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
   - **Sections 1 and 2** are to be completed and approved by the authority.
   - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published **before 1 July 2020.**
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2020.** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
   - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
   - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020
   - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
   - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
   - Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on a publicly accessible website:

Before 1 July 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Where amendments are made by the authority to the AGAR after it has been approved by the authority and before it has been reviewed by the external auditor, the Chairman and RFO should initial the amendments and if necessary republish the amended AGAR and recommence the period for the exercise of public rights. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2020.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements **(Section 2, page 5)**. An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2019) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2020).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the period for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2020.**

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including **the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights**, been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at **31 March 2020** been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? **NB:** do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices, **can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

LAUNCESTON TOWN COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation **during** the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 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? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✔		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✔		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✔		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✔		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✔		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✔		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✔		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✔		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✔		
J. 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.	✔		
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✔
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✔		

	Yes	No	Not applicable
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.		✔	

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

17/10/2019 11/03/2020 07/07/2020

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

S P HUDSON CPFA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: SP Hudson

Date: 10/07/2020

***If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

Launceston 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 2020, that:

	Agreed			
	Yes	No*		'Yes' means that this authority:
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✔			*prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✔			*made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.*
3. 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.*
4. 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.*
5. 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 dealt with them properly.*
6. 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.*
7. 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.*
8. 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.*
9. (For local councils only) 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.	Yes	No	N/A	*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*
		✔		

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)
Authority web address

www.launceston-tc.gov.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

Launceston Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	571,712	686,666	*Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.*
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	567,062	657,121	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	286,804	346,424	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	-344,997	-443,518	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-51,318	-51,318	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	-342,597	-365,886	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	686,666	829,489	*Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).*

8. Total value of cash and short term investments	695,104	805,094	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March –* ***To agree with bank reconciliation.***
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	13,791,243	13,823,270	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	942,063	934,036	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

	Yes	No	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			*The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.*
	✔		*N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

[signature]

Date 22/07/20.

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of Launceston Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2019/20

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature Date

*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

Agenda item: **10**

Committee: **Full Council**

Date: **Tuesday 28 July 2020**

Subject: **Update on the Work and Delegated Decisions of the Council During the Coronavirus Lockdown Period**

Summary: **To note the works undertaken by the Council, the list of delegated decisions and the proposal from Cllr Conway**

Recommendations.

The Council is recommended to;

1) **note the update on works undertaken by the Council since 23 March 2020**
2) **note the delegated decisions undertaken whilst the Council was unable to meet**
3) **consider the proposal of Cllr Conway as listed at paragraph 3 of this report**

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1 <u>Works update</u>

1.1 Since regulations were put in place in March of this year, the Council has strived to continue to operate to the most efficient levels, as applicable to the government restrictions put in place. Initially all staff were working from home and the Council set up phone lines so as officers could use their own mobile telephones to take Council related calls. As restrictions were lifted, every function of the Council was reviewed and where possible colleagues returned back to their posts. In the first instance this involved our Stewards and Town Maintenance team colleagues. Whilst there have been only two uses of the Council's venues since March, our Stewards undertook cleaning and maintenance works throughout our sites and venues, as well as their daily routines of cleaning the public toilet facilities. The Grounds Maintenance team worked through the backlog of our grass cutting programme.

1.2 As further restrictions were lifted, officers worked through all the relevant legislation to ensure that any opening of a particular Council facility or function was undertaken fully adhering to the governance in place. At the time of writing, the Library and Visitor Information Centre are open, as is the car park, all public toilets and parks and open spaces. To date, we have held two weddings in The Guildhall, with further weddings booked throughout August, and the monthly market in the Town Square has resumed.

1.3 We are currently undertaking the necessary risk assessments for the re-opening of the Ambulance Hall and Town Hall. This is a phased re-opening and each user booking is being considered on a case by case basis.

1.4 Office based staff are still predominantly working from home and a rota is being agreed that will allow the office to be covered and for the Town Hall to provide an increased service, whilst at the same time ensuring that proper distancing and safety measures are adhered to.

2 Delegated decisions

2.1 Attached as Appendix 1 is the register of decisions that have been taken by the Clerk as Proper Officer of the Council or in conjunction with the Chairman and as required by the relevant Council committee or further to a request to Full Council, under the Emergency Scheme of Delegation as a result of the Coronavirus Bill 2020 and associated Government Restrictions The register is made in accordance with the 2014 Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations.

3 Proposal by Cllr Conway

3.1 Cllr Conway has requested that the Council consider the following proposal:

That this Council is mindful of:

Their prime objective is the health and wellbeing of their residents

The likelihood of a second wave of Covid 19

The reduced capacity of most hospitality sector businesses

That some tourist attractions will not reopen until 2021

The low number of businesses in Launceston reliant upon tourism

Finite NHS resources

Resolves not to take any action to entice tourists to our town and surrounding area during 2020.

Contact officer: Christopher Drake – Town Clerk

22 July 2020

APPENDIX 1

OFFICER DELGATED DECISION REGISTER 2020

The following are decisions that have been taken by the Clerk as Proper Officer of the Council or in conjunction with the Chairman and as required by the relevant Council committee or further to a request to Full Council, under the Emergency Scheme of Delegation as a result of the Coronavirus Bill 2020 and associated Government Restrictions The Register is made in accordance with the 2014 Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations.

For further details, please contact the Clerk. Information exempted under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the General Data Protection Regulations marked * will not be published.

Date	Resolution	Decision Taken By	Financial Value	S137 Yes or No	Details
6 Apr 20	2004/01	Planning committee	Nil	N	Planning responses; Application PA20/01736 - The Town Council supports this application but requests that proper noise reduction contingencies are incorporated so as to reduce harm to neighbouring properties Application PA20/02168 - The Town Council supports this application but request that the proposed flats are built to a high specification Application PA20/02169 - The Town Council supports this application but request that the proposed flats are built to a high specification and that the works are within the required conservation area/listed building parameters Application PA20/02237 - The Town Council objects to the felling of Cherry Tree (TPO) and would only that support the pruning/thinning of it. The Council supports the proposed thinning of the other trees "
17 Apr 20	2004/02	Planning committee	Nil	N	Planning responses

					Application PA20/00079 – Support Application PA20/01663 - Support Application PA20/01791 - The Town Council requests that it is ensured that the very fragile and important archaeology that may be under this site is recorded before any building takes place. Application PA20/02520 - The Town Council support the minimal lifting of the crowns and other proposed lateral reductions Application PA20/02525 - Support
17 Apr 20	2004/03	Clerk and Chairman	Nil	N	Continued closure of Council facilities/operations until 7 May
20 Apr 20	2004/04	Full Council	Nil	N	Motor Cycling Club 3 Day Trial 25-27 June 2021 - Resolved to support
24 Apr 20	2004/05	Full Council	Nil	N	Donation to Launceston Medical Centre for essential PPE equipment - Resolved to object
28 Apr 20	2004/06	Full Council	Nil	N	Consideration for staff expenses payments - Resolved to consider the matter on return to normal business
06 May 20	2005/01	Planning committee	Nil	N	Planning responses; Application PA20/02078- The Town Council supports this application Application PA20/02768 - The Town Council supports this application

					Application PA20/02822 - The Town Council supports this application
11 May 20	2005/02	Full Council	Nil	N	Consideration to amend Standing Orders for remote meetings – Resolved to support
15 May 20	2005/03	Full Council	Nil	N	Consideration for a Covid relief fund of £2000, with £1000 to be allocated for the Foodbank – Resolved to support
03 Jun 20	2006/01	Planning committee	Nil	N	Planning responses; Application PA20/03491 – Support Application PA20/03640 – Support Application PA20/03709 – Support Application PA20/03878 - The Town Council agrees with the officer's report when giving reasons for refusal for planning application PA18/11542, in that the design of the proposal, in particular due to its positioning, height, and close proximity to the parent dwelling would have a cramped and contrived appearance that would harm the character of the area and be overbearing on the parent property. The confined relationship between the parent and proposed dwellings and positioning of the external amenity space would also result in unreasonable disturbance to the occupants of the properties. The Town Council also has concerns regarding the proposal of a flat roof dwelling behind a brick wall and how this will sit within the existing property boundary. Therefore the Town Council does not support this application.

					Application PA20/04222 – Support
25 Jun 20	2006/01	Planning committee	Nil	N	Planning responses; Application PA19/09583 - The Town Council supports the application in principle subject to the following; i) The Council requires assurances that the new development will allow for both foot and vehicular links to surrounding developments ii) There should be no on road parking, other than in recognised vehicle lay bys iii) The area should be adopted by Cornwall Council following occupancy of the first property, thereby ensuring that there is no negative impact on service provision for residents at the site iv) Surface-water drainage must be controlled to prevent flooding further downstream at Tregada/Little Comfort. v) There must be interlinked developments to safely access the new school & reduce the need for A388 traffic. vi) There must be safe (Not Central Islands) crossing points to & from the Stourscombe side of the A388, but not central islands vii) The speed limit needs to be enforced at least 100m further down the A388. viii) The development must be in tandem with the Southern Area Expansion Plan. Application PA20/04258 – Support Application PA20/04259 – Support Application PA20/04343 – Support

					Application PA20/04433 - Support
15 July 20	2007/01	Planning committee	Nil	N	Planning responses; Application PA20/04442 - Whilst there are some excellent design features to the buildings, and they are highly energy efficient, this is a steep site in a beautiful setting with striking views and needs to be developed with great care. The designation 'as an open area of local significance' is not as strong as it could be, and is not a planning consideration/designation. The Town Council realise that the Launceston Community Development Trust have put a lot of work into this project, but feel that this application is an overdevelopment of this special part of the town and cannot support it in its current design Application – Support

Agenda item: **11**

Committee: **Full Council**

Date: **Tuesday 28 July 2020**

Subject: **Progress and Information**

Summary: **To consider various items of progress and information**

Recommendations.

The Council is recommended to:

1) **Agree a meeting date for the Annual Meeting of Council**
2) **Note the details regarding the councillor vacancy**
3) **Agree the necessary works at the Council's play areas**
4) **Note the re-opening of Launceston Castle**
5) **Note the details regarding the Launceston Southern Growth Area Concept Plan Public Consultation**

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1 Annual Meeting of Council

1.1 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 were put into place to allow local councils to hold remote meetings. The regulations give automatic authority to hold remote meetings and amend standing orders as required. These regulations remain in force until May 7, 2021 or earlier if repealed, and require a number of temporary changes to Standing Orders. The Town Council resolved under delegated authority to agree to the amendments in May of this year.

1.2 The new regulations state that there is no need to hold an annual meeting until May 2021, but a council cannot change the membership of committees or outside bodies without holding an annual council meeting. However a council can decide to set a date for an annual council meeting before May 2021 if it wishes. All of the usual annual meeting recommendations can be then be considered and resolved for the remainder of the municipal year.

2 Councillor Vacancy

2.1 Following the resignation of Sam Allen as a Town Councillor, the Council now has a vacancy for the Launceston South Ward. Notice of the vacancy has been given and details are available on the Council's website and on social media pages. If fewer than ten written requests are received for an election by 31 July, then the Council can fill the vacancy by co-option. If an election is called, then a poll cannot currently take place until the date of the next ordinary elections on 6 May 2021 and the vacancy will be kept open and unfilled until that date.

3 Works Required to Council Play Areas

3.1 Further to extensive vandalism at two of the Council's play areas the following actions are required;

i) a large area of the safety surface at Priory park has been removed. The area is too large for Council colleagues to be undertake remedial repairs. The cost to repair the area is £2000.
ii) the tower equipment at Grammers Park has rotted and is unrepairable. The Council is recommended to agree the removal of the damaged equipment and for officers to work with local residents and park users to agree a replacement piece, but ensuring that it is durable, cohesive in relation to other equipment at the site and does not provide shelter for anti social behaviour.

3.2 The Council has a budget of £1900 for vandalism repairs as well as an additional £4000 in reserves, which can be vired towards the cost of replacement equipment

4 <u>Re-opening of Launceston Castle</u>

4.1 Following the successful reopening of a number of sites in June and July, English Heritage has confirmed that Launceston Castle will reopen from Saturday 1 August.A compulsory advance booking system will be in place which will limit visitor numbers and a number of other safety and social distancing measures will be introduced.

5 <u>Launceston Southern Growth Area Concept Plan</u>

5.1 Cornwall Council, the Town Council and local landowners have been working with architects, Lavigne Lonsdale to create a planning master plan for an allocated site, south of Launceston.

5.2 As part of this project, a public consultation period of six weeks is in place from 29 June to 10 August 2020, seeking the views of local residents. Following the previous consultation and exhibitions held in the town last year, the current consultation is on-line only due to the Covid 19 restrictions and ongoing situation. Information regarding the Launceston Concept Plan consultation can be found on the Cornwall Council website at www.cornwall.gov.uk/launcestonplan

5.3 Social media and newspaper notices have been used to advertise the consultation and residents who commented on the plan during the last public consultation in September and October 2019 were notified via email along with local and national organisations, bodies and individuals on the Councils Planning Consultation database.

5.4 A large part of the existing urban area of the town area were also delivered leaflets advertising the consultation, including those neighbourhoods closest to the growth area consultation. These leaflets were delivered by Royal Mails leaflet delivery service, which are undertaken by postcode sector and are not able to be tailored or amended to cover specific urban areas or places. Some of the postcode sectors covering Launceston also cover wider areas around and away from the town and this resulted in some households in rural areas and some distance from the Concept Plan area receiving a leaflet, and one or two areas in the northern parts of Launceston not receiving a leaflet. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, specialist door to door mail drop businesses were not able to operate during the lead up to the current consultation.

Contact officer: Christopher Drake – Town Clerk
Date: 22 July 2020