



HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

FINANCE REPORT no 66

MONDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2022 AT 6.30PM IN THE DAY CENTRE

Present: Councillors; P Dutton, K Greenberg, J Moseley, R Lewis (Chair), M Took, D Wollweber.

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk), 0 members of the public

REPORT

- 1) **Apologies:** None
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** To receive declarations for pecuniary & non-pecuniary interests: J Moseley for item 13 (4565 & 4566)
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 17th October, 2022 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) **Matters arising from the minutes:** Cllr Moseley asked about feedback from the grant applications considered at the last meeting and Cllr Dutton confirmed that he would give the Clerk contact details for some fencing contractors for the Swan Lane allotments.
- 5) **Finances:**
 - a. To receive the report of expenditure against the budget: The Clerk answered various questions on the budget. It was noted that the Clerk and the Chair intended to expand the report to include columns for allocated or suggested expenditure from CIL funds for the next 3 years. This would also include expected CIL income from new developments and committed expense for planning purposes.
 - b. CIL report The Clerk would request information from ESC to try and estimate the expected CIL income for the next 1 – 5 years.
 - c. Reserves report: It was noted that the Council could allocate a larger sum from general reserves for the Community building, this may be beneficial to implement before the next audit as the Council's general reserves were currently higher than recommended.
- 6) **Committee Budgets for 2023/24:** The Clerk confirmed that the Precept requirements for Halesworth had been requested for the end of January 2023 as usual. It may be possible to confirm this figure even if the budget had not been fully agreed since the majority of expenditure, after the transfer of assets, would be from CIL funding rather than from the Precept. However it was noted that some assets would require additional maintenance or utility costs that would need to be factored into the budget and this would affect the precept requirements. It was agreed that the Chair and Clerk would arrange a meeting with all the Committee Chairs (in approximately three weeks) in order to try and finalise a more comprehensive budget before the next Finance meeting.
 - a. Planning & Highways
 - b. Assets and Services
 - c. Leisure & Environment
 - d. Events

Transfer of Assets: The Clerk reported that the officer in charge of getting the asset transfer proposal to an ESC Cabinet meeting had appeared to have left the employ of ESC. This would then be the fifth officer that had been given this task and as far as the Clerk knew it was still not completed. The Clerk had written to Kerry Blair to request an explanation and clarification on whether the Cabinet had the necessary information for the meeting on the 6th of December, 2022. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would write a letter to the Leader of the Council and the councillor responsible for assets to express the Council's frustration and also to point out that budgeting for the precept was

7) Policy Docs:

- a. Review of the Financial Regulations (attached separately): The Clerk had sent the suggested amendments to the Committee prior to the meeting but had not printed the document again. The amendment to increase the Finance & Governance grant limit from £5,000 to £10,000 was rejected. It was agreed that the Clerk's limit for emergency expenditure should be raised to £2,000. Further amendments may be required to take into account the restructuring of the committees. After a proposal from Cllr Moseley it was RESOLVED that the Clerk would investigate the legality of allowing an amendment to the Financial Regulations to facilitate immediate payment of smaller invoices, without requiring approval under the normal 'accounts for payment' item, but only in the cases where the Council had already approved a budget for this specific purpose. The Clerk suggested that in the meantime, the Committee members could put forward other suggested amendments if required and then the document would be taken to the Council to consider in due course.

The Town Council's Grant Policy was also discussed following concerns about the increased amounts that organisations were requesting and also whether grants for running costs should be permissible but the Committee agreed that it would be better to allow the new Council in May 2023 to determine any changes to the current policy.

- b. The Committee received and approved the Internal Control Document (August)

- 8) **Unity Bank Signatories:** The Clerk had brought this matter up before but had delayed the process to see if more signatories could be added. As it was likely that some councillors would not be standing again in May 2023, new signatories were essential to allow payments to be authorised next year. Cllr Greenberg and Cllr Moseley agreed to be added to the bank signatories as well as Cllr Wagner, as agreed previously. The Clerk would start the process of adding these signatories.
- 9) **Maintenance:** The Clerk reported that someone responsible for the recent graffiti in the archway adjacent to Ancient House (and possibly other areas in the town) had been caught on camera. The Police would be investigating further using the images obtained from CCTV. Norse had cleaned off the original graffiti but this had soon been replaced with new graffiti and so further cleaning would not be undertaken until the Police had completed their investigation. The Clerk would contact the owners of the wall to inform them.
- 10) **Allotments:** The Clerk suggested that new allotment tenants should make a refundable deposit of £50 to reduce the risk of tenants leaving without notifying the office and/or leaving their allotments in a poor condition. This was matter referred to the Assets and Services Committee. The Clerk reported that he was currently reviewing new fixed rates for the water supply for all the allotments and would bring these options to the next meeting.
- 11) **Correspondence:** The Clerk reported that the bags supplied for the free dog waste bag initiative that the Council supported in August, had been used up and the creator of the scheme was enquiring as to whether the Council would continue to support the initiative.

The Clerk reported that he had supplied £75 worth of bags so far which had lasted three months. The Committee agreed to purchase more bags with the remaining balance but would not provide further support until next year. The Clerk would also ask for feedback on whether the scheme was being used as intended or if it was true that certain dog owners were just helping themselves to several free bags at a time or even taking the entire roll as some reports would suggest.

- 12) **News Items:** To consider any items for the website/newsletters. It was agreed that the Coronation and the Market Charter 800 for 2023 needed urgent planning. A meeting with Jo McCallum was scheduled for Wednesday and this would be discussed again then. At the present time 'events' were not in any committee's remit but allocated to the whole Council and this may need reviewing again.

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

4561.	Viking – Stationery (LGA 1972 s111)	58.29 + vat
4562.	Waveney Norse (Park Green Bin) Open Spaces Act 1906 s9&10	53.49 + vat
4563.	Totally Branded – Youth outwork uniform (GPoC) (Grant received)	189.89 + vat
4564.	Pearce & Kemp new timeclock for Skateboard lighting -Open Spaces Act	79.03 + vat
4565.	J Moseley – Stationary for Wayfinding presentation (GPoC)	16.54
4566.	J Moseley – Rent I Chameleon for N Plan (Localism Act 2011)	200.00
4567.	Access – Youth Engagement officer (GPoC) Youth Grant	5,000.00

DD/Standing Orders:

4568.	BT Phone & Broadband – Quarterly (LGA 1972 s111)	277.68 + vat
4569.	Zoom (LGA 1972 s111) (Soldo Acc)	11.99 + vat

Bank & Cash Balances at 16th November, 2022

Current 728	£124,173.58
Unity Trust Current	£80,843.06
Unity Trust Savings	
£200,243.29	
Community A/c	£5,298.88
Business Reserves 017	£92,747.05
Soldo Prepaid Acc.	398.25
Petty Cash	£22.82

- 14) **Staff Matters:** It was agreed that the Clerks would put together their suggestions for additional employees based on the current position and the expected workloads

The meeting was closed at 8.25pm