

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE, ASSET MANAGEMENT & HR COMMITTEE
meeting held at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 5.30 pm on Tuesday, 21st May 2019

Present:

Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning, Cllr. Bert Harper, Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Daniel Thomas (from minute 13 onwards), Cllr Allan Walter.

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett –Town Clerk, Diane Barlow – Assistant to the Town Clerk.

1) Election of Chairman

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** that Councillor Bert Harper be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

2) Election of Deputy Chairman

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** that Councillor Edgcumbe-Venning be elected Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

3) Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Adam Davy, who was on holiday, Cllr. Milner Whiteman, who had a prior engagement, and Cllr. Daniel Thomas, who was engaged on other Council business.

These apologies were ACCEPTED and AGREED as APPROVED absence.

4) Disclosure of pecuniary interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

Cllr. Edgcumbe-Venning declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 13, sponsorship of floral planters, as a business owner in the town.

5) Dispensations

None requested.

6) Minutes

- a. The minutes of a Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting held on 23rd April 2019 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED that the minutes be APPROVED and signed as a true record.**
- b. The minutes of a meeting of the HR Committee held on 7th May 2019 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED that the minutes be APPROVED and signed as a true record.**

7) Town Clerk's report

Members received a written and verbal report from the Town Clerk on action taken since the last meeting. It was noted that further discussion was needed to agree how the public toilets should be maintained and managed in the future. Officers would endeavour to obtain further information on options for maintenance and cleaning for consideration at the next meeting.

It was noted that a draft agreement was still awaited for the use of the Shropshire Council owned area as a storage compound for the Gaskell Ground drainage work. The Clerk would pursue this with Shropshire Council.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously AGREED that the Town Clerk's report be NOTED.

8) Finance

- a. Councillors **NOTED** that financial reports for April 2019 would be available following training for officers on the RBS accounting system. The training was scheduled for 24th May and the office would be closed to the public on that day.
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED that payments for May 2019 be APPROVED.**
It was noted that the Council's gas and electricity contracts should be reviewed. Councillors noted that the current, leased printer/photocopier did not collate papers and a price should be obtained for adding a collator. Prices would also be obtained from an alternative supplier.

9) Strategic Plan and Strategic Financial Plan

It was noted that the Council was required to draw up a Strategic Plan and Strategic Financial Plan and Councillors considered examples of the above from other local Councils. The Chairman drew attention to the Council's current precept compared with the surrounding villages and other Shropshire towns.

It was agreed that, as a first step towards producing a three-year Strategic Plan, Councillors be invited to put forward their ideas and aspirations for Council projects and development. Headings, such as property and environment, would be provided as a guide. Councillors noted the need to take advantage of available grant funding for future projects.

10) Corn Exchange & Guildhall

Councillors noted that the immediate maintenance priorities for the two properties were being addressed.

Cllr. Edgcumbe-Venning would contact Arrol & Snell for an update on progress with their work for the Council and invite Andrew Arrol to attend a forthcoming meeting.

11) Property Walkabout

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to visit all Council properties to assess their condition and consider any matters arising. Two dates were agreed: Saturday, 1st June at 10.30am and Saturday, 15th June at 10.30am, starting from the entrance to the play area on the Gaskell Ground. Councillors could attend on either date, depending on their availability.

12) Date of next meeting

- a. Councillors noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 23rd July.
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to move the start time of Committee meetings to 7.00pm.**

Cllr. Thomas arrived.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press should not be present.

Having declared a pecuniary interest in the following item, Councillor Edgcumbe-Venning left the meeting.

13) Sponsorship of Planters

- a. Councillors considered expressions of interest in sponsorship of floral planters from local businesses.
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to charge a rate of £150 per planter for a period of two years.** The sponsored planter would be fitted with a plaque acknowledging the sponsor. The scheme should be implemented as soon as practicable.

Councillor Edgcumbe-Venning returned to the meeting.

14) Linden Lodge

- a. Councillors noted the most recent report for Linden Lodge and that the property was inspected every six months. The Clerk was asked to inform the managing agent that two members of the Committee would like to accompany the agent on the next inspection visit.
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to increase the rent of Linden Lodge by £25 per month as soon as practicable.**

15) Recruitment of Administrative Assistant

Councillors considered the selection and interview process for the Administrative Assistant. In order to allow the process to be undertaken as quickly as possible, **it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Councillors Harper and Hill and the Town Clerk shortlist and interview the selected applicants.** Councillor Thomas would review the shortlist.

The meeting closed at 7.35pm.

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....