

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
meeting held at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock
at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 24th January 2023

Present:

Cllrs. Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans, Linda West, Duncan White (in the chair).

In attendance:

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

1. Apologies

None.

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 held on 22nd November 2022 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.

5. Town Clerk's report

The Clerk provided a written and verbal report. **It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk's report be NOTED.**

6. Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. She reported that the transitional rate review had now been completed by Shropshire Council. In previous years this had been a statutory scheme but from 2022/3 was not. Shropshire Council had confirmed that the rate relief was no longer applicable to precepting authorities and, therefore, that no discount would be applied to the Guildhall rates.

The internal audit had been undertaken by DM Payroll Services on 12th January and the audit had gone well.

Income to 31st December 2022 was £51,828 excluding precept, which was 29% above budget for the time of year. Expenditure for the same period was £194,881, which was 5.68% below budget for the time of year but the invoice for the library service was still awaited.

Members noted the report.

- b. Members noted the balance sheet as at 31st December 2022.
- c. Members noted the income and expenditure to 31st December 2022.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 31st December 2022. **It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations to 31st December 2022.**
- e. **It was RESOLVED to approve payments from 23rd November 2022 to date.**

7. Interim Internal Audit

Members reviewed the Interim Internal Audit report from the inspection carried out on 16th January 2023. All was in order and no action was required. Thanks were expressed to the RFO and Clerk.

Councillors requested that Officers consider the need and options for an additional bank account to manage risk associated with increased funds expected from the sale of 2 Burgage Way.

8. Financial Risk Assessment

Members reviewed the financial risk assessment and noted amendments.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Council's Financial Risk Assessment, as amended.

9. Corn Exchange – Gate Brackets

Members noted that a safety concern had been raised about the risk from disused gate brackets projecting from pillars at the front of the Corn Exchange.

It was RESOLVED to remove the projecting gate brackets on the Corn Exchange, top and bottom, to file down any remaining metal and to retain the brackets removed, in accordance with the requirements of the Shropshire Council Conservation Officer.

10. The Guildhall Project – Renovation and Future Use

- a. Members noted that repairs to the beam at the rear of the Guildhall had been carried out and that the contractors would return to infill the gaps to the render panel around the new beam with lime plaster.
- b. Members received a report on the meeting with Greenwood Projects held on 10th January 2023. The consultant had recommended seeking additional funding for the viability study from the National Heritage Lottery Fund. No work should begin on the feasibility study until all attempts to secure funding for the study had been completed. It was noted that each funder had its own rules relating to procurement and procedure and the Council would need to comply with these.

11. Olympian Trail Interpretation Panels

It was noted that the damaged Olympian Trail interpretation panel at the Gaskell corner had been; no design had been found on the underside. The Wenlock Olympian Society had offered to apply for a National Lottery Awards for All grant to provide funding for new interpretation panels and possibly other items, such as new leaflets.

It was RESOLVED to support an application by the Wenlock Olympian Society to the National Lottery for grant funding to replace the Olympian Trail interpretation panels and provide other related items.

12. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 21st March 2023 at 7.00pm at The Corn Exchange.

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. Pension Actuarial Valuation

Members noted the Shropshire County Pension Fund Actuarial Valuation for the Town Council dated 31st March 2022 and the employer contribution requirements for the coming three years.

14. 2 Burgage Way

Members reviewed progress with the sale of 2 Burgage Way.

15. 10 High Street

Members noted that the contractor commissioned to undertake the refurbishment work at 10 High Street had withdrawn due to repeated difficulties associated with arranging access to the building. **It was RESOLVED to seek further quotations for the refurbishment work.**

16. Legionella Monitoring

Members considered quotations for regular legionella risk monitoring at the Guildhall.

It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Graham for monthly legionella monitoring at the Guildhall.

17. St Mary's Toilets

Members considered options and quotations to hand for reconfiguring the public toilets in St Mary's car park. Members highlighted the need to upgrade toilet facilities at both St Mary's and Queen Street, which might include reconfiguring the layout. Disabled toilet facilities should be provided in both locations.

It was RESOLVED to investigate options for improving public toilet facilities at both St Mary's car park and Queen Street with the involvement of architects or builders, as appropriate.

18. Kingfisher Visitor Guide

Members considered a quotation for an advertisement in the 2023 Kingfisher Visitor Guide. **It was RESOLVED not to place an advertisement in the 2023 Kingfisher Shropshire Guide.**

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....