REPORT

BridgwaterTownCouncil

Report to:	Full Council
Agenda Item:	All
Date of this Report:	4 May 2023
Meeting Date:	11 May 2023
Author:	Town Clerk

Briefing Paper and Town Clerk's Report

Agenda Item	Background Information
TC2023/42	Please send apologies and reason for absence to Lorna Williams (at least 3 hours prior to the meeting).
TC2023/49	Town Clerk's Report **Town Rangers –** The Town Rangers are making a noticeable impact. They have been undertaking various activities around Bridgwater. **Devolution Pilot –** work is progressing, and I have had a meeting with the new Strategic Director for this workstream. I am pleased to inform members that this meeting was positive and there is a clear commitment to advance this area of work. **ReCreation –** we have now completed the lease and have the keys to the building. I am now able to submit the application for the Youth Investment Fund as this was being held up due to the council not having a lease in place. A community consultation event is planned at the building on 25 May. The Project Officer is scoping the required works to refurbish the building and outside areas. I am currently working with the various partners that will use the building (One Team etc.) to understand requirements and timeframes.
TC2023/50	Portfolio holder reports received were circulated in the agenda pack. There is a recommendation from the Climate report. For information, this has been incorporated into the single use policy later on the agenda.
TC2023/52	Cllr Smedley will lead on this item.
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TC2023/54	Bridgwater Town Council has been approached by Somerset Council to take over the responsibility of the South Bridgwater Panty. This is an exciting opportunity for the Council to grow the pantry and to link with the council's social and environmental values. These values can connect the pantry with the allotments to provide fresh fruit and vegetables as an example. Other options could be to expand into a mini social supermarket. The

	plans for the ReCreation building as a Community Hub is gaining attention and maybe used as a model for elsewhere in Somerset.
TC2023/55	By signing the Pledge, council is agreeing that the council will treat councillors, clerk, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that the council: • Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff (Council has a training budget, policy and courses are shared with staff and councillors). • Has signed up to the LGA Code of Conduct for councillors (Council has signed up to the LGA Code of Conduct). • Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy (overall, yes. Council is asked to adopt a dignity at work policy). • Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise. • Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens. • Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the local Local Council Award Scheme. • Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate. Council is also asked to note the Civility and Respect roles and responsibility document. N.B., I have added the leaders role as this was omitted, due to this role not being a statutory role and with a small number of councils having such a role.
TC2023/56	Please note there are some amendments to the documents marked with * and these are in the meeting folder, except for standing orders. The only amendment to standing orders is standing order 18. The change reflections a legal requirement. The value of tenders has changed from £25,000 to £30,000. Changes to Financial Regulations are: 4.1 added the Facilities Manager 6.13 changed from Microshade VSM to Mircosoft 365 as this is now the Council's I.T infrastructure. 6.20, now includes 'staff as authorised by the Town Clerk' to reflect the council's growing workforce. 11b changed from £25,000 to £30,000 inc. VAT as per SO18. 11h has been reworded to include more officers. The Grants Policy has been amended to remove ward grants, incorporate the Youth Grant, remove Hamp Community Association from Core Grants and to include the new framework for community grants. Plastic free policy, as been amended to ban balloons, banners, and to reflect the new legislation in the autumn. The Scheme of delegation includes the term of reference for the new Environment Committee, changes to the Finance and Policy Executive membership, making the Democratic Service Officer the proper officer of the Planning Committee and the Properties

	Committee and providing a temporary authority of the proper officer role should the Town Clerk not be available. Another addition is to give the Facilities Manager the authority to spend up to £8,000 in relation to facilities management. I have included a role profile within the scheme for portfolio holders.
TC2023/57	Council is asked to amend two rules as per the report.
TC2023/58	The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is seeking authority to transfer £1m from the main current account to the council's CCLA account. This will provide a higher return in interest. The CCLA account provides next day transfer and the RFO can make a transfer of £100,000 without council approval, when the main current account needs topping up.
TC2023/59	Questions in advance of the meeting please
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TC2023/61/62/63	As per the report