

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: