

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
FINANCE, POLICY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2020  
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, LEDBURY**

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**PRESENT:** Councillors: Eakin (Chair) Bannister, Howells,

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

**F158. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Manns, Harvey and Whattler

**F159. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None received

**F160. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None received

**F161. MINUTES**

Members were requested to approve and sign the minutes of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 3 February 2020 as a correct record.

**RESOLVED:**

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

**F162. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT**

Members were requested to approve the invoices for payment in the sum of £25,670.44.

The Town Clerk advised members of an error on page 1 of the invoices for payment and explained that the total for the staff NIC & PAYE should be £2,870.75.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the invoices be approved for payment subject to the amendment of the figure in relation to the NIC & PAYE.**

**F163. TO RECEIVE THE RECORDS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS**

Members were asked to receive and note the receipts and payments for November and December 2019 and January 2020.

Councillor Bannister queried the sum of £9,947.65 paid to Came and Company on 24 January 2020 in respect of insurance. The Clerk advised that Came and Company is the council's insurance provider and the that payment was the yearly cost for the Council's insurance

**RESOLVED:**

**That the record of Receipts and Payments for payments for November and December 2019 and January 2020 be received and noted.**

**F164. TO RECEIVE THE BALANCE SHEET AND TRIAL BALANCE**

Members were provided with a detailed balance sheet and trial balance as at 31 December 2019 and 31 January 2020

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Balance Sheet and Trial Balance as 31 December 2019 and 31 January 2020 be noted and received.**

**F165. TO VERIFY BANK STATEMENTS AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS PRODUCED FOR THE MONTHS OF NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2019. AND JANUARY 2020**

The committee was asked to verify and the Chairman to sign the bank statements and bank reconciliations for November and December 2019 and January 2020.

Due to The Chair of Finance being absent, Councillor Eakin, the Deputy Chair verified and signed the bank statements.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the bank statements and reconciliations be approved and signed.**

**F166. TO RECEIVE BUDGET FOR 3<sup>rd</sup> QUARTER TO 31 DECEMBER 2019**

Members were provided with a detailed income and expenditure report for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter to 31 December 2019.

The Town Clerk advised that she had recently received training from RBS which she felt was useful when reviewing the annual budget. She explained that she believed that nominal code **4170 (Maintenance)** on page 598 should be moved to nominal code **4205 (Grounds Maintenance)** and explained that nominal code **4018 (National insurance)** on page 606 was higher than anticipated due to the salaries being higher than budgeted for due to now having four members of staff in the office.

The Clerk and the Deputy Clerk were confident that there was nothing of great concern at this stage of the financial year.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the budget for 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter be received and noted, subject to the Clerk providing a report on any concerns to a meeting of full council**

**F167.**

**EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Clerk updated members on the progress of the special audit and advised that she had had to look further afield due to may local auditors and companies having already worked or been associated with Ledbury Town Council or others named in the process

Councillor Howells asked if it would be appropriate to contact Herefordshire Council regarding the special auditor. The Clerk advised that it would be a conflict of interest, noting that two councillors were employed as ward members for Herefordshire Council.

**RESOLVED:**

**That members receive and note the update from The Town Clerk regarding quotes for the special audit.**

**F168.**

**EARNMARKED RESERVES**

The Clerk advised members that during a recent training session with RBS Software she had discussed the matter of the earmarked reserves with them and they had advised that the process to resolve this was purely a paper exercise and as such would not affect the AGAR's for the relevant years. They had advised that the process was a simple one and that they could

assist with this and that it would be sensible to undertake this prior to the 2019/20-year end close down.

The Clerk advised the earmarked reserves were a historical figure which had been used to pay for the Judicial Review costs but that had not been transferred across from the Reserves to the general fund prior to spending, and therefore as a result they were still sitting in the earmarked reserves head.

She explained that after her training with RBS they advised that the best practise would be to transfer the earmarked reserves to the general fund for the 2018/2019 and 2017/2018 financial accounts, which was supported by the Councils internal auditor.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Clerk instruct RBS to contact the Deputy Clerk and undertake the necessary actions to transfer the earmarked reserves to the general fund 2018/209 and 2017/2018 financial accounts prior to the year-end close down.**

**F169.**

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Members were asked to consider whether they would like to renew their membership with Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

The Clerk advised that the costs to renew the annual corporate membership would be £25 for twelve months.

Councillor Howells was unsure of the benefits the cooperate membership provided the Council and suggested inviting the Canal Trust to a Full Council meeting before subscribing for another year.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Clerk invite The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust to the next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes committee.**

**F170.**

**GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Members were provided with applications for grant funding and were asked to consider whether they would like to award grants to the organisations, and if so how much was to be awarded.

Members agreed that grants accepted under the sum £500 should be paid promptly from the 2019/2020 budget.

### **Under £500 applications**

**I. Ledbury Community Day**

**RESOLVED:** That the grant request of £300 from Ledbury Community Day is approved.

**II. Ledbury Food Group**

**RESOLVED:** That the grant request of £500 from Ledbury Food Group is approved.

**III. John Masefield High School**

The Town Clerk advised members that they need to consider whether the grant request was for a non-curriculum-based project.

**RESOLVED:** That the grant request of £500 from John Masefield be accepted subject to the Town Clerk confirming whether the grant was for a non-curriculum-based project.

### **Over £500 applications**

Members agreed that grants accepted over the sum £500 should be paid from the 2020/ 2021 budget.

**I. Community Voluntary Action Ledbury District**

Members agreed that they would like to award the requested grant of £8,000 to the Community Voluntary Action Ledbury District Group. However, it was agreed that they should be asked to consider ways to reduce their carbon footprint and encourage environmentally friendly projects going forward, in line with the Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency.

**RESOLVED:** That The grant request of £8,000 from Community Voluntary Action Ledbury is accepted, noting that the Council would like to see improvements to reducing carbon footprint and encouraging environmentally friendly projects going forward.

**II. Ledbury Carnival Association**

Members agreed that they would like to award the requested grant of £1,000 to the Ledbury Carnival

Association. However, felt that it would be worth noting that that the Council would like to see steps to reducing carbon footprint

**RESOLVED: That The grant request of £1,000 from Ledbury Carnival Association be accepted, noting that the council would like to see measures to assist the climate declaration and be aware of environmental impact.**

### **III. The Courtyard Trust**

Members had a lengthy discussion regarding the grant request of £1,000 from The Courtyard Trust. Although members recognised the work that the charity provided, they felt that the project proposed did not benefit Ledbury directly. Members agreed that they would like to work with the Courtyard Trust in the future and asked that the Clerk advise them that the refusal to award a grant this year should not deter them from applying in future years.

**RESOLVED: That the grant request of £1,000 from The Courtyard Trust be rejected on the grounds that the proposed project does not benefit Ledbury directly, noting that the Council would welcome future applications from the charity.**

### **Multi Year Applications**

#### **I. Dream your Future Counselling**

**RESOLVED: That the grant request of £1,620 Split between 3-years, in the sum of £540 per annum from Dream your future Counselling be approved.**

**F171.**

### **REQUEST FROM EASTNOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Members received a handwritten letter from a pupil at Eastnor Primary School asking the Council to consider purchasing gardening equipment for the Malvern Spring gardening show.

The Town Clerk advised that if the Council purchased the gardening equipment, they could claim VAT.

Members agreed that they would like to purchase gardening equipment for Eastnor Primary School Gardening club and suggested a maximum spend of £250 which would be paid from this year's grants fund 2019/2020.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Clerk contact Eastnor Primary School to ask what gardening equipment they would like the Council to purchase, noting the budget of £250.**

**F172. RISK REGISTER – SECTION 1 - FINANCE**

Members were provided with a new and detailed risk register table in respect of Section 1 “Finance” and were asked to consider whether they would like to adopt the new format.

Members agreed that the new Risk Assessment was more comprehensive and agreed to adopt the new format as suggested by the Town Clerk.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the new Risk Register format be adopted by the Council.**
- 2. That Section 1 “Finance” of the Risk Assessment be received and noted.**

**F173. ICT PROGRESS**

The Clerk updated members on the progress with the website. She advised that she had sent Councillor Bannister and Vesma’s comments to the website developer however had not received Councillor Harvey’s comments.

She advised Members that the Council will need to provide an Accessibility Statement on their website with effect from September 2020 and that she would contact the website provider to discuss this. She explained that it was a requirement for all public sector websites and mobile apps, ensuring they are accessible to all users, especially those with disabilities.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the update from the Town Clerk is received and noted, noting that the Council will be required to provide an Accessibility Statement on their website with effect from September 2020.**

**F174. COUNCIL POLICIES**

**Members were requested to give consideration to a Draft Media Policy.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Draft Media Policy be approved.**

**F175.**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

**To note that the next meeting of Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee is scheduled for 26 March 2020.**

Meeting closed at 8.52 pm.

Signed..... Dated .....