

04/22

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
meeting held at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 26th July 2022

Present:

Cllrs. John O'Dowd, Chris Tyler, Linda West, Duncan White.

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Diane Barlow –Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

1. Apologies

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following apology: **Councillor David Fenwick – holiday, Councillor Marcus Themans – family matter.**

2. Disclosure of pecuniary interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

3. Dispensations

None requested.

4. Minutes

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to amend the approved minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee held on 22nd March to correct minute 18, Future Use of 10 High Street, replacing "Members noted that a proposal for the future use of the Guildhall had been withdrawn" with "Members noted that a proposal for the future use of 10 High Street had been withdrawn".
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Committee meeting held on 24th May 2022 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

5. Town Clerk's report

Members received a written and verbal report from the Town Clerk on action taken since the last meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk's report be **NOTED**.

6. Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return had been submitted to the external auditor on 21st June. A complaint had been made to the Energy Ombudsman regarding the previous gas contractor for 2 Burgage Way, relating to the failure to provide information required by law to the Council – the outcome was awaited. The current gas supplier was EDF energy. Income for the first quarter to 30th June, excluding the precept, was £23,558, 75.9% above budget for the time of year. Expenditure for the same period was 3.2% below budget at £60,091. Members noted the report.
- b. Members noted the balance sheet as at 30th June 2022.
- c. Members noted the income and expenditure to 30th June 2022.

The RFO explained that, when received, the proceeds from the sale of 2 Burgage Way would be allocated a separate budget heading. The proceeds could be spent on capital or significant enhancement only, not running costs. The RFO was seeking further clarification on spending.

- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 30th June 2022. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 30th June 2022.
- e. It was **RESOLVED** to approve payments from 25th May 2022 to date.

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7. Strategic Plan

Members considered priorities for inclusion in the Town Council's Strategic Plan. It was agreed that there should be a section for each of the Council's properties, including any plans for the asset and a timescale – short, medium, long term.

It was agreed to hold a separate meeting to consider each property in detail.

8. Guildhall – Legionella Risk Assessment

Members considered the legionella risk assessment for the Guildhall, carried out on 26th April, and noted the recommendations. **It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should draft the required documentation, purchase equipment required for water temperature checks and make arrangements for regular testing.** Any external support required would be considered at a later date.

9. Structural Inspection of Cemetery Chapel and Lychgate

Members considered the report from the chapel and lychgate structural inspection carried out by Thomas Consulting in June 2022 and recommendations for work required. It was noted that the Clerk was seeking quotations for the necessary work.

10. Cemetery Memorials

Members consider the requirement for a review of memorial safety in the cemetery as well as the desirability of mapping the memorials. It was agreed that officers should discuss options with Northwoods, the local undertaker.

11. Memorial Bench

Members considered an offer from a member of the public to donate a memorial bench to the town. **It was RESOLVED to accept the offer to donate a memorial bench to the town subject to agreement on design and location.**

12. Shropshire Library Strategy 2022-27 - Consultation

- a. Members noted a report from the meeting held between Councillors White and West and Shropshire Councillor Cecilia Motley, Shropshire Council's Library Service Manager and the Bridgnorth Area Library Manager, regarding the library strategy consultation and any implications for Much Wenlock Library.

The meeting had been very positive with Shropshire Council looking forward to continuing and enhancing the library service in Much Wenlock. They were keen to find ways to use the library premises when the library was closed and to develop wider engagement within the community, such as hosting public health sessions and silver surfer sessions. It had been agreed that the services provided by the library, such as public access computers, should be better promoted. The possible introduction of a self-service machine to return books had also been discussed. Those present had agreed to hold another meeting in a couple of months' time to review progress.

During the meeting it had also been acknowledged that Much Wenlock Museum needed to be refreshed.

- b. Members considered a response to the Shropshire Council consultation. Shropshire Council representatives at the meeting had conceded that the strategy was general in nature and explained the difficulty of making it more location specific. **It was RESOLVED that Councillor White should submit a response to the Shropshire Library Strategy 2022-27 on behalf of the Town Council, framing comments around issues raised during the meeting with Shropshire Council.**

13. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 20th September 2022 at 7.00pm, venue to be confirmed.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press should not be present.

14. Public Toilets

Members noted that the current cleaning and maintenance contract with Healthmatic would come to an end on 30th September 2022 and considered a renewal of the contract. It was noted that there had been significant changes to the terms of the contract provided, which now included call-out charges for repairs, etc. The Clerk was seeking clarification on some of the new terms.

It was RESOLVED to renew the contract with Healthmatic for the cleaning and maintenance of the public toilets for 12 months at a cost of £15,323.61.

It was RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue past 9pm.

15. Museum Lease

Members noted that the terms of the lease for Much Wenlock Museum between the Town Council and Shropshire Council made provision for a review every 5 years from June 2012. The lease had been reviewed last in October 2018.

It was RESOLVED to review the lease in 2023, five years after the last review.

Members noted an error in Clause 6.1 of the lease, which would be addressed at a later date.

16. 2 Burgage Way

Members noted progress with preparations for the sale of 2 Burgage Way and that marketing of the property was due to commence the following week.

17. 10 High Street

- a. Members noted that several contractors had viewed the interior of 10 High Street but quotations were still awaited. Members noted an update on the condition of the air conditioning units inside the premises. **It was RESOLVED to commission Roberts and Cooke Air Conditioning to pressure test the remaining three units, install refrigerant and test their operation.** It was noted that the energy cost of air conditioning in the premises would be approximately 65% cheaper than any other form of electric heating.
- b. It was noted that an enquiry regarding operational issues relating to the cashpoint machine had been submitted to Barclays and had been passed on to the relevant department. A response was awaited.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....