

# 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, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023

**Present:** Cllrs. Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans and Duncan White.

**In attendance:** Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Diane Barlow – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

## 1. Apologies

None at the time of the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillor Toon subsequent to the meeting.

## 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 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.**

## 5. Town Clerk's report

Members noted the Clerk's written and verbal report on action taken since the last meeting.

**It was RESOLVED to ask a pest control company to inspect the Guildhall posts and give advice on treatment of the infestation.**

Members noted that measures should also be taken in due course to divert water away from the base of the posts.

## 6. Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. She advised that all agreed grant awards had been paid at the beginning of November and the Town Council had received several thank you letters. In addition to those received by post, thanks had been received by email from The Friendly Transport Service, Much Wenlock First Responders, Northgate Swimming Club, Shropshire Roots Brotherhood and Much Wenlock Festival.

Income to 31<sup>st</sup> October was £56,993 (excluding precept, income from grant awards and proceeds from property sales), which was 70.2% above budget for the time of year. This income figure also included the refund from SSE Swalec for street light electricity charges. Expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> October was £158,709, which was 11.36% below budget for the time of year, although there were large invoices for the Christmas light installation and Library Service expected soon.

- b. Members noted the balance sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.
- c. Members noted the income and expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023. **It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.**
- e. **It was RESOLVED to approve payments from 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to date.**

## 7. 2024/25 Budget

Members reviewed the second draft of the 2024/25 budget and considered amendments. Having taken advice, the RFO reported that staff time spent on work for the Gaskell Charity would be best shown as a note to the accounts. The RFO was asked to incorporate agreed changes in the budget. Members agreed to hold an additional meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> December to review the amended draft.

## 8. Town Council Insurance

- a. Members noted the updated reinstatement values for the Town Council's properties, provided by Alpha Chartered Surveyors.

- b. Members considered the revised insurance premium from Zurich which was based on the updated reinstatement values. **It was RESOLVED to accept the additional charge of £2,402.88 from Zurich for the 2023/24 insurance policy to take into account the revised reinstatement values for the Town Council's properties.**

#### 9. Grant Award Acknowledgements

Members noted thank you letters for Town Council grant awards from Wenlock Olympian Games Arts Sub-Committee, Holy Trinity Bell Restoration Appeal and Much Wenlock Windmill Trust.

#### 10. The Guildhall Project

Members noted that there had been a pop-up Guildhall consultation event in the Square on Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> November. It was disappointing that the consultant from Focus had been unable to attend due to an injury and nobody else from the consultancy had been available. Councillor White had provided a gazebo and Councillors Fenwick, Crooke-Williams and Benbow had staffed the stall, engaging with the public and distributing flyers.

A meeting with the consultancies Greenwoods and Lathams was scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

#### 11. Corn Exchange Decoration

Members considered the condition of the ground floor of the Corn Exchange and maintenance required. The Town Handyman had washed down the walls and ceiling which had improved the walls somewhat but had little effect on the ceiling. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotations for repainting the ceiling, deep cleaning the floor tiles and cleaning the walls.

#### 12. Public Toilets

- a. Members noted that reconfiguration work to the public toilets in St Mary's car park was scheduled to commence on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> November. It was hoped that the work would be completed during that week but this was dependent on supply of parts. The Christmas Fayre Committee had been advised. A notice would be displayed on the building with directions to alternative toilet provision at Queen Street. An official opening of the refurbished facilities would be considered when the work was completed.
- b. Members considered improvements required to the public toilets at Queen Street. **It was RESOLVED to seek sponsorship for some improvements. It was RESOLVED to engage EW Humphries to carry out electrical work to upgrade the consumer units and repair the supply to the hand driers at a cost of £1,336.19 including VAT.** It was noted that this price would not cover any other repairs found to be necessary during testing.

#### 13. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be an extraordinary meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December at 6.00pm, followed by a scheduled meeting on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 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.

#### 14. Rental of 10 High Street

Members noted an update on the marketing of 10 High Street for rental. **It was RESOLVED to proceed with the prospective tenant on the terms proposed.**

#### 15. Gaskell Recreation Ground

There had been no response from Shropshire Council to the Town Council's most recent communication.

#### 16. Much Wenlock Museum

There had been no response from Shropshire Council to the Town Council's most recent communication.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signed.....  
Chairperson

Date.....