



HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY 17th December, 2018 at 6.30pm

FINANCE REPORT no. 31 (2018-19)

Present: Councillors;

T Allen, P Dutton, A Fleming, R Lewis (Chair), D Thomas, M Took, P Widdowson, D Wollweber.

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk), Cllr Jill Reece 1 member of the public.

REPORT

The Chair welcomed Cllr Reece to the meeting as an observer. Cllr Reece was not a member of the committee but was invited to attend to see if she would like to become a member in the future.

- 1) **Apologies.** Cllr K Prime
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** Non-pecuniary interests, Cllrs; Fleming, Lewis, Thomas, Took, Widdowson, Wollweber for items 6, 7 & 8 as they were Halesworth residents. In addition Cllr Wollweber for item 10. The Clerk confirmed that special dispensation would be required at the January monthly meeting to vote on the Precept for all Councillors resident in Halesworth.
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 15th November, 2018 was accepted as a true record
- 4) **Matters arising from the minutes.** Cllr Fleming asked about the Pre-Paid Bank Card, the Clerk was not able to provide any further information but would try and investigate options for the next meeting. Cllr Allen asked about Cllr Thomas reference to documentation about free parking at the last meeting. It was concluded that this was the meeting between HTC and WDC when Cllr Stephen Ardley was present and the Clerk would forward the minutes of that meeting to Cllr Allen.
- 5) **Finances:** The Committee received and noted the monthly report of expenditure against the budget.

The Clerk had also provided the current list of ear marked reserves and a balance sheet that summarised the current assets, bank accounts, accounts receivable, current liabilities, VAT reclaim and ear marked reserves. The general reserves currently stood at £137,877.45

- 6) **Budget:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee approved the amended budget figures.
- 7) **Precept:** It was noted that the tax base (number of householders paying tax) had increased again this year. This meant that if the Precept increased to £112,683.59 this would relate to the same amount for a Band D property as this year. The Council were facing many financial challenges ahead and so it was **RESOLVED that the Committee's recommendation to the Full Council is that the Precept for 2018/19 should be**

£115,000. This represented a 2% increase (equivalent to £1.36 increase) for a Band D property owner.

- 8) **Free Parking:** To consider the council's current position on free parking for 2019/20 pending any further updates. It was noted that District Cllr Goldson would be meeting with Kerry Blair of WDC this week to discuss the free parking. Various discussions and ideas were put forward by the members and it became clear a separate meeting would be required to come up with a plan of action. Cllr Goldson would be invited to attend. In discussing various parcels of land in the town it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would apply to the Land Registry to find the owner of the land on Saxon Way which had been used for parking by the Circus vehicles in the past. It was thought previously that this may have belonged to WDC but WDC had not been able to confirm if this was the case.
- 9) **Meeting Dates:** To consider changing the meetings dates to the second Monday of the month. It was RESOLVED not to change the dates as this would leave insufficient time between the monthly meeting and the Finance meeting for any items or actions to be taken forward and for preparation of the agenda and documents.
- 10) **Station Building:** Damp proofing update. The Clerk confirmed that Trinity Damp proofing and not been able to get a builder and electrician in to prepare the walls in time for the damp proofing work for the 4th December. The work would be rescheduled and Mencap had been informed. The Clerk had explained the ongoing problems with the damp caused by Network Rail's Platform and asked the organisation to consider their future use of the building. The Museum had reported that some more damp had appeared in an area not previously treated and this was a great concern. The Clerk would contact Trinity to ask them to inspect the new damp area and also when the work would be completed in the Mencap side.
- 11) **Maintenance:** To consider any maintenance costs: The Clerk reported that the faulty lights in the Day Centre had finally been replaced and in fact Waveney Norse had replaced the whole series of fluorescent tubes to minimise the chance of other faults developing.

The Clerk reported that Waveney Norse had contacted him to ask whether Halesworth in Bloom's proposals for additional tree planting works in the town had been approved by the Council. W-Norse had concerns over grass cutting maintenance. The Clerk did not know anything about these proposals but Cllr Dutton had understood that there were some free trees being offered by Suffolk Tree Wardens Network which is where the idea had probably come from originally. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to HIB to ask them to submit a plan of where they were proposing to plant the trees.

12) **Correspondence:** None

13) **News Items:**

- a. ATM and cash back options in the town. Cllr Fleming confirmed that the Angel, Spar and Patricks would under certain circumstances offer cash back. It was agreed this could be advertised but the Clerk's Office would need to get approval before proceeding to advertise it. Cllr Prime, who was attending the Bungay High School Awards evening, had sent the Clerk pictures of 'CashZone' machines in Gt Yarmouth which looked like telephone boxes. It was not known who had installed them. There was some support on Social Media for a Links Machine even if this meant a cost to the end user. The Clerk had made some enquiries about Links Machines and reported that there were different charging tariffs but it was clear that an existing shop owner would need to have the machine installed. This was not something the Council could supply. The Clerk had written in October and

again recently to the Co-op to find out if they would consider an external cash point but had not received an answer as yet.

b. To consider any items for the website/newsletters. None

14) **Accounts for Payment:** The following list of accounts was approved for payment.

P Welby Land Registry enquiry for N Plan SG (From Petty Cash) (Neighbourhood Planning – Localism Act 2011 sch9)	3.00
Viking – Paper and Notepads - (LGA1972 s111)	31.44

DD/Standing Orders:

EDF Energy – Market Place No 3 Electricity (Food Act 1984 s 50)	13.65 CR
EDF Energy – Market Place No 2 Electricity (Food Act 1984 s 50)	29.52 + vat
EDF Energy – Market Place No 3 Electricity (Food Act 1984 s 50) Revised figures after submission of meter readings	17.05 + vat

Bank & Cash Balances at 17th December, 2018

Current 728	£149,034.59
Community A/c	£5,281.52
Business Reserves 017	£92,442.93
Petty Cash	£185.40

15) **Staff Matters:** The Clerk would arrange for the Personnel Committee to meet to conduct the Staff Appraisals in January.

The meeting was closed at 7.42pm