

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Eakin, Sinclair, Bradford, Howells, and Hughes

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Price – Town Clerk
Charlotte Bartrop – Minute Taker

F521 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harvey.

F522 Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

F523 Nolan Principles

RESOLVED:

That the Nolan Principles be received and noted.

F524 Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

Minutes

F525 TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General-Purpose Committee held on 29 September 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

F526 TO REVIEW THE ACTION SHEET

F512 The Clerk advised that she had received notification that the dropped kerb at Horselane Orchard will not be included this financial year by Herefordshire Council.

RESOLVED:

That the action sheet be received and noted.

F527 TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT FOR NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

- i. That the list of invoices for payment included in the agenda pack in the sum of £15,810.56 plus VAT be approved.
- ii. That the tabled list of invoices for payment in the sum of £2,413.99 plus VAT be approved.

F528 TO RECEIVE THE RECORD OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the receipts and payments for September 2022 be received and noted.

F529 TO RECEIVE THE BALANCE SHEET AND TRIAL BALANCE FOR MONTH 6

RESOLVED:

That the balance sheet and trial balance for month 6 be received and noted.

F530 2022/23 BUDGET MONITORING

The Chair queried the following lines:

107/4206 – The Clerk will investigate why this budget line is almost spent and return the answer accordingly.

107/4594 – The Clerk stated that it had previously agreed that the cemetery mapping would be funded from the General Reserves

108/4209 – Dog Hill Woods Maintenance the Chair enquired why this figure is a minus. The Clerk will investigate.

108/4210 – Councillor Sinclair asked why this total was shown as two entries on this line, the Clerk advised that it had been agreed at the Environment & Leisure Committee to vire £1,000 towards training of volunteer to work in Dog Hill Woods.

202/4122 – The Chair stated that the electricity figure looks low for the office. The Clerk informed Members that this figure will now rise as the office heating has been turned on.

214/1718 – October Fair Income - the budget was £2,000 but the actual figure was £2,250. Members feel that there should be full discussion regarding the fee which the fair pays to Ledbury Town Council as this has not risen for some time.

230/4000 – Not used as much of the Salary as expected. The Clerk stated that some of the agreed figure on this line should be in lines 230/4018 and 4230/4019 to take into account Pensions and National Insurance.

2817 – Stationary is overbudget. The Clerk advised that she had asked the

accounts clerk to check that this was all stationery items and not equipment or housekeeping items.

301/4542 – Town Centre Facilities, £5,000 which has not been spent. The Clerk stated that this was money which had been earmarked for the Bye Street toilets when the Council was considering taking these on. Members asked that this be remove from the 2023/24 budget line.

There followed a discussion about the high bank charges which are being charged to Ledbury Town Council. The Clerk stated that she had looked into this, and Lloyds Bank had informed her that this was due to Ledbury Town Council having an international bank account, which is not the correct account for this type of business.

Members agreed that it would be in Ledbury Town Councils best interest to investigate bank accounts and to find one which best suited the Council. Councillor Sinclair agreed that he would undertake this task with guidance from the Clerk regarding the needs of the Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the 2022/23 Budget Monitoring be received and noted.**
- 2. That Councillor Sinclair undertake an investigation into the most suitable bank account for Ledbury Town Council, with guidance from the Clerk and provide a report to the next meeting of the Committee.**

F531 TO CONFIRM VERIFICATION OF BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that the Bank Statements and Reconciliations had been signed by the Chairman of the Finance, Policy, and General Purposes Committee in accordance with Financial Regulations.

F532 TO RECEIVE INTERIM EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2022/23

Councillors concentrated on the areas which held the most recommendations within the report.

Box B

B1 – very important as the financial regulations which were used for the War Memorial report were not up to date.

B2/B3 – as above

B4 This is marked as medium importance. From the Clerks notes within the agenda, it does appear that there is now a proper process in place.

B5 – The Clerk stated that there have been occasions when the payment reports have been generated but whilst awaiting the approval of invoices at meetings, someone has chased payment for their invoice, and this has been paid via consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair prior to the meeting. The issue is that this payment should then be removed from the initial report and listed separately so that the lists and the banks payment reports are a match.

B6 – The Accounts Clerk reported the error to the Clerk as soon as it was realised. The committee noted that it was human error and accepted that this does on occasion happen.

C2 – The Chair stated that there were Members who were not aware that there are issues with the website. This is the third, possibly fourth, website that has been created for Ledbury Town Council. Rather than commissioning a new website can this one be fixed. Members discussed the website navigation being unsuitable for the Council noting that the company who created it have not made it user friendly for users or for updating information by officer. Councillor Howells stated that a website which is fit for purpose, a content management site, should be commissioned for use by LTC as this will eliminate the issues which have arisen. Councillor Sinclair recommended that Members view Cheltenham Town Council website as this is what the Council should aspire to.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the External Audit Report be received and noted.**
- 2. That a recommendation be put to Full Council that Ledbury Town Council put together a specification of the requirements for a website and invite tenders from companies that are used to working with Town and Parish Councils with a view to commissioning a new website.**

F533 TO CONSIDER ANNUAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

Grants over £500:

- 1. Ledbury Primary School - That the application be declined but that the school be offered a permanent loan of 6 of the Ledbury Town Council Gazebos to Ledbury Primary School, on the proviso that the Council can collect them for use on their events when required.**
- 2. Ledbury Swifts Football Club – That Members offer an increased grant in of £1,500.**

Multi-year grants

- 1. Age UK Hereford & Localities – That Members approve this grant and that officers work with AGE UK to help publicise the location of their office in Ledbury.**

Year 1 - £4,000
Year 2 - £4,000
Year 3 £4,000

2. Ledbury Places – That the grant application be declined.

It was also proposed that Ledbury Town Council discuss the amalgamation of the Tour Guides work at both sites in order to provide better service.

3. Dream Your Future Families – That the Members approved this application for the sums of

Year 1 - £1,500
Year 2 - £1,500
Year 3 - £1,500

4. Ledbury Food Bank – That Members approve the grant for £2,500 for years 1, 2 & 3 with an additional sum of £2,500 for year 0.

5. Ledbury Methodist Church – on behalf of “Warm Spaces” – That the Members approved this grant subject to the equitable distribution of funds.

Year 0 - £1,200
Year 1 - £1,350
Year 2 - £1,350
Year 3 - £1,500

F534 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION 2023 – ESTIMATED COSTS TO BE RE-CHARGED

RESOLVED:

That the estimated costs information for the Parish Council Election 2023 be received and noted.

F535 CCTV REVENUE FUNDING 2023-2024

Members discussed the CCTV which is currently used by Ledbury Town Council within the town. It was noted that the cost had increased whilst the level of service and details offered have decreased, such as a detailed report with crime figures used to be received and this is no longer the case.

The Clerk stated that Ross on Wye has recently withdrawn from the service which as it felt that it was not the best way forward for their town. They have approached Ledbury about jointly funding an Enforcement Officer for the towns. She informed Members that there will be a report issued for Full Council in respect of partnership working between the market towns.

The Members requested that the Clerk review the terms of the current CCTV contract.

Councillor Eakin proposed that Ledbury Town Council commit to assessing the feasibility of changing CCTV provider once the Clerk had reviewed the terms of the current contract.

RESOLVED:

That the Members agreed that Ledbury Town Council would commit to assessing the feasibility of changing CCTV provider once the Clerk has reviewed the terms of the current contract.

F536 WORCESTERSHIRE PENSIONS FUND

(For information only)

- i. Actuarial Valuation Results 31 March 2022
- ii. 2022 Actuarial Valuation and FSS Consultation

RESOLVED:

That the Worcestershire Pensions Fund information be received and noted.

F537 PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT FUND FACT SHEET – OCTOBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the public Sector Deposit Fund Fact Sheet be received and noted.

F538 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Councillor Bradford posed the question to the Clerk as to why the Skatepark Resurfacing report had come to the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee as there is already a budget set for this project.

The Clerk informed the Members that, the total for the resurfacing was £9,590, which exceeded the amount available within the 2022/23 budget and therefore it was required to be reported to the Finance Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee agreed to the recommendation for Ledbury Town Council to proceed with Company C at a cost of £9590.00 +VAT to resurface the skatepark at the earliest opportunity, subject to funding being identified from within the 2022/23 budget.

F539 TO CONSIDER QUOTES RECEIVED IN RESPECT OF ELECTRICAL WORKS REQUIRED IN COUNCIL OFFICES

RESOLVED:

That the Members approved and selected Company A to carry out the electrical works at Ledbury Town Council Offices as soon as possible at a cost of £660 plus VAT.

F540 At this point the Members agreed that due to Health & Safety considerations, (the temperature in the room had become too cold to continue) the remaining items be deferred to other meetings.

RESOLVED:

That due to the Burgage Hall being cold and the winter months approaching, that future meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee be held in the Committee Room in the Council Offices.

F541 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 26 January 2023 at 7.00 pm, and will take place in the Burgage Hall, Church Lane, Ledbury

RESOLVED:

To note that the date of the next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee is scheduled for Thursday, 26 January 2023.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

Signed Dated
(Chair)