

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 21st of MARCH, 2019
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, LEDBURY**

PRESENT: Councillors: A Harrison (Chair), D Baker, E Harvey, J Hopkins, P Howells,

IN ATTENDANCE: L James, Minutes

F50 - 03.19 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Manns, Shields & Warmington.

F51 - 03.19 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

To receive any declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.

Cllr Hopkins declared and recorded a non-pecuniary interest in F.54, 5.1.

Cllr Harvey declared an interest in agenda item 20.

F52 - 03.19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of public were present.

F53 - 03.19 MINUTES

4.1 To approve the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 21 February 2019 as a correct record
Copy previously circulated

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of the 21st February 2019 as a correct record. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

4.2 To approve the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7 March 2019 as a correct record.

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7 March 2019. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

F54 - 03.19 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To approve invoices for payment.*

(*As per LTC Financial Regulations, cheques for approved invoices will be signed after the close of this meeting.)

- Clarification was requested regarding the Lanyon Bowdler LLP invoice prior to payment. Cllrs asked that the Deputy Clerk review the budget that had been approved by the Council for this work. It was questioned if February and March's payments combined exceeded the budget. However, Councillors approved payment of this invoice as long as the budget has not been exceeded.

ACTION POINTS:

- Deputy Clerk to check budget against Lanyon Bowdler LLP invoice. Payment approved if budget not exceeded.
- It was also requested that future "invoices for payment" sheets are linked to budget lines, so when budgets for particular lines are close to being exceeded, Cllrs can make a decision about moving monies from reserves to ensure the line remains in budget.

5.2 To receive the record of Receipts and Payments from 1 February 2019 to 28 February 2019.

Received and noted.

5.3 To receive the Balance Sheet and Trial Balance as at 28 February 2019.

- Cllr Harrison clarified the negative balance – refers to cheques written but not presented.
- It was proposed for clarity and accuracy, that the legal cost part of the "professional services" are reclassified under a separate new budget line as "Legal costs awarded against Council" so that they are not confused with the legal fees paid by the Council, which should be listed under "professional services".

RESOLVED: to reclassify legal costs awarded against Council as a separate budget line.

ACTION POINT: Office to reclassify legal costs awarded against Council as a separate budget line.

5.4 To verify bank statements and bank reconciliations produced for the months of August 2018, January 2019 and February 2019.

Cllr Harrison confirmed he had viewed these with the Deputy Clerk and has signed them off. Noted.

5.5 Income/Expenditure 2018-2019 at 28 February 2019. The following points were raised.

- Audit External - 220 4580 – it was not clear as to which external audit year the figures relate to. Cllr Harrison would like to discuss this line with the Internal Auditor when they meet.

ACTION POINT: to ensure 220 4580 is discussed with the Internal Auditor.

It was discussed that budget lines should not be in deficit, and that there should be a clear register of earmarked reserves. Cllr Harvey has done some work on this and will liaise with the Deputy Clerk regarding earmarked reserves.

- It was requested that the Deputy Clerk reviewed all lines with a deficit of £5,000 or more to ensure correctly posted. The lines highlighted are listed below in the action points.
- It was proposed to move monies from Staff Salaries to Temporary Staff and Grounds Maintenance Contract to cover the deficits, and to move monies from earmarked reserves to Election Expenses to cover the deficit.
RESOLVED: to move £38,000 from 230 4000 Staff Salaries to 230 4001 Temporary Staff Salaries, and to move £10,000 from 230 4000 Staff Salaries to 110 4205 Grounds Maintenance (Contract) to cover deficit, and to move £5,600 from earmarked reserves to 225 4540 Election Expenses to cover deficit.
ACTION POINT: The Cllrs requested the Deputy clerk review the following lines and action as appropriate.
110 4130 Insurance - check posting (Interim Clerk to review)
110 4205 Grounds Maintenance Contract - move £10,000 from staff salaries 230 4000 to cover deficit.
115 4640/4641 Christmas lights - to check postings to these lines to ensure correct.
220 4580 Audit External – to clarify the financial year these entries relate to, to highlight to the Internal Auditor.
220 4590 Professional Services – to create 2 separate lines, as above.
225 4540 Election expenses - move £5,600 from earmarked reserves to cover deficit.
230 4001 Temporary Staff Salaries - Move £38,000 from staff salaries 4000 line into Temporary Staff Salaries to cover deficit.
235 4405/4410 photocopier hire and cost, to check postings are correct.
- The Cemetery electricity bill was felt to be excessive, and it was requested that the E&L committee review this.
ACTION POINT: ask E&L committee to review cemetery electricity.

5.6 To review budgeted / actual expenditure to 28 February 2019.
Noted.

F55 - 03.19 ASSET REGISTER

To review the Asset Register and produce an updated version for 31st March 2019.
Not yet fully updated, and will need to go through Finance and General Purposes Committee at future meeting.
ACTION POINT: To be added to a future agenda for review.

F56 - 03.19 EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIT (Standing Item)

To receive an update on the external and/or internal Audits

- Meeting arranged with the Internal Auditor arranged for week beginning 1st April 2019.
- External Auditor – has requested further information, this was sent 3 weeks ago, but Council have not received a reply yet.

F57 - 03.19

GRANT APPLICATIONS

To consider an Unspecified Grant application from Ledbury Carnival Association.

This was considered by the Councillors. It is the second application received this year from the Carnival Association, and it was proposed to reject the application, firstly as it was felt that Council had already given a substantial grant to the Ledbury Carnival Association, and secondly that the grant application was made on the old-style form which is obsolete.

RESOLVED: to reject the Unspecified Grant application from Ledbury Carnival Association.

ACTION POINT: Office staff to reject any Grant Applications received on old style application forms.

F58 - 03.19

TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

9.1 To consider purchase of a franking machine. It was requested that a breakdown of costs, i.e. postage to councillors/other postage be produced. Also, it was felt prudent to wait until the appointment of new Councillors to understand the postage requirements.

RESOLVED: to recommend to defer to the new Finance & General Purposes committee once new Councillors are elected.

9.2 To consider the purchase of music performance licence for music played in Market House/Ceremony Room/Painted Room. It was proposed that the appropriate licence is purchased, and it was requested that the Interim Clerk contact PPL before the next Full Council meeting to clarify what level of licence is required.

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council that the appropriate music performance licence is purchased once this has been clarified with PPL.

ACTION POINT: Interim Clerk to contact PPL before the Full Council meeting to clarify the costs of the appropriate licence.

F59 - 03.19

HEREFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

In the light of the failure of failure of HALC to provide satisfactory indemnified advice, to consider commencing a search for suitable advice providers to replace HALC.

It was noted that the incoming Clerk recommends SLCC, but this does not provide advice to Councillors. It is understood that Leominster and Hereford City Councils are not renewing their association with HALC, and Bromyard Council is unlikely to do so. It was suggested Ledbury Town Council combine with these Councils to improve purchasing power, and to ensure consistent advice within the local area. It was proposed that the incoming Clerk undertakes this work, liaising with

Leominster, Hereford City and Bromyard Councils to see if a joint approach is available. It was noted that Councillor Advice and Training would be required as part of the package.
ACTION POINT: Incoming Clerk to search for suitable advice providers, perhaps in conjunction with the local councils named above.

F60 - 03.19
F61 - 03.19

WORKING PARTIES

To review any work completed by Working Parties under the remit of Finance & General Purposes committee.

The Democratic Working Party has not yet met, the meeting was cancelled, and no new date set. It was requested that when this Working Party meets, that the issue of Political Party representation under the Market House is considered.

F62 - 03.19

SUBSCRIPTIONS (Standing item)

To consider renewal of subscription of Ledbury & Stromstad Twinning Association.

Ledbury Town Council has honorary membership. It was unclear whether a fee was required, but Cllrs proposed that membership should continue, and approved subscription up to a maximum of £20.

RESOLVED: To renew subscription to Ledbury & Stromstad Twinning Association, up to a limit of £20 if required.

F63 - 03.19

RISK MANAGEMENT (Standing Item)

To review Section 5 of the Risk Register, Other Assets.

As there is no updated Asset Register at present, it was agreed to increase the actual risk to 4,3,12, with the residual risk remaining 1,1,1. It was agreed that when the up to date asset register is in place that the risk register will need to be reviewed.

RESOLVED: to increase the actual risk to 4,3,12, with residual risk remaining at 1,1,1.

ACTION POINT: To add to agenda to review section 5, Other Assets when up to date asset register in place.

F64 - 03.19

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR) (Standing Item)

To receive any updates regarding GDPR compliance. The Privacy Policy has been completed, and will be reviewed at the next Full Council meeting.

F65 - 03.19 OUTSIDE BODIES (Standing Item)

To receive and note any reports from Councillors who have attended meetings as a representative of Council.

No reports received.

F66 - 03.19 CORRESPONDENCE (Standing Item)

To note any correspondence received.

No correspondence received.

**F67 - 03.19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA
F68 - 03.19 INCLUSION**

The next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be scheduled following the Elections held in May, unless an Extraordinary meeting is required.

- It was requested that an item regarding the use of Bacs payments be added to the next agenda.
- It was also requested that “cheque signatories to be members of the F&GP committee” be an item to be discussed for the next agenda.
- It was requested that an item regarding “Council Accounts training be encouraged for members of the F&GP committee” be added to the next agenda

Meeting closed at 9.25pm.

CHAIRMAN DATE