

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 2nd September 2019 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Murdoch (Chair), Bartlett, Davies, Marsh, Rumsey, Sutcliffe, Thomas and Williams.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk.

FG12/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Marshall and Norman.

FG13/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declaration of interest made.

FG14/19 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There had been no requests for dispensations received.

FG15/19 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

FG16/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 24th June 2019 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

FG17/19 CLERK'S REPORT

- (a) **Art Project Request** – Committee discussed supporting a new art project based primarily in Hereford and Leominster, exploring the work of Alfred Watkins, which was being developed by Salt Road. Following consideration, it was agreed to support the project providing resources such as meeting rooms, photocopying and promotion of the project through Council/TIC websites and social media accounts, provided the level of support was properly monitored.
- (b) **Funeral** – Committee noted that the funeral of ex-Mayor of Leominster, Brettina Meadows, would be held on 11th September at 9:00am at Hereford Crematorium.
- (c) **Polish Remembrance Service** – Committee noted that this would take place on Sunday 3rd November 2019 at 12 noon. This was an annual civic event and was now part of the civic calendar.

- (d) **Polish Friendship Initiative** – Committee noted that an initiative to develop a friendship with a town in Poland was currently being pursued. Following discussion Committee agreed to appoint Cllrs Bartlett and Rumsey to help develop this initiative alongside members of the local community.
- (e) **Precept Setting** – Council noted that it needed to start considering its forecast expenditure and set its precept requirements for the coming financial year. In line with previous years, Herefordshire Council had requested that the precept request for 2020/21 be submitted by 31st December 2019 together with the breakdown of expenditure. It was acknowledged that this would need to be extended until 27th January 2019 when the Town Council met.
- (f) **Communications & Events Committee** – Committee noted the request to revise the date of the next Committee meeting scheduled to take place on 18th September. Committee Members would be requested to consider moving this and future meeting dates to a Monday, Tuesday or Thursday.

FG18/19 FINANCIAL AND COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) **Financial Report** – Committee received the Income and Expenditure report presented. It was noted that a number of virements would be required from balances in due course.
- (b) **Outstanding Accounts for Payment** – Committee ratified the payments relating to the months of July 2019 amounting to £11,833.17 and August 2019 to date amounting to £62,581.01, inclusive of VAT.
- (c) **Revised Financial Regulations** – Committee considered the revised Financial Regulations drawn up by NALC. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED:**
- To recommend that the revised Financial Regulations be submitted to Full Council for adoption;
 - To request NALC to draw up a regulation regarding ethical standards in line with the Financial Regulations, to include reference to modern slavery and child labour;
 - To consider the ethical standard for inclusion in the Council's Financial Regulations once received.
- (d) **Committee Report** – Committee considered the Committee Update Report and, following discussion, **RESOLVED:**
- To note the report;
 - To review the membership of the LARC/Grange Court Task & Finish Group appointed at the next Full Council meeting to be held on 30th September 2019 due to the restricted availability of current appointees;
 - To appoint Cllrs Bartlett, Davies and Murdoch to the Budget Task & Finish Group to develop the 2020/21 Budget and update the Corporate Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan. An additional

Member from would be invited to sit on the Task & Finish Group at the Full Council meeting on 30th September 2019;

- To organise Code of Conduct training with the Herefordshire Council Monitoring Officer to take place prior to the Full Council meeting to be held on 25th November 2019 at 6pm;
- To note that the current vacancy on the Town Council would be filled by co-option at the Full Council meeting on 30th September 2019;
- To obtain further quotations to carry out a Housing Needs Survey to be undertaken in partnership with Herefordshire Council;
- To undertake a review of the Town Council's banking arrangements and obtain quotations from locally represented banks and the Unity Trust Bank to enable the future use of BACS payments.

FG19/19 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** – Committee noted that no grant applications had been received.
- (b) **CAB Report** – Committee noted the quarterly CAB report. It was agreed to request that an annual overview of the information be provided alongside the existing report and to ask CAB whether it would be in a position to provide support for EU citizens in the UK who were applying for settled status.
- (c) **Staff and Budget Report** – Committee discussed the Staff and Budget Report and, following discussion, **RESOLVED**:
- To note the report;
 - To note that the current Town Clerk would be retiring from Leominster Town Council on 31st March 2020;
 - To formally adopt the recruitment timetable. An initial advertisement would be developed and placed onto the SLCC and NALC websites followed by local advertisements;
 - To appoint an interviewing panel at the Full Council meeting on 30th September 2019;
 - To advertise the vacancy for a Financial Assistant as soon as possible;
 - To organise a meeting with Leominster Museum to discuss future arrangements. A Working Group would be appointed at the Full Council meeting on 30th September 2019;

- To ratify the continuation of the current agreement to provide a curator for 10 hours per week funded by the Town Council up until 31st March 2020;
- (Cllr Thomas left the meeting at 8:42pm)
- To arrange a meeting with the Council's contractor;
- To move forward with negotiations to secure a new depot on the Croft Business Park. A full report will be presented to Full Council at its meeting on 30th September 2019;
- To arrange a visit for Members to see the proposed depot building;
- To note the initial draft staffing budget proposals;
- To note the initial draft budget with an aim of presenting it for initial approval at the Full Council meeting to be held on 25th November 2019.

FG20/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Committee noted that the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee would be held on Monday 28th October 2019 at 19:00 at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:30pm.

CHAIR:

DATE: