

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
meeting held at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 23rd November 2021

Present:

Cllrs. John O’Dowd, Marcus Themans, Robert Toft, Daniel Thomas

In attendance:

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

1) Apologies

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the following apology: Cllr Mike Atherton – unwell

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 19th October 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. The Clerk advised that she had met a structural engineer at the Guildhall the previous day and was awaiting further quotations for a structural survey. Despite contacting 13 structural engineers, responses had been slow and limited. A local roofing contractor had inspected the chimney of Linden Lodge in connection with a damp issue but could see no fault with the chimney capping or flashing or any missing tiles. The Clerk would check the file for any recent work to the chimney.

The Clerk and RFO were asked to press on with review and separation of the gas supply for 2 Burgage Way.

Members **NOTED** the report.

6) Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. She noted that the grant awards had all been paid and thanks had been received from the Much Wenlock Festival, the First Responders, Scouts, Wenlock Clickers and Wenlock Olympian Live Arts Committee. Thanks had also been received for the donation to the Wenlock Herald. As at the end of October income was at 96.5% of the annual budget with expenditure to the same date 22.4% under budget for the time of year. However, there were significant expenses still to come, including £12,000 towards the Gaskell Recreation Ground, paid on 4th November, £18,580 towards the library and £1,939 for eye bolt testing for the Christmas lights. Members **NOTED** the report.
- b. Members **NOTED** the balance sheet as at 31st October 2021.
- c. Members **NOTED** the income and expenditure to 31st October 2021.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 31st October 2021. **It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations to 31st October 2021.**
- e. **It was RESOLVED to retrospectively approve payments from 20th October 2021 to date.**

7) 2022/23 Budget Setting

Members considered the second draft of the budget, incorporating changes agreed at the last meeting. The budget for grants to community groups had been increased. Costs for 10 High Street were included. The RFO explained that the budget headings for Guildhall income had been changed to better describe the various income streams. Guildhall exhibitions related to sales from the changing, monthly exhibitions.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the revised draft budget to full Council.

8) Tree pit for Christmas tree in the High Street

Members considered an approach regarding the installation of a tree pit with an electrical connection for a Christmas tree at the Gaskell corner end of the High Street. It was noted that this year trees had been erected and decorated with lights in the two planters at the end of the High Street.

It was RESOLVED to consider the matter early in 2022 when Councillors had had an opportunity to review this year's display and the desirability of a new tree pit.

9) Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 18th January 2022 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.

10) Mary Webb Room Rental

Members noted that nothing further had been heard from the prospective tenant despite repeated attempts to contact her.

It was RESOLVED that if no positive response were received from the prospective tenant by the end of the week it would be assumed that she had no interest in proceeding and officers would re-advertise the Mary Webb room for rental.

11) Guildhall Cupola Repairs

Members noted that the contractor and Conservation Officer had identified that further repairs were necessary to the base of the Guildhall cupola and considered quotations provided.

It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Croft Building & Conservation for option B, repairs to the whole of the base, at a cost of £12,772.42.

12) Property Working Group

Members considered a report from the Property Working Group and work required to Council owned properties.

It was RESOLVED to make the following recommendations to full Council:

a. Guildhall

That the Council

- i. Commits to the full repair of the Guildhall
- ii. Engages with the Shropshire Council Conservation Officer with regard to renovation work.
- iii. Appoints a professional fund raiser to raise funds for the necessary renovation.
- iv. Checks the VAT position arising from the above.

b. Corn Exchange

That the Council commits to the full repair of the Corn Exchange.

c. Cemetery Chapel

That the Council obtains a condition report for the building.

d. 10 High Street

That the Council approves the recommendations made in the confidential report.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

Signed.....

Chairman

Date.....