



HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING

FINANCE REPORT no 54

MONDAY FEBRUARY 15th 2021 AT 6.30PM BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

In accordance with (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)

Present: Councillors;

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

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk), Museum Trustees; Pauline Wilcock, Brian Howard

REPORT

- 1) Apologies: Cllr T Allen
- 2) Declarations of Interest: To receive declarations for non-pecuniary interests: Cllr Lewis for item 6a (Museum Trustee) and Cllr Wollweber for 6a (Museum Trustee).
- 3) Minutes: The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on Wednesday the 18th January, 2021 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) Matters arising from the minutes: Cllr Dutton enquired about the revised voucher scheme, the Clerk reported that currently it was not operating because at the present time Rev Jane Held and the Community Larder volunteers were working on a suitable system and paper trail. The condition of the benches in the Thoroughfare was also discussed. It was noted that the benches may be encouraging people to congregate which was against the lockdown rules. It was agreed that the Clerk would inspect the benches and initially ask the Men's Sheds to undertake any repairs needed and at the same time they may be able to remove the timbers as necessary which may help to achieve both aims.
- 5) Finances: To receive the monthly report of expenditure against the budget. Cllr Dutton enquired as to what the Chair intended to do with the balance of the Chair's allowance. Cllr Wollweber said that he had not decided as yet but he would probably allocate the balances to charities or voluntary groups as has been the tradition in the last few years.
- 6) Grants & Donations:
 - a. Halesworth & District Museum grant application. The Committee received the application and the grant reporting form showing how the last grant was used. Pauline Wilcock (Chair of HDM) and Brian Howard explained the museum's financial position and the purpose of the grant, which fundamentally was to help towards the cost of purchasing a new secure display case which would be in the region of £9,000. The Committee members were in full support of the application and the continued efforts to expand and improve the Museum and it was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved a grant for £2,500.
- 7) Survey Costs: To consider the quotations for undertaking surveys on the proposed assets. The Clerk explained that there were two quotations to consider; Fenn Wright, who

had quoted £1,650 for surveying the properties but were unable to quote for surveying the bridges. Morton Partnership had quoted £2,050 for the properties and had quoted £950.00 for surveying the bridges. The Clerk explained that these were condition surveys and were not full structural surveys. If the condition survey uncovered anything of concern then the Council could commission a full structural survey. The Committee had generally been impressed with the details provided in the survey undertaken by the Morton Partnership in 2016 and preferred to use this company. It was also important to get the bridges surveyed so it was RESOLVED that the Committee approved the quotation from Morton Partnership. The ABP Committee would review the brief at the next meeting and consider Cllr Dutton's suggestion as to whether it should be expanded further and whether to also include tree surveys.

It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate whether the surveys could be funded from CIL monies as it related to infrastructure.

It was noted that the decision to engage the services of a solicitor had been agreed at the last monthly meeting and the Clerk was in the process of getting quotations which he would bring back to the Council.

8) Annual review of statutory documents:

- a) To approve the outstanding amendments to the Financial Regulations. This document needed final agreement as the items 1.4c Community Awards and 1.4g Maintenance and development of I.T. facilities for the Council including development of Council's website, needed clarification. This was because the Community awards and the development of the website had specifically been given to the Communication Committee by the Council previously. The Clerk suggested adding 'costs relating to' in front of each item and then this would give meaning to both items for the Finance Committee but would allow the Communications Committee to continue with their remit. This was agreed and with this amendment it was RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations were approved.

- 9) Maintenance: Cllr Fleming reported that some loud banging noises had been heard in the Park the other night and asked whether there had been reports of any damage. The Clerk confirmed that he had not received any reports. Cllr Fleming offered to check on this as soon as the weather improved.

It was noted that during the icy weather many footpaths and side roads had been treacherous, particularly for walkers. Cllr Dunning reported that there had been several falls and injuries. The Clerk reported that he had received many emails on this subject but at present there was no obvious way to get these footpaths gritted, as Suffolk County Council would not undertake this work. The Town Council could request Grit Bins were filled and purchase new ones but this relied on residents spreading the grit and keeping the Town Council informed when they required refilling. It was then RESOLVED that there should be an audit of all the Grit Bins in the town and a register of those residents that were looking after them. Cllr Dunning and Cllr Lewis offered to assist in Clerk in compiling the list.

- 10) Correspondence: None

- 11) News Items: To consider any items for the website/newsletters: Grants awarded.

- 12) Accounts for Payment: The Clerk explained that the BT bill was very high due to the number of visits that the engineers had to make before the connection at the Angel had been completed, mainly due to the lockdown. The Clerk would attempt to get this reduced. The Committee then approved the following list of accounts for payment:

<u>4561.</u>	N Rees – Zoom monthly subscription (November) (LGA 1972 s111)	11.99 + vat
<u>4562.</u>	Joyce Moseley - Zoom monthly subscription N Plan (localism Act 2011)	11.99 + vat
<u>4563.</u>	Mustard Creative Annual website hosting	60.00 + vat
<u>4564.</u>	Viking – Paper & Stapler (LGA 1972 s111)	21.76 + vat
<u>4565.</u>	EPS Transfers – CCTV Stickers (GPoC)	25.00 + vat

DD/Standing Orders:

<u>4566.</u>	EDF Electricity – Market Place no 3 (Food Act 1984 s50)	23.49
<u>4567.</u>	BT Telephone, installation of new line and engineer's visits	550.63 + vat
<u>4568.</u>	LGPS Pension Scheme (LGA 1972 s112)	997.73

Bank & Cash Balances at 15th February, 2021

Current 728	£129,534.32
Unity Trust	£82,832.28
Community A/c	£5,296.20
Business Reserves 017	£92,699.93
Petty Cash	£71.83

The meeting was closed at 7.28pm