



LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 13th December 2016

To: All Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee:
Councillors Marsh (Chair), Bartlett, Evans, Freedland, Mifflin, Norman, A
Pendleton, R Pendleton, Rosser and Rumsey.
(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 19th December 2016** commencing at **19:00 hours** in the Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP.

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 24th October 2016 (**attached**).



LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

6. FINANCIAL AND COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) **Financial Report** – To receive a verbal financial update report which will be presented at the meeting.
- (b) **Outstanding Accounts for Payment** – A list of outstanding accounts for payment for December 2016 to date will be presented to the meeting.
- (c) **Leominster Branding** – An update on the development of the Leominster Branding project will be provided at the meeting.
- (d) **Committee Report** – Please see the attached Committee update report.

7. 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) **Draft Budget** – Please see the attached first draft budget for information.
- (b) **Grant Applications** – To consider grant applications received. Please see attached report.
- (c) **Property Report** – An update report will be presented at the meeting.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee will be held on Monday 27th February 2016 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 24th October 2016 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Marsh (Chair), Bartlett, Mifflin, Norman, A Pendleton, R Pendleton, Rosser and Rumsey.

OFFICER PRESENT: Town Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT: Ward Councillor Stone.

FG11/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Evans (illness) and Freedland (illness).

FG12/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made:

- Cllr Norman: Member of Leominster Museum.

FG13/16 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations had been received.

FG14/16 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Cllr Stone congratulated the Mayor on a very successful and positive civic service held on Sunday 23rd October 2016.

FG15/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 27th June 2016 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

FG16/16 FINANCIAL AND COMMITTEE MATTERS

(a) **Financial Report** – Committee considered the financial report from April to June 2016. Following discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

- That the report be noted;
- That the quarter two payments made to date (including the total cost of purchase of 11 Corn Square for £283,239), amounting to £386,959 exclusive of VAT, be ratified;
- That the quarter two income received to date (including the PWLB advance of £350,000) amounting to £573,630 be ratified;
- That the current balance of £461,460.70 be noted;
- That the projected of approximately £7,000 be noted.

Committee raised no objection to the street trading request from the Morris Family to trade in Corn Square on Saturday 12th and 19th November and 3rd and 17th December 2016.

Following consideration of the expenditure related to open spaces Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- Request a meeting with Balfour Beatty and Herefordshire Council to discuss the revised Highway and Grounds Maintenance contract for 2017/18;
- Clarify whether spraying the highway, car parks and other areas formed part of the revised contract;
- Clarification on what would and would not be provided as part of the revised contract;
- Clarify who monitored the contract on behalf of Herefordshire Council.

(b) Outstanding Accounts for Payment – Committee considered the list of outstanding accounts for payment for October 2016 amounting to £48,915.76, inclusive of VAT, and **RESOLVED** that they be ratified.

(c) Extension of Referendum Principles – Committee considered the report which outlined the proposed referendum principles. It was noted that there was some flexibility within the principles to avoid a referendum, even if the precept was raised by more than either £5 or 2% to cover additional works, subject to agreements being reached with the Principal Authority

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to respond to the consultation as recommended, subject to a list of devolved services already taken on by Leominster Town Council being included.

It was further agreed to develop a formal response to the Boundary Commission on its proposals to review local parliamentary boundaries.

(d) Budget Sub-Committee Report – Committee considered the Budget Sub-Committee report which provided an update on discussions to date regarding the development of the 2017/18 budget. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the proposed timetable to develop the budget, a Corporate Strategy and an Action Plan as contained within the Sub-Committee's report be adopted.

(e) Committee Report – Committee considered the Committee report which provided an update on issues relating to the Town Council. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**:

- That the report be noted;
- That a request be submitted to Herefordshire Council to fund the public realm works being developed for Leominster town centre using some of the refund the Principal Authority had received from Amey following the relevant court action, as this money had previously been used for highway works;
- That further efforts be made to publicise the Destination Leominster branding project consultation to encourage a good response;

- That an update report regarding the Youth Services be provided when available;
 - That the asset transfers of the public conveniences be completed as soon as possible.
- (f) **Audit for Year Ended 31st March 2016** – Committee considered the Audit report and **RESOLVED** to adopt it and implement the actions recommended.

FG09/16 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) **Draft Budget** – Committee considered the Draft Budget Report which provided information regarding the development of the 2017/18 budget. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**:
- That the report be noted;
 - That Members submit proposals and suggestion for projects to the Town Clerk. These would then be considered and either included in the forthcoming budget or in the Corporate Plan for future consideration;
 - That the Lengthsman and P3 schemes costs be reviewed;
 - That options to develop open space income be developed;
 - That apprenticeship opportunities be developed.
- (b) **Grant Applications – Grant Applications** – Committee considered the Grant Report and, following discussion, **RESOLVED**:
- That the report be noted;
 - That the following shop front grants be awarded:
 - Just for You: £250;
 - Howard Moseley Butchers: £250.

Committee **RESOLVED** to allocate £250 to develop a Christmas Window Competition. Prized would be £125 for first prize, £75 second prize and £25 for third prize. The remaining £25 would be used to fund certificates and frames.

Committee **RESOLVED** to allocate £100 to Leominster News for Marketing and up to £400 for the purchase of a laptop, which would remain the property of Leominster Town Council but be used to collate the Leominster News.

Committee **RESOLVED** to allocate up to £400 to fund the Remembrance Sunday Parade. £200 would be provided initially with the remaining element of the grant being paid upon confirmation of final expenditure.

Committee **RESOLVED** grant permission to Leominster Museum to use its previous grant funding to meet the costs of an insulation test and essential follow up work.

- (c) **Property Report** – Committee considered the Property Report updating Committee on progress relating to 11 Corn Square and 17 West Street. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**:
- That the report be noted;
 - That work continues to develop proposals for 11 Corn Square overseen by the appointed Task & Finish Group;
 - That the sale of 17 West Street continue to be monitored.
- (d) **Personnel Report** – Committee considered the Personnel Report. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**:
- That the report be noted;
 - That the incremental increase of one spinal point for the Office Manager, Administration Assistant, Environmental Supervisor and TIC Assistant be approved;
 - That the draft job description and person specification for the Financial Assistant be approved.

FG10/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Committee noted that the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee will be held on Monday 19th December 2016 at 19:00 at the Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP.

There being no other business the Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8:40pm.

CHAIR:

DATE:



Finance Committee

Date: 19th October 2016

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.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report intends to update members of progress to date regarding various Committee related projects, outline decisions required and offer an opportunity for Members to question Officers regarding Council business.

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 budgets and overseeing project development.

2.3 Measures such as Key performance Indicators (KPIs) are being developed as part of the emerging Corporate Strategy. An initial version will be considered by Council at its meeting in January 2017, reviewed by F&GP in February 2017 and formally adopted in March 2017.

3. COMMITTEE REPORT

Public Realm

3.1 An update meeting was held with Balfour Beatty on Friday 2nd December 2016 to discuss, among other matters, the progress of the public realm options.

3.2 An initial draft consultation document is nearing completion and it is hoped that a draft version will be available by the meeting.

Destination Leominster

3.3 A further meeting to discuss Destination Leominster was held on Wednesday 23rd November 2016.

3.4 The meeting received updates on current project development including the Leominster Museum Trails of the Unexpected, the Footpaths Group, Festive Events in Leominster and the Great British High Street.

- 3.5 Results of the Great British High Street will be announced on 12th December 2016 and will be available at the meeting.
- 3.6 Presentations on the Hereford Courtyard collaboration opportunities, Leominster Branding, a call for community assets to be registered and the Saverne Twinning Association were also received. Discussions have now taken place between the Twinning Association and the Town Council regarding the support to be provided by the Council.
- 3.7 A further verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

Youth Provision

- 3.8 A new Service Level Agreement between HVOSS and Leominster Town Council has been received and reviewed. All the issues previously highlighted have now been addressed.
- 3.9 It is recommended that this be entered into for 2017/18 subject to the funding allocation being agreed as part of the budget. The service provides a valuable opportunity to engage with local youngsters in Leominster.

Past Mayoral Badges

- 3.10 The past Mayoral and Civic Award Badges have now been received.

Asset Transfers

- 3.11 The public convenience and Pavilion at The Grange has now formally been transferred. The Central car park public conveniences are currently in the process of being transferred and the asset transfer of the Bus Station Westbury Street conveniences has commenced.

Contract with Balfour Beatty

- 3.12 A meeting was held with Balfour Beatty to discuss the highways and grounds maintenance contract for 2017/18.
- 3.13 The value of the contract had been reduced by Herefordshire Council from £6.4 million to £5.8 million as part of the continued cost savings required.
- 3.14 The following elements were confirmed:
- As indicated previously an overview was provided of the public realm initial proposals. More work was required on the document but it was hoped that it would be available prior to Christmas;
 - There were no changes to street cleaning services as these were already operating at the minimum statutory requirement;
 - Bin emptying would hopefully be improved. Larger vehicles from 3.5 tonne to 5 tonnes had been purchased and efficiencies were already being achieved;
 - It was agreed to carry out a Leominster wide review to rationalise the litter bin provision between Leominster Town Council and Balfour Beatty. This would be followed up;

- Grounds and amenity cuts would be the same as in 2016 with 6 cuts being delivered throughout the season. This work was tendered on an annual basis and it was agreed to send the Town Council information relating to the possibility of it undertaking the contract in the future;
- No weed spraying would be carried out in 2017 in the town centre;
- There was a full time tree team now contracted who carried out tree maintenance throughout the year for BBLP;
- The road marking budgets and highway maintenance had been reduced;
- Fly tipping was a considerable drain on resources so a different approach was being developed.

Victorian Street Market

- 3.15 An update on the Christmas Window Competition and Chimney Sweep competition held on Saturday 10th December 2016 as part of the Victorian Street Market event will be provided.

Christmas Lights

- 3.16 The Christmas Lights have now been erected by Lite Ltd and seem to be working well. There have been some issues with timers but these are gradually being resolved. Due to the low consumption of the new LED lights if a timer fails the lights will override the timer and burn for 24 hours.

- 3.17 This is still a work in progress and ideas are being developed to make a greater impact in 2017 especially as the Town Council will have relocated to Corn Square.

Council Tax Referendum Principles

- 3.18 It was possible the provisional local government finance settlement might have been announced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) this week but this wasn't the case. It is now expected that this will take place on Thursday 15th December 2016.

Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill

- 3.19 On Tuesday the Cabinet Office (CO) published a draft Public Services Ombudsman Bill which will abolish the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman and the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and create a new Public Services Ombudsman; the new body will bring existing functions together with the aim of improving access to the Ombudsman's services by allowing for all complaints to be made with or without the help of a representative and in a variety of formats to meet the digital age, provide simpler access to individuals who believe that they have suffered injustice or hardship and share the learning from failures to improve services for everyone.
- 3.20 While the current LGO does not cover parish and town councils, it has long been NALC policy that its remit should be extended to cover the sector and the Bill proposes to do just this. NALC is in touch with both the CO and DCLG about the proposals especially the timescale as there are no details on this. Comments are welcome.