

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD
ON
29 SEPTEMBER 2022**

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

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

F496. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harvey.

F497. Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

F498. Nolan Principles

That the Nolan Principles were noted.

F499. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

Councillor Eakin entered the meeting at 7.01pm
Councillor Howells entered the meeting at 7.02pm

**F500. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF A
MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 28 JULY 2022**

RESOLVED:

**That the minutes of a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General-Purpose
Committee held on 28 July 2022 be approved and signed as a correct
record.**

F501. TO REVIEW THE ACTION SHEET

F481(1) That members approve the Shop Front Grants with the Exception of 10
Chestnut Close.

RESOLVED:

**That the grant for Pinkusion be supported as the business is based at 40
Bye Street, with 10 Chestnut Close being the residential address of the
proprietor.**

F482(2) Small flyer advising of shop front grant to be provided to members to deliver to shops and businesses who have not yet applied for grant funding.

RESOLVED:

That this item be removed from the Action Sheet due to the grant recommendations which appear on this agenda.

F495 That the Clerk write to the former post holder to request they contact the Clerk within days to resolve the matter. If no response received by 25.08.2022 Town Clerk to progress to small claims court.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk advised that the application had been made to the Small Claims Court due to no contact having been received following the latest letter.

RESOLVED:

That all items not referred to above, by number, on the action sheet be received and noted.

Financial Matters

F502. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the invoices for payment for September 2022 be approved.

F503. TO RECEIVE THE RECORD OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR JULY AND AUGUST 2022

RESOLVED:

That the receipts and payments for July and August 2022 be received and noted.

F504. TO RECEIVE THE BALANCE SHEET AND TRIAL BALANCE FOR MONTHS 4 AND 5

RESOLVED:

That the balance sheet and trial balance for months 4 and 5 be received and noted.

F505. 2022/23 BUDGET MONITORING

Councillor Hughes raised the point that on page 2696-line number 4270 Litter Bins & Benches is at 205% of budget.

The Clerk assured the Members that this item had been listed against the incorrect line and would be corrected.

RESOLVED:

That the 2022/23 Budget Monitoring be received and noted.

F506. TO CONFIRM VERIFICATION OF BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS FOR JULY AND AUGUST 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.

F507. TO RECEIVE OUTCOME 2021/22 EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members of the Committee expressed their thanks and congratulations to the Clerk and Accounts Clerk for their hard work in making sure the Council received an unqualified audit for 2021/22.

RESOLVED:

1. That the External Audit Report be received and noted.
2. That Members endorse the action of the Clerk to publicise the External Auditors report and Public Notice of Conclusion of Audit.

F508. OPTION TO OPT OUT OF THE SMALLER AUTHORITIES APPOINTED AUDITOR (SAAA) ARRANGEMENTS

RESOLVED:

That the Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee make a recommendation to the meeting of Full Council, scheduled for 6 October 2022, that Ledbury Town Council does not opt out of the central procurement regime managed by SAAA.

F509. NOTIFICATION OF INCREASE IN FEES FOR INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED:

That Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee acknowledge the increase in the annual fee for IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd from £750 to £790, an annual increase of £40.

F510. ACTION TAKEN BY CLERK IN CONJUNCTION WITH COUNCILLOR SINCLAIR

There was concern amongst some Members that the production of this leaflet, without going through the Committee process, could set a precedent for future projects. However, this concern was allayed by the other Members who advised that this course of action has been taken for similar small projects in the past and as a result had not become normal practice. It was felt that on this occasion the actions taken by the Clerk and Councillor Sinclair, with approval from the Chair of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee had been within the realms of the Financial Regulations and therefore should be endorsed.

The Clerk informed Members that at a meeting with Talk Community the leaflet had been well received with other groups requesting copies in order that they may distribute it.

The Clerk suggested creating a "Scheme of Delegation" which would provide clear clarity in such situations in the future.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the actions taken by Councillor Sinclair and the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee be endorsed.**
- 2. That the Clerk provide a draft "Scheme of Delegation" to a future meeting of the committee.**

F511. PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT FUND FACT SHEET – JULY AND AUGUST 2022

RESOLVED:

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

F512. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

1. Environment & Leisure Committee

Dog Hill Wood

Councillor Bradford expressed his dismay that Dog Hill Woods had been allowed to fall into a state of disrepair over the past seven years. He also stated that he is extremely pleased that this project is now being brought to the fore and the Woods will be returned to a satisfactory state.

Councillor Howells enquired as to whether the coppice training would be for members of the public who would then become volunteers. The Clerk confirmed that this project was two-fold, firstly with the aim to clean up Dog Hill Woods and secondly to provide support for men's mental health and encourage dialogue.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Finance, Policy, and General Purposes Committee approved a virement of £1,000 to be undertaken from “Closed Churchyard – Tree Works/Property Maintenance” (CC101 – NC 4250) to “Amenity Areas – Dog Hill Wood Maintenance Coppicing” (CC108 – NC 4210) to provide sufficient funding for three days training in respect of coppicing to be provided by Guy Tustin at a cost of £400 per day.
2. **Grants Working Party**
 - i. That £200 be transferred from the Dropped Kerbs project to the Town Centre Public Realm (Sustainable Ledbury/Ledbury in Bloom) for the purchase of plants for autumn planting around the town.
 - ii. That £3,058.79 be transferred from the Jubilee Picnic in the Park underspend for the cost of the supply and fixing of 4 replacement bins on the Town Trail.
 - iii. That the remaining £1,800 from the dropped kerbs project, and £200 from the Jubilee Picnic in the Park underspend, a total of £2,000, be made available to purchase a weeding and urban cleaning system, to help prevent weeds and clean up pavements and other surfaces within the town.

RESOLVED:

That the Finance, Policy, and General Purposes Committee approved the three recommendations from the Grants Working Party.

F513. THE SHELTER, RECREATION GROUND

Councillor Bradford informed the Members that whilst the work had taken place on the shelter it had created a lot of positive interest around the area. Attracting people to see the artwork and discussion had ensued around what a positive space this could be.

RESOLVED:

That Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee approved the repainting of the inside of the shelter at a cost of £1,384.99 and that these works be carried out at the earliest opportunity.

F514. TO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING POLICIES

- a. Concerns and Complaints Policy
- b. CCTV Policy
- c. Information, Communication, & Technology (ICT) Policy
- d. Local Resolution Policy
- e. Lone Working Policy

Councillor Hughes asked the following questions of the Clerk:

1. Are these policies adequate?
2. Do you (the Clerk) have any proposed amendments.

The Clerk informed the members that she had brought these policies with her from her previous council. She advised that the policies are union approved and that she is satisfied with their contents. The Clerk suggested that Members may wish to review the ICT Policy for improvements.

Councillors debated how to alter the policy ICT Policy in order that it become adequate. It was felt that where it currently refers to "Officers and Employees" the wording may be altered to "Officers, Employees and Councillors."

Councillor Howells expressed his concern about the Lone Working Policy as he did not feel that it goes far enough to protect employees who are working alone on town business. Both Councillor Howells and Councillor Bradford suggested that a panic button may be a suitable solution for those working in the Church Lane offices alone. However, there was concern raised for the Groundsman who often works alone and has, recently, experienced abuse in the course of his duties at the Cemetery.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Lone Working Policy be reviewed by the Clerk to bring that forward to the Committee at a future date, with reference to panic lanyards being used by lone workers alongside any other adjustments that can be made to ensure lone workers safety.**
2. **That the ICT Policy is reviewed and that the Clerk adjusts the wording to refer to Officers, Employees and Council Members within the Policy and that it be referred back to the next meeting of the Committee.**

GOVERNANCE

F515. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)

The Clerk suggested that the GDPR policy is due for review and suggested that a Task and Finish group be created in order to carry out this work.

Councillors Sinclair, Howells and Hughes all agreed to membership of the Task and Finish group as they have experience with GDPR laws.

RESOLVED:

That the Members agreed that a Task and Finish group be set up in order to review the GDPR policy and that Councillors Hughes, Howells and Sinclair would form the core of this group due to their experience in the field.

F516. TO REVIEW RISK REGISTER PART 2 – EMPLOYERS LIABILITY

Councillor Hughes suggested that the Members should be concerned with the items listed in section 2 of the risk register that, following mitigation, were still showing a high risk.

Councillor Sinclair stated that in Section 3 of the Risk Register there were some items regarding contracts which he felt needed to be addressed. He stated that he had previously worked within a company which issued generic contracts and job descriptions which allowed for a much wider range of tasks to be assigned to staff members.

The Clerk stated that all Ledbury Town Council contracts are a standard format. She stated that the issue has arisen as one member of staff has had no updated contract for some time, which did not reflect their change in position.

Members discussed how best to provide training in relation to staffing matters and who should receive this training. It was felt that the Mayor and Clerk, as line managers, should receive this training along with members of the Resources Committee.

With regards to the Section 2 items:

Long Term unavailability of Clerk or loss of Clerk without a notice period - this is to be reviewed. It is also to be noted that there is a contingency in the budget for just such an occurrence which would be likely to reduce the risk following mitigation.

Lease Agreements – That this item is listed correctly as a 6 on the right-hand column due to the reliance on solicitors.

RESOLVED:

That the Members adopted the Risk Register subject to changes outlined above.

F517. TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF A BUDGET MONITORING MEETING HELD ON 16 AUGUST 2022 AND TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee recommend to Full Council the movements outlined within the report, from the general reserve to the relevant earmarked reserves as follows:**

NC	ACCOUNT	2021/22 ADDITION £	BALANCE £
320	Earmarked reserves		112.92
321	Play/skate park	15,000	50,330.00
322	Traffic Management		9,000.00
323	Charter Market Improvements		1,000.00

324	Listed Building	TBC	110,000.00
325	Elections		10,000.00
326	Youth Support		5,000.00
328	War memorial	25,000	40,000.00
329	Paths, Bins and Benches		2,500.00
330	CCTV	5,000	10,000.00
331	Advertising		5,000.00
332	Climate change		2,000.00
333	Perimeter wall cemetery		15,000.00
334	Great Places to Visit		81,110.45
TOTAL		45,000	341,053.37

2. That the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee approved moving £10,000 from the general reserve to the Listed Building earmarked reserve in anticipation of potential costs for timber repairs to the Market House and Council Offices.
3. That £30,000 be placed in the 2023/24 budget for the play equipment, noting that the £30,000 in the 2022/23 budget will be used for the refurbishment of the skate park.
4. That it be noted that the decision to approve CCTV at the recreation ground being linked into the Hereford Council system had previously been approved at the extraordinary meeting of Council held on 18 August 2022.

F518. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GRANTS WORKING PARTY HELD ON 3 AUGUST 2022 AND TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of a meeting of the Grants Working Party held on 3 August 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

F519. LEDBURY WAR MEMORIAL – INTERNAL INVESTIGATION REPORT

Councillor Hughes provided an extensive record dating from May 2013 of Ledbury Town Council decisions and actions relating to the condition and renovation of the Ledbury War Memorial.

Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee did not feel that they were equipped at this meeting to make recommendations with regard to the report which had been received but rather that the report be presented to the Meeting of Full Council on 6 October 2022.

Councillors wished to clarify that this was a public document, Councillor Hughes stated that the report was open and transparent and that under no circumstances should this report be confidential.

Councillor Sinclair requested that the report provided by Councillor Hughes and the Caroe report, which Ledbury Town Council have received, be placed onto the website in order that it be in the public domain.

Councillor Howells agreed and requested that suitable wording be provided with the report that Ledbury Town Council are still clarifying their course of action and that this shall be shared with the residents of Ledbury as soon as the actions have been settled upon.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Members agreed that the report should be presented to Full Council at the meeting to be held on 6 October 2022.**
2. **That this report and the report from Caroe be shared on the Council's website as soon as possible.**

F520. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 24 November 2022, 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, 24 November 2022.

The meeting ended at 8:55pm.

Signed Dated
(Chair)