



HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 18th March, 2019 at 6.30pm

FINANCE REPORT no. 34 (2018-19)

Present: Councillors;

T Allen, P Dutton, A Fleming, R Lewis (Chair), K Prime, D Wollweber, P Widdowson (from 7.40pm).

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk), Julia Howell of HACT, Emma Healey of HVC and Alison Britton of the Friends of Halesworth County Library.

REPORT

- 1) Apologies: D Thomas, M Took, P Widdowson (for late arrival)
- 2) Declarations of Interest: Non-pecuniary interests; Cllr Wollweber for 7c & 9, Cllr Fleming for 8.
- 3) Minutes: The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 18th February, 2019 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) Matters arising from the minutes: Station building update to be discussed under item 9.
- 5) Finances: The Committee received and noted the monthly report of expenditure against the budget.
- 6) Audit 2019/2020:
 - a. To appoint the internal auditor: It was RESOLVED to appoint SALC to undertake the audit for 2018/2019.
 - b. Review of internal controls: In accordance with the recommendations in the last internal audit it was RESOLVED that the Committee would put in place a further internal monitoring system to spot check transactions and financial procedures. Cllr Fleming volunteered to conduct the first check.
- 7) Grants and Donations: To consider the following grant applications and requests for donations:
 - a. Day of Dance: It was agreed that this event had proved very successful and continued to grow in popularity and size and it was then RESOLVED that the Committee awarded a grant of £280.
 - b. HACT: Julia Howell explained the purpose of the grant. The Committee were very much in favour of assisting this valued local transport service and noted that the grant application was slightly under the estimated costs of printing the timetables for the additional Saturday service. Cllr Allen asked whether the costs could be reduced by using online printing but HACT had got very favourable prices from a

Halesworth company and wished to trade locally. This company had all the design templates in place and it would therefore be more costly to go elsewhere. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee awarded a grant of £575.

- c. Halesworth Volunteer Centre: Emma Healey explained the purpose of the grant which was primarily for training the drivers to develop the skills required to assist an ever ageing populace with specialist needs and also a recruitment drive to get more drivers signed up. Passengers increasingly required assistance over and above the normal requirement for getting to and from their homes. Emma Healey asked the Committee to take into account a £150 donation/grant that they had received since making the application. The Committee noted this and appreciated the honesty but wished to consider the application as submitted and it was then RESOLVED that the Committee awarded a grant of £900
- d. The Friends of Halesworth County Library: Alison Britton explained the purpose of the grant. The FoHCL had earmarked the grant awarded from last year to purchase tables but had not spent the grant as yet. This application was for replacement chairs and now all the furniture, which was over twenty years old, could be replaced with the type and style, as near as possible, to the ones that the late manager, Alison Hopkins, had intended to purchase. The Council had always been supportive of the Library and had intended to reserve some funds for this year and it was then RESOLVED that the Committee awarded the grant application for £3,000.
- e. Nominated Charity requests; Firefighters, Fresh Start. It was noted that these charities always requested money at this time of year but Council's grant policy that restricted grants for benefit of the local area and primarily for residents of Halesworth and these charities did not meet that criteria. It was then RESOLVED that the Clerk would write to decline the requests.
- f. Saxon Allotments Committee: It was noted that the Clerk had originally put this item under maintenance but since the mower was owned and used for the allotment holders and kept in a locked container on site, he had advised that a grant application may be needed. This was submitted after the agenda had been advertised but was therefore considered under grants as an application had been made. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee awarded a grant for mower repairs for the sum of £77.

8) Free Parking: To consider contributions and confirmation of the offer from WDC. The Clerk had prepared some questions for the Committee to consider and these were RESOLVED as follows:-

- a. Contributions: The Communications Committee would consider, before the next monthly meeting, the most effective ways of informing the residents, local parishes and businesses as to how and why the proposed changes to the free parking had been decided. It was agreed that the Committee would also consider when and how the request for contributions would be actioned. It was noted that the Clerk had not received written confirmation from WDC and it was also not known exactly when the one hour free parking change from the Thoroughfare car park to the other four car parks would take place. In the meantime it was understood that the Thoroughfare car park would continue to have the free one hour parking until the necessary Traffic Orders were in place and the ticket machine recalibrated.
- b. Honours Board: The Committee agreed that the board would be best used for advising drivers about the free parking in the other car parks. The Committee did not think that it was necessary or cost effective to erect another board elsewhere or to produce more window stickers. The Communications Committee would consider how best to advertise those businesses and parishes that had contributed to the free parking for 2019/2020.
- c. Blue Badge Parking: The Committee were concerned about this element of the proposal in so far as it was not feasible to have the extra free one hour parking in the existing Blue Badge spaces in the Thoroughfare. Blue Badge holders would

normally have an extra one hour free parking in any WDC car park but they would need to purchase a ticket for the first hour. However in car parks that had the first hour free, Blue Badge holders would be able to obtain two hours free parking in this proposal but they would be a little further away from the centre of town.

- d. Lloyds Bank Mobile: The Clerk had written to WDC to inform them that the calculation for the rebate for 2018/2019 was £413 and this would be deducted from the bill for 2019/2020. The Committee agreed that the Clerk should raise an invoice for this amount.

- 9) Station Building: To consider the request for a meeting with the Museum to discuss the future use of the vacant office and advice on rent, repairs, etc. It was noted that the damp proofing works to the Station Building would not take place until June 2019 and it may therefore be better to decide what to do with the vacant part of the building after this work had been completed. However it was noted that the Museum wished to prepare for the possibility of taking it over and replacing a new door way between the properties. The Clerk informed the Committee that any structural changes would need to be approved by Greater Anglia, who in turn leased the building from Network Rail. It was RESOLVED that a meeting in May would be arranged after the new Council had been elected. It was also RESOLVED that the Committee asked the Clerk to write to Greater Anglia to try and get some compensation for the damp problems, which had been compounded by the leaking canopy roof over their platform.

7.40pm Cllr Widdowson joined the meeting.

- 10) Maintenance: To consider any maintenance costs:

- a. Noticeboard options. The Committee considered the three options; refurbishment, full replacement and a smaller alternative layout. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee considered that the refurbishment was the most cost effective solution and would last a considerable time before needing any further work. It was also agreed that the map, which was now outdated, would be replaced with a simple design showing the main attractions and destinations. It was noted that this would mean that the Notice Board would be out of service for about three weeks.
- b. Mower repairs – Saxon Allotments. This item was considered under 7f.

- 11) Correspondence: None

- 12) News Items: To consider any items for the website/newsletters: The Communications Committee would consider advertising the free parking proposals at the next meeting.

- 13) Accounts for Payment: The following accounts for payment was approved:

<u>3714.</u>	Viking – stationary (LGA1972 s111)	31.61 + vat
<u>3715.</u>	Mustard Creative – Website training (LGA1972 s111)	150.00 + vat
<u>3716.</u>	Red Dune – Computer upgrades and replacements (LGA1972 s111)	748.00 + vat
<u>3717.</u>	East Suffolk Council – HTC office – Annual Rates (LGA1972 s111)	589.20

DD/Standing Orders:

<u>3718.</u>	East Suffolk Council – Market Place – Annual Rates (LGA1972 s111)	441.90
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Grant applications awarded at the meeting:

<u>3719.</u>	Day of Dance (LGA 1972 s144)	280.00
<u>3720.</u>	Halesworth Community Transport (Local Government and Rating Act 1923, 1948 s133)	500.00
<u>3721.</u>	Halesworth Volunteer Centre	900.00

	(Local Government and Rating Act 1923, 1948 s133)	
<u>3722.</u>	Friends of Halesworth County Library (GPoC)	3,000.00
<u>3723.</u>	Saxon Allotments Committee (V Coulson) (GPoC)	77.00

Bank & Cash Balances at 13th March, 2019

Current 728	£136,636.67
Community A/c	£5,281.52
Business Reserves 017	£92,442.93
Petty Cash	£100.43

14) Staff Matters: Pensions & salary reviews: This item was not considered in camera as the Committee had still not received any advice from the Local Councils Public Advisory Service. The Committee was very disappointed that this matter was still not concluded but the Clerk would write to inform the organisation that the deadline was now the 25th March 2019 so it could be considered in time for the next monthly meeting.

The meeting was closed at 7.56pm