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MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
meeting held at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock
at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 27th September 2022

Present:

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

In attendance:

Diane Barlow – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

1. Apologies

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following apologies: **Councillor Marcus Themans – work commitment.**

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

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Committee held on 26th July 2022 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

5. Town Clerk's report

Members received a written report 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. Income to August 2022, excluding precept, was £32,335, which was 45% above budget for the time of year. The greater than anticipated income was largely due to higher than anticipated burial and memorial applications. Expenditure for the same period was £98,138, 14.5% above budget. The RFO advised that the Annual Governance and Accountability Statement had now been completed by PKF Littlejohn, the external auditors. The statement indicated that there were no considerations for the council to act upon. This would be added to next month's Town Council agenda.

Members noted the report.

- b. Members noted the balance sheet as at 31st August 2022.
- c. Members noted the income and expenditure to 31st August 2022.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 31st August 2022. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 31st August 2022.
- e. It was **RESOLVED** to approve payments from 27th July 2022 to date.

7. 2023/24 Budget

Members agreed that the Clerk and RFO should work on a first draft of the budget to be presented to the October meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee.

8. Strategic Plan

Members agreed to meet on Tuesday 4th October, in the Mary Webb Room, to discuss priorities for inclusion in the Town Council's Strategic Plan.

9. Meeting with Greenwood Projects

Members received a report from the Mayor, Cllr Duncan White, concerning the recent meeting with Greenwood Projects. The meeting had been extremely useful and Greenwood Projects were optimistic of positive results concerning grant funding

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applications. Feedback from Greenwood was expected at the end of October. Cllr. White advised members that this was a long-term project which might take up to five years to complete.

10. Cemetery Management

- a. Members considered a draft Management Plan 2022-2-27 for the Old Cemetery.

It was RESOLVED to defer consideration of the plan to the next meeting on 18 October 2022.

- b. **To consider a proposal from a member of the Friends of the Old Cemetery to apply for four new “feathered” trees from Shropshire Council.**

Members welcomed the proposal to plant five “feathered trees” in the Old Cemetery, however, they felt that as ten trees had recently been planted as part of the “Queen’s Green Canopy”, they wished to keep the proposal under review until the health of the newly planted trees was confirmed.

It was RESOLVED to review the health of “Queen’s Green Canopy” trees in twelve months before considering any further planting at the Old Cemetery.

- c. **To consider a review of memorial safety in the cemetery.**

It was noted that a suggestion to approach a local business concerning memorial testing at the cemetery had been undertaken but had not concluded successfully.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk should seek advice from other Councils and SALC for their approach to memorial testing and report her findings to the Committee at a future meeting.

11. Extension of Cemetery

Members discussed a proposal from the Allotment Society for the Town Council to purchase adjacent land to the cemetery. This proposal would potentially allow the Allotment Society to remain at its current location, whilst allowing the cemetery to be extended at an appropriate juncture.

It was AGREED that the Allotment Society should be thanked for their proposal and their concerns noted. It was RESOLVED that long term plans for the cemetery including this proposal may be included in the long-term strategic plan for the council.

12. Cooke Clock

Members received a verbal report concerning potential repairs to the door of the Cooke Clock.

It was RESOLVED that Mayor, Cllr Duncan White, would approach a local tradesman for a formal quote to replace the door.

13. Fire Safety Audit – Update on progress

Members received a verbal report from the RFO concerning progress made with completing recommendations received in a recent Fire Risk Assessment undertaken at The Corn Exchange. Some work had been carried out in-house by staff including the addition of new signage. Some improvements still need to be undertaken by a contractor, including the replacement of door handles. Staff were having difficulties finding a contractor who was willing to undertake the work.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Chris Tyler would provide Town Council staff with contact details of a local contractor.

14. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 18th October 2022 at 7.00pm at The Corn Exchange.

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.

15. Repair of Inkstand

Members considered a quote to repair an inkstand which is located in the Guildhall.

It was RESOLVED to approve the quotation of £135 plus VAT from Taylors Classics

16. Winter Floral Displays

Members considered a quote for the town’s winter floral arrangements.

It was RESOLVED to approve the quote for £280 from Rod and Viv Hall.

17. 2 Burgage Way

Members discussed progress with the sale of 2 Burgage way. The sale was proceeding well and no further documentation was required for the sale at this point.

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18. 10 High Street

- a. **To consider quotations for refurbishment work at 10 High Street and select a contractor.**

Members considered that further information was required before proceeding with a decision.
It was RESOLVED to defer this item to the next meeting on 18 October 2022.

- b. **To consider a quotation for the intruder alarm at 10 High Street.**

Members considered that as a response from Barclays Bank had not been advised of before the meeting, further information was required before proceeding with a decision.
It was RESOLVED to defer this item to the next meeting on 18 October 2022.

- c. **To consider any response from Barclays Bank regarding management of the cashpoint machine**

Members NOTED that they had not been advised of a response from Barclays Bank prior to the meeting.

19. Pigeons

Members considered a request from the PCC to jointly fund Pigeon reduction plans. Members were positive about the request and thought it was a practical way forward.

It was RESOLVED to approve the quote from JCJ Pest Control at a rate of £420, 50% of the total cost of £840.

20. Christmas Lights Display

- a. **To consider quotations for new column lights for the Gaskell Corner.**

It was RESOLVED to delegate authority to choose new column lighting to the Town Clerk and RFO up to a maximum budget of £3,500.

- b. **To consider quotations for the installation of the town’s Christmas lights.**

Members reviewed three quotations to install the town’s Christmas Lights. One of the quotations included remedial works to two bollards, thought to be owned by Shropshire Council and located at The Square, to make them collapsible. This would result in lower installation costs as a scissor lift would no longer be required to access catenary wires located there. Members considered that this option should be pursued.

It was RESOLVED to offer a three-year contract to Potters Electrical Ltd at a rate dependent upon works to the bollard: £25,410 over three years without works to the bollard and £23,2390 over three years if the works to the bollard take place.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Signed.....
 Chairman

Date.....