

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
 meeting held at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 at 7.00 pm on Thursday, 22nd March 2022

Present:

Cllrs. David Fenwick, Wilf Grainger, John O'Dowd, Daniel Thomas, Duncan White.

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Diane Barlow – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), Cllr William Benbow.

1) Apologies

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following apology: Councillor Marcus Themans – 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 20th January 2022 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.

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

6) Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. She advised that items to be financed by the Welcome Back Fund had been ordered and the planter was already in place. The payment of £5,776.68 had been received from Shropshire Council on 1st March. The RFO was preparing for the financial year-end and the closedown would be undertaken remotely by Rialtas on 5th May. The end of year internal audit was scheduled for 10th May. Income to 28th February was £272,574, 12.37% above budget for the time of year. Expenditure for the same period was £221,414, 15.1% below budget for the time of year. Large invoices from Shropshire Council for the library and RMW for the Christmas lights removal had now been received and paid. The RFO was forecasting a small underspend for the 21/22 financial year as a whole. Members **NOTED** the report.
- b. Members **NOTED** the balance sheet as at 28th February 2022.
- c. Members **NOTED** the income and expenditure to 28th February.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 28th February 2022. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 28th February 2022.
- e. It was **RESOLVED** to approve payments from 21st January 2022 to date.

7) Interim Internal Audit Report

Councillors reviewed the report from the interim internal audit carried out on 18th January 2022. It was noted that the reinstatement value insured for the Memorial Hall had been increased as specified by the internal auditor. There had been no additional charge from the insurer for this increase. It was **RESOLVED** to note the interim internal audit report and action taken and to refer the report to full Council for approval.

8) Reserves and Virements

Councillors considered virements between budget headings as recommended by the RFO.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the virements between budget headings within the financial year 2021/22 as recommended by the RFO in her report.

Councillors reviewed the Council's earmarked reserves and considered recommendations by the RFO. **It was RESOLVED to approve the transfers to reserves recommended by the RFO in her report.**

9) Financial Risk and Health & Safety Evaluation

Members reviewed and **RESOLVED to approve the updated internal Financial Risk and Health & Safety Evaluation.**

10) Asset Register

Members reviewed and **RESOLVED to approve the asset register as at 31st March 2022.**

11) Cemetery Fees

Members reviewed current cemetery fees and considered amendments to the fees for 2022/23. It was proposed that non-residents of the parish should be charged double the fees for residents for all interment costs. **It was RESOLVED to approve the Cemetery fees proposed by the Town Clerk and RFO with effect from 1st April 2022.**

12) Analysis of Residents' Survey Forms

Members considered arrangements for the analysis of the paper versions of the residents' survey forms. It was noted that the electronic forms had already been analysed. **It was RESOLVED to arrange for the Administrative Assistant to undertake the analysis of the paper survey forms as paid overtime.**

It was RESOLVED to approve an amount of £250, to be taken from the contingency budget, for any other expenses associated with preparations for the Examination in Public of the Draft Local Plan. Any expenditure was to be agreed with the Mayor and RFO prior to being incurred.

13) Guildhall Cupola and Window Repairs

Members noted that the work on the cupola was scheduled to finish during the current week.

14) New Strategy for Shropshire Council Libraries

Members considered information regarding the new strategy for Shropshire Council Libraries. It was noted that this was expected to have little impact on Much Wenlock Library.

15) Welcome to Shropshire Kingfisher Visitor Guide

Members considered advertising to promote Much Wenlock in the Shropshire Kingfisher Visitor Guide, combined hard copy and online versions. **It was RESOLVED to commission a half-page advertisement and to approach the publisher with a budget of £250.**

16) Mayor's Evensong

Members noted that a Mayor's Evensong had been arranged at Holy Trinity Church for Sunday, 1st May. **It was RESOLVED to allocate a budget of £300 for the event.**

17) Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 24th May 2022 at 7.00pm at the Guildhall.

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.

18) Future Use of 10 High Street

Members noted that a proposal for the future use of the Guildhall had been withdrawn.

19) Structural Engineer's Report for Guildhall

- a. Members considered the structural engineer's report on the support beam at the rear of the Guildhall and noted recommendations for work required to the beam and yew hedge.
- b. **It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should make arrangements for the work with an appropriate contractor within a budget of £5,303.**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to reduce the height of the yew hedge at the rear of the Guildhall to the level of the lead ledge for the length of the building, removing the sections of hedge above the ground floor windows completely and leaving columns of hedge, within a budget of £300.**

20) Property Working Group

Members considered a report from the Property Working Group. The situation with regard to the tenancy of 2 Burgage Way and preparations for sale were noted.

21) Electrical Report for 10 High Street

Members considered proposals for electrical work to 10 High Street. **It was RESOLVED to approve the quotation provided by DLM Electrical Contractors in the amount of £1,620 + VAT.**

It was RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue past 9pm.

22) Interim Visit Report for 2 Burgage Way

Members considered the interim visit report for 2 Burgage Way, dated 28th January 2022. Members noted that a repair had already been commissioned to the French door. **It was RESOLVED to arrange a repair to the velux window in the living room but to undertake no work to the brickwork along the entrance path for the time being.**

23) Guildhall Fire Alarm

Members considered information regarding the Guildhall fire alarm. **It was RESOLVED to commission RMW Electrical Services to undertake remedial works required to the alarm system and emergency lighting at a cost of £288.04 +VAT . It was RESOLVED to seek quotations for a new digital alarm system.**

24) Legionella Risk Assessment

Members considered the need for a legionella risk assessment for the Guildhall and quotations to hand. **It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Clira Water Hygiene in the amount of £180 + VAT for a legionella risk assessment of the Guildhall.**

25) Cemetery Grounds Maintenance

It was RESOLVED to approve an increase in the cost of cemetery grounds maintenance in the amount of £40 per month due to the increase in fuel costs.

26) Christmas Lighting

Members considered a proposal regarding a donation towards Christmas lighting in the town and provision of the Christmas tree at the end of Sheinton Street for the festive season.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council accept with thanks a donation of around £1,000 from the Much Wenlock Christmas Lights Fund towards the town's festive lights display and take on responsibility for the ongoing provision, installation and dressing of the Christmas tree located at the corner of Sheinton Street, making use of lights to be provided with the donation.

27. HR Support Service

Members noted that the Council's current contract for HR support and employment law advice was due to expire on 26th April 2022 and considered quotations for the future provision of HR support.

It was RESOLVED to accept the proposal from Telford & Wrekin HR and to take out a three-year contract for HR advisory services, at a year one cost of £1,600 + VAT.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....