

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FINANCE, POLICY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 28 NOVEMBER 2019
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, LEDBURY**

Due to additional papers the Chair proposed that members had 15 minutes to look through the extra reports- the meeting started at 19:37

PRESENT: Councillors: Bannister, Eakin, Harvey (Chair) Howells and Whattler

IN ATTENDANCE: The Town Clerk – Angela Price
The Minute Taker- Olivia Bundy

F103. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Manns

F104. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received

F105. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received

F106. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINANCE, POLICY AND GENERAL PURPOSES HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2019

Members were requested to approve and sign the minutes of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 24 October 2019

Councillor Harvey asked the Town Clerk whether Members were able to make recommendations at Full Council regarding the accuracy of minutes of committee meetings. The Clerk advised that whilst minutes are submitted to Full Council for receiving and noting, if there was an inaccuracy in them it would make sense for this to be brought to the attention of Council, to ensure that this can be raised at the meeting of the committee where the minutes would be approved.

The Town Clerk advised that going forward she would like the opportunity to make the minutes available to committee Chairs prior to despatch with the agenda in order for them to advise of in errors or inaccuracies therein. However, due to time

constraints and workload in the office, advised that this is not possible at the moment

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee be approved and signed as a correct record.

F107.

TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT

Members were requested to approve the invoices for payment in the total sum of £16,598.97.

The Clerk advised that there was a double entry in respect of the purchase of boots and that she would bring this to the attention of the Deputy Clerk following the meeting, to avoid two payments being made for the same item.

Councillor Howells noted that the payment to BBLP for the Speed Indicators was less than agreed and queried whether the Clerk had ordered x3 Speed Indicators. The Clerk advised that she would look into this and update members accordingly.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the invoices be approved for payment in the sum of £16,598.97**
2. **That the Clerk investigate how many SID's investigations had been requested.**

F108.

TO RECEIVE THE RECORD OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR OCTOBER 2019

Members were asked to receive and note the record of receipts and payments from October 2019.

Councillor Bannister queried the payment to Ridout Associates for £820 under payment detail '**Market House Timber**'. The Town Clerk advised that the payment was for the timber survey.

Councillor Harvey expressed her concerns regarding the Market House throughout the winter and suggested keeping the heating on low to keep the building warm to prevent condensation or damp.

RESOLVED

1. **That the record of receipts and payments for October be received and noted**
2. **That arrangements be made to keep the heating on low in the Market House through the winter months**

F109. EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIT

Councillor Harvey advised members that the Special Audit would commence week beginning 6 January 2020.

F110. TO RECEIVE THE BALANCE SHEET AND TRIAL BALANCE AS 30 OCTOBER 2019

Members were provided with a detailed balance sheet and trial balance for October 2019.

Councillor Harvey advised that the Earmarked reserves would be looked into by the auditor in January.

RESOLVED:

That the Balance Sheet and Trial Balance for October 2019 be received and noted.

F111. TO VERIFY BANK STATEMENTS AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS PRODUCED FOR THE MONTHS OCTOBER

The Committee was asked to verify and the Chairman to sign the Bank Statements and bank reconciliations for October 2019 accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the Bank Statements and Reconciliations be approved and signed by the Chair of the committee.

F112. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

The Clerk advised that recommendations from other committees would be dealt with under the next agenda item "Items for consideration in 2020/21 Budget".

F113. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN 2020/21 BUDGET

Members were provided with suggestions from other Standing Committees of the Council in respect of the 2020/21 budget.

There was a lengthy discussion on the proposed benches for the cemetery and members felt that it would be beneficial to see a sample before purchasing them. The Clerk advised that she could arrange for a sample to be delivered to the offices for members to see before the next meeting.

Councillor Harvey suggested looking into the option to lease an electric mower rather than purchasing one outright. The Clerk advised that she would look into this and advised that she and the team were looking for a second-hand mower as an option to purchase, but that these were difficult to find to meet the specification required.

Members were concerned about the upkeep of the Ledbury in Bloom flower beds and suggested purchasing a plastic liner to keep the flower beds from rotting. The Clerk proposed speaking to the volunteers of Ledbury in Bloom to ask for advice and suggestions.

Councillor Harvey suggested increasing the budget for the benches and providing more around the Town.

Members agreed to the suggested items for budget 2020/21.

Cemetery Charges

Members felt that a 2% increase for the Cemetery Charges was not comparable with the cost of the upkeep of the Cemetery and suggested looking into other Parish Councils Cemetery Charges, including Ross-on-Wye and Leominster, with a view to increasing the fees and charges.

Room Hire Charges

Jacobean Room

Councillor Harvey felt that the Jacobean Room could be utilised more including events and weddings and felt that the room was not marketed enough. Members agreed that they would like to use the Market House in conjunction with the Jacobean Room and offer a wedding package in the future, accepting that this was dependent on the Market House being renovated with a lift and toilet facilities.

Councillor Howells proposed that the recommendations be accepted in principle subject to The Town Clerk looking into other Councils room hire charges.

The Market House

Members discussed the possibility of installing a lift as well as toilet and kitchen facilities to make the Market House more hirer friendly. Councillor Harvey advised members that Ledbury Places had started projects to improve the Market House and suggested the Town Clerk contact them as well as the Civic Society. She proposed that in the meantime The Market House become a special project with £10,000 being placed into reserves "Market House Repairs" which could be used in the initial stages to obtain artist impressions and consultations with architects.

Charter Market

Councillor Harvey suggested looking into costs of Street Management Consultant to improve and manage the Market in Ledbury that would help compliment the current traders.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following items be included in the Environment & Leisure 2020/21 budget as additional expenditure: -

1.
 - **New Benches and picnic tables £ 3,910.00**
 - **20 x Derby Steel Litter Bins (for the Cemetery & Town Trail) £ 5,980.00**
 - **20 x moulded benches (Cemetery and Recreation Ground) £5,180.00**
 - **Replacement Sit and Ride Mower £ 4,500.00**
 - **10 x Replacement Planters for Ledbury in Bloom £1,100.**
 - TOTAL £20,670.00**
2. **That the proposed cemetery fees and charges be approved subject to the Town Clerk investigating other local Parish Councils cemetery charges and update members accordingly.**
3. **That the proposed room hire charges be approved in principle for the 2020/21 budget.**
4. **That £10,000 be placed into a special project budget head – "Market House Renovations" for future improvements to**

the Market House, such as a lift and toilet and kitchen facilities.

5. **That the Lengthsman scheme be moved from E&L budget and placed in the ED & PL budget.**
6. **That the budget for Traffic Management be increased to £10,000 in the 2020/21 budget.**
7. **That the increase to the Charter Market fees for 2020/21, be approved, noting that the Clerk would investigate costs of a Street Management Consultant.**

F114. 2020/21 BUDGET

Councillor Harvey suggested noting the new 2020/21 budget layout and arrange a task and finish group to go through the budget in detail due to time constraints.

The Clerk explained the new budget layout and that she had added a corporate budget, which included £30,000 for events. She explained that this will cover all events the Council anticipates providing or facilitating for 2020/21 and therefore reducing the need for in-year virements.

Councillor Whattler queried whether a budget would be needed for the upgrade of the phone boxes after agreeing to adopt the decommissioned phone boxes in September. The Clerk advised that she is waiting to hear further from BT on this, but that this could go under Special Projects.

Councillor Whattler also advised that the road near Busy Bee's was in a poor state and during recent bad weather had been unpassable for residents walking to the recreation ground. The Clerk believed that Hereford Council owned the road and advised that she would have to speak to BBLP to discuss road maintenance.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the draft 2020/21 budget proposals be received and noted.**
2. **That a Task and Finish Group go through the 2020/21 budget in detail due to time constraints.**

F115. SUBSCRIPTIONS

None received.

F116. INSURANCE RENEWAL

Members were provided with details of the cost of the Annual Insurance Renewal which will take effect on 18 December 2019.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Insurance Renewal is received and noted.

F117. OCTOBER FAIR GRANT APPLICATIONS

Members were asked to consider grant applications for the October Fair 2019.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Grant Application for £250 submitted by Friends of Ledbury Children's Centre be approved.**
2. **That the Grant Application for £500 submitted by Friends of the Master House Ledbury be approved.**

F118. CONSULTATION – INDEPENDENT REVIEW INTO THE ARRANGEMENTS IN PLACE TO SUPPORT THE TRANSPARENCY AND QUALITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY FINANCIAL REPORTING AND EXTERNAL AUDIT

The Chairman proposed creating a draft response via email, to send to members and that a recommendation be provided to Full Council to give delegated powers to the Clerk and Chairman of the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That Full Council give delegated powers to the Clerk and Chairman of Finance, Policy and General Purposes to prepare a response to the consultation.

F119. RISK MANAGEMENT

Members were asked to receive and note the Risk Management Register.

Councillor Harvey suggested reviewing Section 8 of the Risk Register once the new website is live.

Members agreed that the shelter should be removed from the risk register and a risk assessment be prepared in respect of it.

It was agreed that an extra column be incorporated into the register with dates of the completed assessments.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Risk Assessment be Received and Noted.**
2. **That the shelter be removed from the risk register and a risk assessment be prepared in respect of it.**

F120. UPDATE ON PROGRESS ICT MANAGED SYSTEM

Councillor Eakin left the meeting at 21:31.

The Clerk updated members on the progress of the ICT managed system. She advised that OMS had started transferring data and that some councillors still needed to provide OMS with their passwords to their current email.

RESOLVED:

That the update on progress ICT managed system be received and noted.

F121. GDPR

Received and Noted.

F122. COUNCIL POLICIES

Members were provided with two draft policies Draft Concerns and Complaints Policy & Local Resolution Policy & Procedure.

Councillor Harvey advised that the County Council have a protocol for concerns and complaints and suggested that this be circulated to members in order for them to compare with the draft policy provided by the Clerk.

Members agreed to defer the policies to the next meeting to allow members time to read them in detail.

RESOLVED:

That the Draft Concerns/Complaints & Local Resolution Policy and Procedures policies be deferred to the next Finance, Policy and General Purposes meeting on 23 January 2020.

F123. COUNCILLOR TRAINING

The Town Clerk advised members that the Equality and Diversity Training would be a half days training and that it would start at 9:30 am to 1:00pm on 3 December 2019 and that she hoped all councillors could make the training.

F124. UPDATE FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING PARTY INCLUDING NOTES FROM A MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER

Councillor Howells updated members on the progress on choosing an LSCA consultant. He advised that the Working Party estimated a budget of £40,000 and before applying for grants via Dave Tristram the budget would have to be approved by Full Council.

Councillor Harvey advised that she had a copy of the grant approval from last year and that she would provide this to Councillor Howells.

Councillor Harvey suggested taking money from the budget next year for this year.

RECOMMENDATION

That a recommendation be submitted to Full Council to approve the budget for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

F125. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Finance, Policy and General Purposes will be held on 23 January 2020

F126. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, in the public interest the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

F127. QUOTE IN RESPECT OF CABLING FOR UPSTAIRS

The Clerk advised that she had received a quote from the Council's ICT providers, in respect of cabling the offices upstairs.

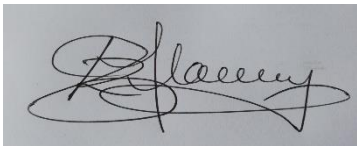
Members agreed to set aside the requirement for the need of three quotes, on the grounds that the company were currently engaged in upgrading the council's ICT equipment and services.

Councillor Harvey suggested adding £700 in the budget to cover the works.

RESOLVED:

The quote from OMS in respect of the cabling works to the upstairs offices be accepted and that £700 be made available for the works.

The Meeting ended at 21:51

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Blaney'.

Signed (Chairperson)

Dated : 23/01/2020