



# HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

## FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

### FINANCE REPORT no 64

MONDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JULY 2022 AT 6.30PM IN THE DAY CENTRE

**Present:** Councillors; A Fleming, P Dutton, R Lewis (Chair), M Took, D Wollweber

**In Attendance:** N Rees (Town Clerk). Teresa Walsh (HEM), Gary Stannard (HEM)

### REPORT

- 1) **Apologies:** Cllr J Moseley, Cllr A Dunning.
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** To receive declarations for pecuniary & non-pecuniary interests: Cllr Fleming for 6a (HEM rep), Cllr Wollweber 6b (involved in the event), and for 6c (proximity to the Cut)
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2022 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) **Matters arising from the minutes:** None
- 5) **Finances:**
  - a. The Committee received and noted report of expenditure against the budget
  - b. The Committee received and noted the CIL report
  - c. The Committee received and noted the Reserves report
- 6) **Grant Applications:**
  - a. **Halesworth Events Management:** Teresa Walsh and Gary Stannard made a presentation to the Committee and explained the need for additional funding this year. HEM confirmed that they would be requesting some financial support from the local businesses and hoping to do some more fund raising which had not been possible in the last two years but nevertheless there was a significant shortfall this year. The cost of installing the icicle lights was a significant proportion of the shortfall but because the lights would remain in position it would not be required next year. Teresa Walsh also explained the problems with the tree holders and that due to Health and Safety and insurance considerations it was not possible for HEM to install trees in the holders in future, hence the icicle lights were a replacement for the loss of the trees. It was then **RESOLVED** that the Committee approved a grant of £9,000; £4,000 would be taken from the Grants Budget and £5,000 from reserves.
  - b. **Halesworth Open Days:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee approved a grant of £1,000.
  - c. **James Holloway Youth Arts Fund:** The Committee were very interested in the project, presented by the two representatives that attended the meeting. The organisers had contacted Bungay and Beccles schools to obtain a limited number of students for the project based at the Cut. However, it was unclear as to how many Halesworth students would be attending. The Committee was bound by the grant policy which states that grants should benefit Halesworth residents and without knowing how many students would be from Halesworth, the Committee was unable to approve the grant application. It was suggested that the organisers contact Bungay and Beccles Town Councils so that a joint approach to the funding

could be demonstrated. Then the Committee would reconsider the grant application in September.

- d. **Halesworth in Bloom:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee approved a grant of £2,000.

7) **Policy Docs:**

- a. The Committee received the link to the following policy documents and updated documents: Bullying & Harrassment (update), Emergency Leave, Flexible Working, Home Working, Lone Working, Maternity/Paternity Leave, Sickness & Absence, Social Media.
- b. The Committee received the link to review whether existing policies need updating; Data Protection, Disciplinary, Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, Training & Development, Whistleblowing.

The Committee appreciated that reviewing all these documents was a significant amount of work and an alternative approach might be to share the documents equally between all the councillors. Employing a professional HR consultant had also been considered but localised amendments would still need to be approved by the Council. In the meantime, it was **RESOLVED** that the Committee, taking in consideration that these were recommended templates from the National Association of Local Councils, approved all the documents under item (a) subject to any particular localised amendments where necessary. In some cases a minimal amount of amendments would be necessary but in others more work would be required.

- 8) **SOLDO Prepaid Card:** The Clerk reported that he had discovered a prepaid Mastercard card that could be used for the Council's online purchases or subscriptions where back payments were not possible. At the current time the only way to do this was for the Clerk or Councillors to use their own debit/credit cards. The company was regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and there would be minimal risk as the Council approved deposits and payments in the normal way. It was **RESOLVED** to use the Soldo prepaid card to allow internet purchases, the payments would be approved for payment at each monthly or Finance meetings. A deposit of £500 was approved to activate the Soldo account.
- 9) **Unity Bank:** It was **RESOLVED** to transfer £200k into a Unity Instant Access Savings Account (0.45%). This would be a straight forward internal transfer and would at least gain a little more interest than in the current account. It was noted that the Council needed to consider other savings accounts as the Financial Services Compensation Scheme only guaranteed up to a maximum £85k if a bank failed.
- 10) **Maintenance:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee agreed to pay £134 for cutting back one of the trees at Beddingfield Crescent Allotments which were overhanging a neighbouring property.
- 11) **Correspondence:** The Committee received a request by a resident; that the Council funds the cost of refilling dog waste bag dispensers which the resident had designed and installed in several locations in the town. The Committee, whilst in support of any initiative to reduce dog fouling in public spaces, felt that the resident could have involved the Council at the start of the project. The Committee were also reluctant to commit public money on an unlimited basis and mindful that not all residents would necessarily benefit or support this scheme, so it was then **RESOLVED** that the Council would make a one-time purchase of bags to the value of £100. The bags could be collected by the resident from the office as required.
- 12) **News Items:** To consider any items for the website/newsletters: Grants
- 13) **Accounts for Payment:** The following accounts was approved for payment:-

<b><u>4561.</u></b>	Norse – Green bin collection (Park) (Open Spaces 1906 ss9&10)	53.49 + vat
<b><u>4562.</u></b>	Norse – Market Clean Apr - June (Food Act 1984 s.50)	174.99 + vat
<b><u>4563.</u></b>	Farmhouse Bakery – Cake for Queen’s Jubilee (GPoC)	50.00

### **Bank & Cash Balances at 13<sup>th</sup> July**

Current 728	£125,057.14
Unity Trust	£245,422.28
Community A/c	£5,297.25
Business Reserves 017	£92,718.47
Petty Cash	£22.82

14) **Staff Matters:** No matters discussed

The meeting was closed at 7.48