



LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 10th December 2019

To: All Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee:
Councillors Murdoch (Chair), Marshall (Vice Chair), Bartlett, Mr P Davies,
Marsh, Norman, Rumsey, Sutcliffe, Thomas and Williams.
(Copies to other Councillors for information)

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** to be held on **Monday 16th December 2019** commencing at **19:00 hours** in the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

Paul Russell
TOWN CLERK

AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Town Clerk as it is usual for the grounds upon which apologies are tendered also to be recorded. Under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence are acceptable.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it.
- 3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**
To consider requests for dispensations (must be notified in writing).
- 4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (maximum 15 minutes)**
To receive questions and statements from members of the public as provided for in Standing Orders.
- 5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 28th October 2019.
- 6. CLERK'S REPORT**
To receive the Clerk's Report on matters outstanding that may not appear on the agenda.



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FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

7. FINANCIAL AND COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) **Financial Report** – To consider the financial report and balances sheet attached up to the end of November 2019 (Month 8).
- (b) **Outstanding Accounts for Payment** – A list of accounts paid relating to the months of November and December 2019 to date will be presented at the meeting.
- (c) **Committee Report** – Please see the attached Committee update report.

8. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Certain items are expected to include the consideration of exempt information and the Finance Committee is, therefore, recommended to resolve "That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed below, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information".

- (a) **Grants Report** – No grant requests have been received.
- (b) **Staff Report** – To receive a verbal report at the meeting.
- (c) **Budget Report** – To consider the attached consultation report.
- (d) **CAB Update** – Please see the attached update.
- (e) **Heritage High Streets Draft proposal** – To note the draft proposal.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee will be held on Monday 24th February 2020 at 19:00 at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 28th October 2019 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Murdoch (Chair), Marshall (Vice-Chair), Bartlett, Davies, Marsh, Norman, Rumsey, Sutcliffe (8.17pm), Thomas and Williams.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk.

FG21/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Sutcliffe who would be arriving late.

FG22/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Cllr Norman – Shopmobility
- Cllr Rumsey – Shopmobility
- Cllr Thomas – Shopmobility

FG23/19 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There had been no requests for dispensations received.

FG24/19 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

FG25/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 2nd September 2019 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

Disappointment was expressed regarding the turnout of Councillors at the Civic Service on Sunday 27th October 2019.

FG26/19 CLERK'S REPORT

- (a) **Additional Grant Request** – Committee agreed to consider the request received to support the Community Self Build Agency that are responsible for developing the new flats being built at Waterworks Lane.
- (b) **Climate Change** – The Committee recommended that the Climate Change actions should be included in the revised Corporate Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan.
- (c) **Polish Remembrance Service** – Committee noted that this would take place on Sunday 3rd November 2019 at 12 noon.

- (d) **HALC Update** – Committee noted the update received from HALC including the HALC Conference and AGM taking place on Saturday 23rd November 2019 and the training update.
- (e) **Climate Change** – Committee noted the information received regarding the Great Collaboration. Local meetings were being held at:
- Hereford, Monday November 18th
 - Bromyard, Wednesday November 28th
 - Ledbury, Monday January 20th
- (f) **LCR Article** – Committee noted that an article regarding Leominster was included in the autumn edition of this sector magazine.

FG27/19 FINANCIAL AND COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) **Financial Report** – Committee noted that the Income and Expenditure report would be sent out to all Members following the meeting. A six month healthcheck had been undertaken on Thursday 24th October 2019 and the Town Clerk apologised for not having collated the relevant reports ready to present to Committee.
- (b) **Outstanding Accounts for Payment** – Committee ratified the payments relating to the months of September 2019 amounting to £2,437.53 and October 2019 to date amounting to £33,952.22, inclusive of VAT.
- (c) **Committee Report** – Committee considered the Committee Update Report and, following discussion, **RESOLVED:**
- To note the report;
 - To investigate grant opportunities to help fund solar panels on Council property including the Secret Garden toilets, the new depot and the public conveniences;
 - To note that the LARC AGM would be held on 31st October 2019 at 6pm at Grange Court;
 - To note that Herefordshire Council would be undertaking a housing needs survey as part of the Core Strategy review;
 - To note that the Polish Friendship initiative would be implemented once a new Town Clerk had been appointed;
 - To delegate authority to the Budget task & Finish Group to review the legal documentation for the new depot as part of its duties;
 - To take any appropriate action as required to address the comments made by the External Auditor following the completion of the Council's external audit.

FG28/19 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

As certain items were expected to include the consideration of exempt information and the Finance & General Purposes Committee **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed below, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of, Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(a) Grants Report – Following discussion, Committee **RESOLVED** to allocate the following grants:

- Polish Memorial Service – £200;
- Free parking, Small Business Saturday – £1,079 subject to the promotion of the free parking, feedback on the effect the free parking had made on the footfall in the town and spend in local businesses. The result of the feedback would influence any decision made by the Town Council in 2020. An enquiry would be made regarding the cost of free parking from 10am to 2pm;
- Shopmobility – £1,000;
- Everybody Dance – £982;
- Boots for the self-builders at Waterworks Lane – £270

Committee **RESOLVED** to request that in future all grant recipients provide feedback to the Town Council on the projects funded and ensure that the Town Council is mentioned in all publicity.

(b) Recruitment Report – Following discussion, Committee noted the report presented. The interviewing panel made up of Cllrs Herschy, Murdoch and Thomas would be shortlisting for the position of Town Clerk within the week and invitations to interview would be emailed to the shortlisted candidates. Town Clerk interviews would be held on Thursday 14th November 2019.

It was noted that the recruitment process to appoint a Financial Assistant would begin week commencing 4th November 2019.

(c) Budget Report – Committee noted the draft budget developed by the Budget Task & Finish Group. It was agreed to continue to review the draft budget to try to identify additional savings, and to carry out the annual budget consultations on the Market during November 2019.

(d) Response to Complaints – Following consideration Committee **RESOLVED** to respond to the three complains as recommended, subject to the amendments agreed and confirmation of the complainants referred to in the final complaint.

It was agreed to appoint a panel to address potential future queries regarding these complaints. Cllrs Bartlett, Davies, Murdoch and Thomas were appointed to this panel.

FG29/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Committee noted that the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee would be held on Monday 16th December 2019 at 19:00 at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:54pm.

CHAIR:

DATE:



Finance Committee

Date: 10th December 2019

Title: Committee Report

Purpose of the Report: To provide Members with a full report relating to all current Committee matters.

Contact Officers: Paul Russell

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the report be noted;
- 1.2 To consider the lease for the proposed Depot, if available;
- 1.3 To consider agreeing the installation of Wi-Fi for the holiday flat.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report updates members on Committee matters and identifies items that require a decision.
- 2.2 The responsibilities of the Finance & General Purposes Committee are contained within the Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation. These include monitoring the Council's finances, recommending the annual budget and overseeing project development.

3. COMMITTEE REPORT

Janice & Peter McCaull Trust

- 3.1 The Trust has received the legal from Wellers Hedleys. The Trust will meet in the New Year to discuss the next steps.

Secret Garden

- 3.2 Works are progressing on the toilet unit. The project has halted due to the many events being held in December including the Lights Switch On and Through the Wardrobe.

Budget Task & Finish Group

- 3.3 The Budget Task & Finish Group has completed a public consultation exercise. The report will be considered under Confidential Items. The final budget will be considered by Full Council at its meeting on Monday 27th January 2020 following final amendments.

Heritage High Street Action Zone Scheme

3.4 To note the following update:

- Leominster's full Delivery Outline for the High St Heritage Action Zone Scheme was submitted on 5th December 2019 and was due to be considered by a regional panel on 10th December 2019. Herefordshire Council is the lead applicant for the funding bid, however the delivery outline was developed in collaboration with Leominster Town Council (with input from the LTC Projects and Grants Officer) and with advice from Historic England.
- The delivery outline sets out the projects that will be taken forward, should Herefordshire Council be awarded the full amount of funding that has been applied for (see p27 for a project summary table). These projects appeared in the original Expression of Interest and have been selected for development because they meet the scheme criteria and Historic England funding requirements. The outline document describes the decision-making and delivery structures that will be required for the scheme, including representation from LTC and local residents on the scheme Steering Panel (see p16). It also includes a statement of community engagement – setting out the consultation requirements for each project (p20).
- It is a requirement of the HSHAZ scheme that a Cultural Programme is developed to complement the scheme projects. Additional funding is provided to support this and further details will be made available to all HSHAZ towns in Spring 2020.
- It is important to note that the Delivery Outline is not yet final, as the regional panel may request edits in advance of submission for national review on 20th December 2019. We should receive notification of the results of the national review by 20th January 2020. It is important that the content of the Delivery Outline remains confidential until this notification has been received.
- A briefing will be provided at the Full Council meeting on Monday 27th January 2020, as by this time the final delivery outline will be available and we should have received notification of the decisions made by the national review panel.

Bank Mandate

3.5 To note that a new mandate will be submitted to the Co-operative Bank in January 2020 to include the new Town Clerk Designate and the Finance Assistant. The current Clerk will be removed.

Ethical Standards

3.6 A request has been submitted to NALC to develop an ethical standard to be included in the Council's Financial Regulations. The request was submitted via HALC, the County Association. To date no further information or update has been received.

Climate Change

3.7 The following events have been organised by the Great Collaboration to discuss a Climate Change Action Plan:

- Ledbury 20.01.20: 7pm - 9pm (arrival from 6:30pm The Feathers)
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-great-collaboration-ledbury-tickets-76423226929>
- Leominster – February 6th 2020, The Talbot Hotel
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-great-collaboration-leominster-tickets-85478298893>

Depot Update

- 3.8 The draft lease has been submitted to Lloyds Cooper LLP for review. Subject to receipt of additional information, Committee is requested to consider the advice received from the Solicitor.

Grants for Renewable Energy

- 3.9 Information regarding this grant is outlined below and can be found by following this link: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/MarRE>

- The Marches Renewable Energy (MarRE) project is accepting formal expressions of interest. MarRE is a grant scheme part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. The project will run for two and half years from 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2021.
- Eligible applicants can apply for a 50% grant towards the installation of eligible renewable technologies on their premises. Grants will only be awarded for new installations at existing premises. Retrospective applications are not eligible and no work should start until written approval is agreed.

Who can apply

Eligible applicants include:

- Local Authorities
- Statutory and non-statutory public funded organisations/bodies
- Higher and Further Education Institutions
- Voluntary/community organisations
- Private sector companies
- Registered charities
- Not-for-profit organisations

What technologies will the grant cover?

The MarRE project covers a range of technologies including:

- Wind
- Solar
- Aerothermal - including air source heat pumps
- Geothermal - including ground source heat pumps
- Hydrothermal and ocean energy
- Hydropower
- Biomass
- Landfill gas
- Sewage treatment plant gas and biogases

How much you can apply for

The grant amount is for up to 50% of eligible installation works. There is no maximum amount. Installations are expected to be in the range of 4 to 200kWp. Installations larger than 200kWp will not be considered for this project.

- 3.10 Subject to the results of the budget consultation a strategy will need to be developed by the Town Council as to how it aims to combat climate change and invest in its estate.

LARC

- 3.11 No further update has been received

Small Business Saturday

- 3.12 SBS went very well. Businesses have reported good sales from it. There was good customer feedback and the car parks filled up. There was some evidence that customers definitely spend longer in town when car parking is free.

SERVANTS QUARTERS WI-FI REPORT – DEC 2019

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Servants Quarters holiday let hosted its first paying guests in June 2019. Feedback from guests during the first six months of operation has been very positive. Requests for additional facilities or services have generally been minor and have been addressed with minimal additional cost to the Council.
- 1.2 Internet access at the Servants Quarters is currently limited to a single hard-wired access point that feeds the television in the Butler's Parlour. Feedback from paying guests indicates a high level of demand for Wi-Fi provision in the property. Wi-Fi access is offered as standard in most accommodation advertised via the Air BnB booking service.
- 1.3 Extending Leominster Town Council's existing Wi-Fi provision to the Servants Quarters presents security risks, as it leaves the Council's network open to misuse and malicious attack. Instead, the Council has been advised to install an independent Wi-Fi network, specifically for the use of guests staying in the Servants Quarters.
- 1.4 There is currently no telephone line servicing the Servants Quarters, so installation of a new line will be necessary to enable Wi-Fi provision.

2. WIFI INSTALLATION OPTIONS

- 2.1 The following quotes have been received for line installation and Wi-Fi provision:
 - BT will install a telephone line free of charge, providing that the Council take out a BT line rental and Wi-Fi package. The most cost-effective BT package (providing Wi-Fi speed of 35-36MB per second) will cost £24.99 per month, with an additional one-off set-up fee of £19.99. The total outlay over the life of the contract is expected to be £619.75.
 - Spitfire (Leominster Town Council's current telephone and internet provider) have quoted a cost of £38.50 per month (rolling contract) for line rental and Wi-Fi in the Servants Quarters. In addition to this, line installation from BT Openreach has been quoted at approximately £150.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That an independent Wi-Fi network is installed at the Servants Quarters.
- 3.2 That a BT service is secured at a total contract cost of £619.75 over a 24-month period.
- 3.3. That costs and supplier options are reviewed 12 months into the BT contract.