

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 24th February 2020 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk and Town Clerk Designate.

FG39/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Marshall and Rumsey.

FG40/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Cllr Bartlett: Member of the Timebank
- Cllr Norman: Member of the Timebank
- Cllr Norman: Trustee of Leominster in Bloom.

FG41/19 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There had been no requests for dispensations received.

FG42/19 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present. No issues were raised

FG4319 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 16th December 2019 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

Committee noted that discussions were on-going with regard to Wi-Fi in the flat and Corn Square. Final options would be placed before Committee for consideration.

FG44/19 CLERK'S REPORT

Committee noted the following items:

- (a) **Complaints, Grange Open Space** – Committee noted that two complainants had indicated that they did not agree with the response to the complaint made in October 2019 and had requested that the matter be referred back to the Committee. Both complainants had been requested to identify the areas of the response they did not agree with prior to the Panel appointed being convened.

- (b) **Flooding Issues** – The Committee wished to record its thanks to the Council's Caretaker for all the work he had undertaken during the recent flooding.
- (c) **Museum Grant** – Committee noted that the Leominster Museum had underspent its grant awarded in 2019 by £407.22. This was due to the contractor waiving his costs. Following consideration, Committee **RESOLVED** to grant Leominster Museum permission to use the unspent grant funding to help towards the purchase of the Ivington Hoard.
- (d) **Payroll** – Committee noted that it was likely that the payroll contractor would discontinue its service in 2020. It was noted that investigations were on-going into a suitable alternative, including the option to purchase software and undertake payroll in-house.
- (e) **Reduction in the Ambulance Service** – Committee noted the response received from the West Midlands Ambulance Service regarding cost savings and the reallocation of its resources.

FG45/19 FINANCIAL AND COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) **Financial Report** – Committee considered the Financial Report and Balance Sheet up to the end of January 2020 (Month 10). Following discussion, it was agreed that the report be ratified.
- (b) **Outstanding Accounts for Payment** – Following consideration of the accounts for payment, Committee **RESOLVED** to ratify the payments relating to the months of January 2020 amounting to £6,674.09, inclusive of VAT, and February 2020 to date amounting to £43,282.57, inclusive of VAT.
- (c) **Risk Register** – Following consideration of the Council's Risk Register, Committee **RESOLVED** to recommending adoption by Full Council subject to the following amendments:
 - RR3 – Under controls and actions to add information regarding the Town Council's communications to inform residents;
 - RR10 – To note that this had been updated.
- (d) **Committee Report** – Committee considered the Committee Update Report and, following discussion, **RESOLVED**:
 - To note the report;
 - To recommend that Council renews its subscription to HALC and NALC at a cost of £2,413.99 + VAT for 2020/21 subject to the requested ethical standard for Financial Regulations being addressed and the reason why the recruitment of the post of Town Clerk had not been actioned;
 - To monitor the value for money provided by the HALC/NALC subscription and review it in February 2021;
 - To seek clarification on storage restrictions in the proposed Depot prior to signing the lease. It was noted that although the building had

suffered an ingress of water during the flooding it had not been serious;

- To ratify the removal of the lights in the trees in West Street;
- To support the provision of an additional CCTV camera in the Central car park following a request from Team Leominster;
- To ratify the Legionella training at a cost of £450 + VAT and to establish whether any other organisation wished to take advantage of the training;
- To provide a rent reduction to allotment holders that had been affected by the flooding over the past year as part of their 2020/21 allotment rent;
- To ratify the sponsorship of £500 to Leominster in Bloom for planting of the bee hive planter in Corn Square;
- To carry out the services to the two mowers by TH White Group at a cost of £825.66 for the Ransomes HR300 and £799.25 for the Ferris Zero Turn mower;
- To note the update regarding initial discussions with the National Trust regarding the Secret Garden.

FG46/19 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** – Following consideration of the grant report presented, Committee **RESOLVED**:
- To note and confirm the formal grant application from the LDCA for 2020/21. It was agreed to thank the Community Centre Manager for a very comprehensive application and update;
 - To award a grant of £907 to ECHO to fund the Timebank project subject to the application being amended, fully completed and signed. The award would be subject to the receipt of this information and ratification by Full Council
- (b) **Youth Report** – – Following consideration of the Youth Report presented, Committee **RESOLVED**:
- To allocate £995.67 from the 2019/20 Youth budget to support Dynamis Adventures to run weekly activities at Barons Cross from Easter to August 2020;
 - To allocate £750 from the 2019/20 Youth budget to fund three Wildplay Sessions on the Grange. These will be provided by Herefordshire Wildlife Trust;

- To allocate £1,000 from the 2019/20 Youth budget to support the Kids Kitchen Collective CIC to run six family cooking sessions at Leominster Children’s Centre;
- To review the allocation of the remaining £6,041.33 from the 2019/20 Youth budget at the Full Council meeting to be held on 30th March 2020.

(c) **Banking Report** – Following consideration of the banking report presented, Committee **RESOLVED** to delegate the consideration of the Town Council’s banking arrangements to the Budget Task & Finish Group to review all the options and make a recommendation to Full Council in due course. Cllrs Bartlett, Davies and Murdoch had been appointed to the Task & Finish Group.

(d) **CAB Report** – Following consideration of the CAB report presented, Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report subject to clarification as to whether the income gain achieved was on-going or one off payments.

(e) **Mayor Making 2020** – Committee noted the update on the preparations for Mayor Making and its associated costs. It was agreed to continue to negotiate with the appointed caterer on requirements.

(f) **Staff Report** – Following consideration of the Staffing Report presented, Committee **RESOLVED** to agree a date for the Personnel Sub-Committee to meet to discuss appraisals, job descriptions and Ellis Whittam, HR consultant to Leominster Town Council.

Committee further **RESOLVED** to increase the Financial Assistant’s hours from 12 to 18 per week commencing from 1st March 2020.

(g) **Hep B vaccinations for staff** – Following consideration this matter Committee **RESOLVED** to investigate accessibility to vaccinations further and would seek advice from Herefordshire Council and Balfour Beatty.

FG47/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Committee noted that the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee would be held on Monday 27th April 2020 at 19:00 at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 21:12pm.

CHAIR:

DATE: