

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
meeting held at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 19th October 2021

Present:

Cllrs. Mike Atherton, John O'Dowd, Robert Toft, Daniel Thomas

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Diane Barlow – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

1) Apologies

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the following apologies: **Councillors Sam Neal and Marcus Themans – work**

2) 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.

3) Dispensations

None requested.

4) Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Committee meeting held on 21st September 2021 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

5) Town Clerk's report

Members received a written report from the Town Clerk on action taken since the last meeting.
Members **NOTED** the report.

6) Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. She advised that overall expenditure was 24% under budget for April to September, in the amount of £31,372. Income, however, was already at 94.8% of budget for the total year. She highlighted several budgets which were unspent at present: town celebrations £500, climate change £1,000, 10 High Street repairs & maintenance £5,000, 10 High Street rates £4,950 and The Square repairs and maintenance £1,500. Members **NOTED** the report.
- b. Members **NOTED** the balance sheet as at 30th September 2021.
- c. Members **NOTED** the income and expenditure to 30th September 2021.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 30th September 2021. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 30th September 2021.
- e. It was **RESOLVED** to retrospectively approve payments from 22nd September 2021 to date.

7) 2022/23 Budget Setting

Members considered the first draft of the budget, prepared by the RFO. Members suggested increasing the budgets for grants to community groups and councillor training. The RFO was asked to make other minor amendments. The revised draft budget would be presented to the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee.

8) Grant Awards

- a. Members consider grant awards to local organisations. It was **RESOLVED** to make the following awards:

Applicant	Purpose	Amount £
Holy Trinity Church	To support maintenance of the green in the town centre	500
Much Wenlock Festival	Towards the cost of running the festival in June 2022	500
Wenlock Olympian Games Live Arts Festival	To pay for membership of the British and International Federation of Festivals and towards annual insurance	465
Much Wenlock First Responders	Towards running costs for the response car	500
Much Wenlock Scouts	Towards cost of replacement cladding for the Scout hut	450
Wenlock Clickers	To assist with venue hire and additional equipment	226
Much Wenlock Young Farmers	Towards room hire costs	100
Royal British Legion	Annual poppy wreaths	50
TOTAL		2,791

- b. It was **RESOLVED** to approve a donation of £250 to the Wenlock Herald to support publication of the Town Council's regular contribution to the magazine.

9) Christmas Lights Switch-on

It was **RESOLVED** to allocate up to £500 from Town Celebrations budget to the Christmas lights switch-on event on 25th November.

10) Guildhall

Members noted that when the cupola had been removed for renovation it had been found that the supporting base was in extremely poor condition and it was likely that additional, unplanned work would be required. The contractor was investigating further.

11) Property Working Group

Members of the Property Working Group would be meeting later in the week and would provide a report at the next meeting.

12) Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 23rd November 2021 at 7.00pm.

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.

13) Internal Audit

Members considered quotations for this year's internal audit. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint DM Payroll Services to carry out the internal audit for 2021/22 at a cost of £600.

14) Arrangements for Year End Close-down of Accounts and Ongoing Support

Members considered arrangements for ongoing support and the year-end close-down of the accounts. It was **RESOLVED** to take out a three year contract with Rialtas Business Solutions for support services for the accounting package and year-end closedown of the accounts at a cost of £809 for the first year, with subsequent discounts being offered annually.

15) Security Alarm Maintenance and Monitoring

Members considered quotations for the maintenance and monitoring of the security alarms in the Corn Exchange and Guildhall. It was **RESOLVED** to award the contract for maintenance and monitoring of the security alarms at the Corn Exchange and Guildhall to Security Wise at a cost of £230 per site per year.

16) Guildhall Repairs

- a. Members noted repairs required to a window frame at the rear of the building, which had been identified by the contractors undertaking the work to the cupola and the Shropshire Council Conservation Officer. **It was RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Clerk to negotiate with Croft Building & Conservation Ltd the price for repairs to the cill and painting of the window to a maximum of £580.**
- b. Members noted the poor condition of a beam at the rear of the building. The Conservation Officer had advised that a structural engineer’s report was required and the Clerk was obtaining quotations for a report.

17) Replacement Street Lights

It was RESOLVED to approve the quotation submitted by E.ON to replace the street light outside 10 Swan Meadow at a cost of £849.82 and to install a replacement street light in Queen Street at the junction with Back Lane at a cost of £1,152.34 (new connection).

18) Cemetery Maintenance

Members considered a proposal to change the grass cutting regime at the old cemetery and costs arising.

It was RESOLVED to maintain the current grass cutting regime of a 3 weekly cut to a height of 1 inch, but that Councillor Atherton would explore other options more fully.

It was RESOLVED to approve the quotation from Steve Burton for the following work:

- **Trim top and sides of ivy on boundary walls and dividing wall in the cemetery late winter** £280
- **Remove self-set ash and similar in the bed along the entrance road** £ 50
- **Cut back hedge and tree branches to fence between allotments and cemetery** £300
- **Rough cut wild flower circles ad rake away cuttings in late August** £ 90

19) Winter Floral Displays

It was RESOLVED to approve the quotation of £280 from Abbey Nursery for the winter floral displays in the town.

20) Linden Lodge

Members considered the report dated 5th October 2021 from the letting agent for Linden Lodge.

It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Will Winton for repairs to the garden fence in the amount of £145.

Members noted that quotations were being obtained for work to the chimney and window latches.

21) Mary Webb Room Rental

Members noted that arrangements were in progress for rental of the Mary Webb room.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....