

### **Item 15 – Unity Bank Councillor Authorisations**

In July 2021, the RFO raised concerns that online payments with Unity Bank were not being authorized in a timely fashion. This resulted in an email complaint to the Chairman from the RFO and a follow up conversation with Councillors and the Clerk asking that all Councillors who are cheque signatories ensure that they have registered to authorize payments. At that time, two of 5 cheque signatories were registered to complete online payment authorisations.

At the August meeting this was again raised as a concern as no action had been taken and the Chair asked Councillors to rectify the position.

Both the July and August salary payments were later than they ideally should have been.

At a handover with the outgoing RFO on 30 September, he confirmed that with Councillor Christensen away on leave until 7 October, it was quite possible that salary payments would not be authorized as at the time of the handover, still only 2 of 5 councillors had registered for online authorization. It is my understanding that Cllr Mann may have now registered and I can confirm that my salary was paid into my account on 4 October. That is approximately 6 days later than it ideally should be.

It is a duty of the Council to pay salaries and its suppliers and contractors in a timely fashion. Councillors pressed for the change from cheque banking to an online system. It is therefore particularly frustrating to still be in the position of a limited number of Councillors available to authorize online payments.

The new RFO is very competent, but inevitably has a lot to learn in a new role. It would be greatly appreciated if the Councillors who have not yet registered for online banking could do so before the next round of supplier and salary payments with salary payments due to need online authorization on or around 26 October.