

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, 23rd July 2019

Present:

Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning (in the chair), Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Dafydd Jenkins, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Daniel Thomas, Cllr Milner Whiteman.

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett –Town Clerk, Diane Barlow – Assistant to the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

1) Chairman’s Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that the installation of a defibrillator cabinet outside the Corn Exchange had been completed, although the contents of the cabinet were yet to be fitted. The Chair also announced that the purchase of 10 High Street, the former Barclays Bank premises, had been completed.

2) Apologies

The following apologies were received:

Cllr. Adam Davy, Cllr. H Harper and Cllr. Allan Walter - holiday

Cllr. Kate Southan – work commitment

These apologies were ACCEPTED and AGREED as APPROVED absence.

3) 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.

4) Dispensations

None requested.

5) Minutes

The minutes of a Finance, Asset Management and HR Committee meeting held on 21st May 2019 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED that the minutes be APPROVED and signed as a true record.**

6) 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 Shropshire Council had now granted permission for the fitting of a memorial plaque on the wall of Back Lane car park.

No progress had been made with moving a bench in the Square to the bottom of the shallow steps. Consideration might be given to moving all of the benches to the perimeter of the Square to allow more use to be made of the central space. Councillor Themans was asked to draw up a design, for consideration by the Planning & Environment Committee.

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

7) Finance

- a. Councillors **NOTED** a report from the RFO. Training on the RBS system had been undertaken and the trainer was available to provide further support if required.

The Unity Trust and Public Sector bank accounts had been balanced up to the end of June and Barclays accounts up to the end of May. Barclays had still not completed the change of mandate, although this was expected later in the week. It was noted that there were some coding errors in the accounts which would be reviewed and corrected.

The RFO was pleased to report that the £36,000 contribution due from Shropshire Council for the Callaughtons Ash development had now been received.

- b. Councillors **NOTED** the balance sheet as at 30th June 2019.

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- c. Members **NOTED** the income and expenditure for the first quarter to 30th June 2019. Councillor Holyoak stressed the need to set appropriate budgets and remain within these so that virements or transfers from reserves were not necessary.
- d. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to approve Unity Trust bank reconciliations to 30th June 2019 and Barclays bank reconciliations to 31st May 2019.**
- e. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve payments for June and July 2019.**
- f. Members considered the need for additional signatories on the bank mandate for the Unity Trust Bank accounts. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED that Councillor Daniel Thomas be added to the bank mandate for the Unity Trust Bank current and deposit bank accounts.**
- g. Members were asked to consider the format of future financial reports. It was suggested that overspends might be printed in red ink for clarity. It was agreed to add the matter to the agenda of the next meeting for further discussion.

8) Strategic Plan and Strategic Financial Plan

- a. Members reviewed items proposed for inclusion in the Council's Strategic Plan.
- b. All Councillors were asked to prioritise items proposed from 1 (most important) downwards. The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting in early September for discussion of priorities for the Strategic Plan. A copy of the current year's budget should be provided with the papers. It was suggested that the priorities could be displayed on an x/y axis urgent/long term, important/less important and that the four headings of Property, Planning & Environment, Promotion & Events and Other be used.

9) Corn Exchange & Guildhall

- a. Members noted a report from the meeting with Arrol Architects held on 17th July, when proposals for the Guildhall had been presented and discussed. The proposals were intended to repair and protect the building and to make it relevant and accessible for the present and future. Andrew Arrol had been positive about opportunities to obtain grant funding.
- b. Councillors agreed that it was important to seek public opinion on the proposals. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to set up a working group to arrange community involvement / consultation.** As several Councillors were absent, nominations for membership of the working group would be considered at the September full Council meeting. Officers were asked to check the terms of the agreement with Arrol Architects.

10) Card Reader for Guildhall

Councillors considered a proposal to purchase a payment card reader which could be used by customers for purchases of items for sale in the Guildhall.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to purchase a payment card reader for use in the Guildhall (preferably Sum Up 3G). Exhibitors would be responsible for payment of the card fee but have the option to continue with cash only if preferred.

11) Electric Vehicle Charging Points

- a. It was noted that an electric vehicle charging point, available for public use, had recently been installed at the Fire Station in Much Wenlock.
- b. Consideration of the installation of an electric vehicle charging point in the car park at the Corn Exchange would form part of the discussion regarding the Council's strategic planning priorities.

12) Grounds Maintenance and Property Maintenance

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to set up a working group to explore options for the maintenance of the Council's grounds and property. As several Councillors were absent, nominations for membership of the working group would be considered at the September full Council meeting.

13) Date of next meeting

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to move the date of the next meeting from Tuesday, 24th September to Thursday, 26th September to allow the Chair and members of staff to attend a Budgeting training course on 24th September.

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.

14) Christmas Lights

Members considered a report on options for the installation of this year’s Christmas Lights display.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to appoint RMW as the Council’s contractor for a period of three years on the terms outlined in their proposal dated 20th June 2019.

Members of the Communications, Markets & Tourism Group would liaise with the RFO regarding arrangements for the Christmas Lights switch-on event.

15) Linden Lodge

Members considered quotations for the renovation work required at Linden Lodge. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to instruct Balfours to place the order for the work with EGV Ltd, as per the quotation dated May 2019 in the amount of £3,876.00.**

16) Public Toilets

- a. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to approve the extension of the cleaning and maintenance contract with Healthmatic for a further three months, to the end of September 2019.**
- b. Councillors noted options for the public toilets put forward by Healthmatic. It was agreed to consider the matter further at the forthcoming Strategic Planning meeting.

17) Fire Alarm/ Emergency Lighting

Councillors noted that the fire alarm and emergency lighting service level agreements for the Guildhall and Corn Exchange were due for renewal on 6th August. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to renew the agreements with RMW Electrical Engineers as per the proposals dated 17th July 2019.**

18) Drainage work on Gaskell Recreation Ground

Councillors reviewed the draft Licence to Occupy for the use of Shropshire Council land in Station Road as a storage compound for the forthcoming drainage work on the Gaskell Ground. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to approve and sign the agreement.**

19) Recruitment of Temporary Town Handy Person

Following the advertisement of a temporary position to cover for the sick leave of the Town Handy Person, and subsequent consideration of applicants, **it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to appoint Mr Doug Blackhall as temporary Town Handy Person.** The Clerk was asked to make the necessary arrangements for an immediate start.

20) Contracts of Employment and Employee Handbook

Members reviewed the following documents, which had been revised by Ellis Whittam to take account of changes in legislation and working practices:

- a. Contracts of Employment for Clerk and other staff.
- b. Employee Handbook.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to approve the revised contract of employment for staff other than the Clerk, following the removal of Clause 19, Lay Off.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to approve in principle the revised contract of employment for the Clerk, following the removal of Clause 19, Lay Off, and subject to confirmation of salary progression.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED to approve the Employee Handbook, as amended.

The meeting closed at 8.58pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....