



# HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2019 at 6.30pm

## FINANCE REPORT no. 40 (2019-20)

Present: Councillors;

A Fleming, R Lewis (Chair), K Prime, J Reece, D Thomas, M Took, D Wollweber,

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk). 6 members of the public.

### REPORT

- 1) Apologies received: P Dutton, A Dunning. Not received: T Allen
- 2) Declarations of Interest: Non-pecuniary interests: Cllr Lewis for 6d, Cllr Wollweber for 6d, Cllr Thomas for 6A, Cllr Reece for 6A
- 3) Minutes: To approve the report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2019
- 4) Matters arising from the minutes. The Clerk would check whether the Thoroughfare and Market Place had been sprayed for weeds. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask for volunteers for the Community Speed Watch Programme in November's HCN
- 5) Finances: To receive a report of expenditure against the budget. The Committee received and noted the monthly budget report and also a 6 monthly report showing details of all the transactions in all accounts since April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019.
- 6) Grant Applications: The Chair explained that the Clerk had produced a separate sheet showing the expenditure from the Grant budget but had highlighted the three transactions which related to last year's budget which had been cashed in this year's accounts. This then left a balance of £15,815.
  - a. HACT – Vehicle repairs. Mr Brian Holmes had attended the meeting on behalf of HACT had produced a report on what had happened to the vehicle and why the repairs were necessary. Mr Holmes explained that HACT had been fortunate to receive £2,000 from the Lions and this left £2,000 required to get the vehicle back in operation. The Committee acknowledged that this was a vital service for many residents in the town and it was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved the grant of £2,000.
  - b. Halesworth in Bloom – Various. Liz Wooster explained the purpose of the grant which included various projects around the town and in the park and also that HIB wished to redesign their website. The Committee appreciated the invaluable work of the volunteers in improving the appearance of the town and in was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved the grant for £3,000.
  - c. Ink Festival 2020: Mr John Bainer and Mr Ben Cardwell made a joint presentation for grant funding for the festival in 2020. There were plans to increase the size of the festival again next year and they were currently negotiating additional venues in the town for this purpose. Concessions would be available for under sixteen year olds and unemployed residents. The three day event would cost

£70k but they had attracted £15k funding from the Arts Councils and £20k through sponsorship and the organisers were applying to other organisations to raise the necessary funds. The event was becoming established and well known nationally and the organisers were committed to retaining the event in Halesworth. The Committee were impressed with how the event was evolving and how it was putting Halesworth on the map and it was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved a grant for £2,000.

- d. Halesworth & District Museum: Mrs Pauline Wilcox made a presentation for grant funding which was the same as last year application. The Museum continued to put on special events of interest and part of the funding would be to improve the off-site storage facilities. The Committee agreed that the Museum played a vital role in maintaining the town's history and interests for the residents and for future generations. It was then RESOLVED that that the Committee approved the grant for £2,500.

The Chair asked the Committee to note that she was currently preparing the accounts for the Open Heritage Event on behalf of Halesworth & Blyth Valley Partnership and that once all the costs had been accounted for any surplus from the grant awarded in May would be returned to the Council.

- 7) Station User Group: Station parking for volunteers and arranging a meeting. Cllr Wollweber asked to be replaced as the Council's rep for the Station user group as he was a trustee for the Museum. It was agreed that the Clerk, Cllr Thomas, Cllr Fleming and the station users would arrange a meeting to discuss the parking and also an update on the building repairs.
- 8) CIL/s106: To receive a report of the current balances and funds available. The Clerk had produced reports on the CIL monies and s106 monies available. It was noted that Waveney Norse had caught up with some outstanding work and most of the s106 monies would be used up. However there was sometimes a long delay in getting invoices from Norse in order to reclaim the s106 funding. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the District Councillors to see if they could help in getting invoices sent in timeously.
- 9) Banking: To review the current position. The Chair reported that she had visited Barclays Bank again to see if they could get the direct debits and standing orders moved to Unity Trust Bank but a member of the staff explained that it was not possible. This was very frustrating as the Clerk had written several letters and Unity Trust had also sent written requests but there had been no response. The Committee agreed that Barclays Bank had provided a very poor service for the Council over several years and asked the Clerk to look at alternative banking options such as the Post Office in order to be able to eventually close all the accounts with Barclays. In the meantime the Clerk would try to get the direct debits and standing orders changed by contacting the suppliers directly.
- 10) Free Parking: It was noted that the Council had received some contributions from local parishes but the Clerk was concerned as traders had not been asked to contribute and the Town Council was still in negotiations with East Suffolk. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the relevant parishes to explain the situation and reassure them that the monies would be ring fenced or returned if required.
- 11) Market: Invoicing and outstanding accounts. The Clerk explained that he was having difficulties with receiving payments from one of the Market Stall traders. Since moving to payment by BACS this particular trader had consistently been behind in paying to such an extent that the Clerk had put them back to cash payments only. It was RESOLVED that the Committee authorised a 14 day payment notice to be issued and if no payment had been received the Council would take further legal action.

12) Maintenance: There were no maintenance costs to consider:

13) SCC Pension report: The Committee received and noted the Suffolk Funding Strategy Statement.

14) Correspondence: The Clerk announced that Jayne Cole from the Local Council Public Advisory Service was relocating and the business would close if a buyer was not found. In recent times the service from the LCPAS had been disappointing and payment to LCPAS for Data Protection officer services that had not been delivered had been withheld by the Council. The Clerk reported that the Information Commissioner's Office had ruled that parish councils did not require a data protection officer anyway so an alternative service would not be required. Cllr Thomas reported that Suffolk Association of local Councils (SALC) were planning to expand their services and hopefully this would fill any void left by LCPAS.

15) News Items: To consider any items for the website/newsletters. It was agreed that the Clerk would report on the grants awarded by the Committee and also that there were funds available for other organisations in the town.

16) Accounts for Payment: The Committee approved the following list of accounts for payment.

<u>3714.</u>	Local Government Pension Scheme (Mthly Employer and Employees Contrib) (LGA 1972 s112) - October	1,006.75
<u>3715.</u>	SALC – Payroll Services – (LGA 1972 s112)	78.00 + vat
<u>3716.</u>	Viking – Stationary & pen drives – (LGA 1972 s111)	47.40 + vat
<u>3717.</u>	Community News – Scarecrow Advert (LGA 1972 s144)	50.00 + vat
<u>3718.</u>	Waveney Norse – Quarterly Market Clean (Food Act 1984 s50)	174.99 + vat

DD/Standing Orders:

<u>3719.</u>	Barclays Bank Charges (LGA 1972 s111)	12.65
<u>3720.</u>	EDF Electricity – Market Place no 2 (Food Act 1984 s50)	24.80
<u>3721.</u>	EDF Electricity – Market Place no 3 (Food Act 1984 s50)	18.33

#### Bank & Cash Balances at 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2019

Current 728	£103,881.17
Unity Trust	£84,220.80
Community A/c	£5,289.42
Business Reserves 017	£92,581.28
Petty Cash	£69.88

The meeting was closed at 7.47pm