



# HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

## **FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING** **MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> APRIL, 2018 at 6.30pm**

### **FINANCE REPORT no. 24 (2018-19)**

**Present:** Councillors;

A Fleming, P Dutton, R Lewis (Chair), K Forster, S Leverett, D Thomas, M Took, D Wollweber.

**In Attendance:** N Rees (Town Clerk).

### **REPORT**

- 1) **Apologies:** Cllr P Widdowson.
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** Non-pecuniary interests; Cllr D Thomas for 7f & 7g, Cllr P Dutton for 7e & 7f, Cllr A Fleming for 7f & 12, Cllr D Wollweber for 8 and Cllr R Lewis for 7e, Cllr S Leverett for 7f & 7g.
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) **Matters arising from the minutes.** Cllr Fleming asked whether the Council had the General Data Protection regulations in place for May. The Clerk confirmed that the Local Council Advisory service had been engaged to undertake compliance on behalf of the Council.
- 5) **London Rd Building:** To consider any updates. The Clerk confirmed that there were no further updates. There was some frustration at the length of time that this was taking, however the Clerk confirmed that the Council was currently only paying for business rates and as Cllr Dutton noted this was in the Council's favour until the building was transferred. It was agreed that the Clerk would arrange a meeting of the Council as soon as possible to consider what options were available.
- 6) **Finances:**
  - a. End of year report. The Committee received and noted the Clerk's report. The Clerk reported that there was a balance of £16,564.66 from the 2017/2018 budget that the Committee could consider for allocation to specific reserves. This was mainly because no expenditure had taken place for the London Rd building as yet. The payment to WDC of £21,000 for the free parking had not been cashed by WDC until after the end of the year so it would now appear in the 2018/19 budget instead albeit this would actually be paid from General Reserves.
  - b. To agree any transfers or amendments to the reserves. The Committee agreed the following transfers from the current budget to reserves as follows; £10,000 would be transferred from the current budget to the Divestment of WDC Services Reserve, £3,000 to a new Youth development Reserve, £3,000 to a new Market reserve (directly from market rent profits). The balance of £549.66 would go into general reserves. The Committee agreed £5,000 from general reserves to a new Repaid Grants Reserve and £5,000 from general reserves to Skate park reserves.
  - c. To consider the current Grant budget and the repayment from last year. The Clerk reported that after investigation there was no limit to how much of the

budget was spent on grants (provided they came under the relevant legislation). The Chair advised that the Council keeps to the current budget of £26,000 but the £5,000 repaid grant from Campus could be put into the reserve and used if necessary.

- d. Clerk's Pre-Audit report. The Clerk had provided the Committee with the preliminary end of year summary figures and a complete list of all expenditure for the year. After the internal Audit the Clerk would confirm the final figures for submission to the External Auditors.
- e. Free parking Contributions update. The Clerk reported that contributions were still coming in and were currently £6,555 but this would continue to increase until the end of April.

7) **Grants & Donations:** To consider the following applications:

- a. Blayze'ing Star. It was noted that the Clerk had sent two further emails of invitation to attend the meeting but had not received any reply. The Committee agreed that it could not consider the application at this meeting and would defer it again until such time as the applicant was in contact.
- b. Citizens Advice Bureau. The Clerk explained that a representative was unable to make the meeting due to another meeting on the same night. However, he had received further information about the application and explained that due to the funding cuts from WDC and SCC the Bureau was under threat of closure in Halesworth and Bungay. The CAB office was manned by volunteers 2 hours per week in Halesworth and last year advised 70 applicants on 187 different problems. The Grant, if awarded, would be specifically for Halesworth and CAB would provide supporting financial information. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved the grant application for £1,000.
- c. Halesworth Arts Festival. The Clerk explained that the Council received a similar application every year to support this festival. Cllr Leverett reported that the event was well attended and brought increased footfall to the town. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved the grant application for £500
- d. EACH (East Anglia's Children's Hospices). The clerk explained that this was not a grant application but a request for the Chair to adopt the charity for any fund raising purposes during the year. It was noted that this request was not specific to Halesworth. It was agreed that this would be brought to the annual meeting of the Council in May when the Chair for 2018-2019 would be appointed.
- e. Halesworth & District Twinning Society. The Committee heard from Libby Eves, representing the Twinning Society who explained that the main purpose of the application was to fund the Mid-Summer Fair event where around 40 representatives from Eitorf and Bouchain would be attending. It was noted that the Twinning Society was currently experiencing a resurgence of interest and the Committee agreed that it was important to maintain the good relations with our fellow twin towns and to support the event. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved the grant application for £965.

Before the following application was considered it was noted that Cllrs; Dutton, Fleming and Thomas all had a non-pecuniary interest as trustees of HCSL and would abstain from voting on the application. It was noted that there had been a comment regarding a grant payment of £2,000 from the Council to the HPFA which the Chair had understood to be incorrect and that this comment should therefore be removed. No one present at the meeting could remember a grant payment of £2,000 to the HPFA and it was RESOLVED that the Clerk would write to the author of the comment to ask them to remove or correct it. [Clerk's note, after checking the records the following day the Clerk advised that a grant of £2,400 for legal fees had been awarded to the HPFA back in April 2015 however this was prior to most of the Committee member's time on the Council including the Chair, who had raised the question.

- f. Halesworth Community Sport and Leisure. The Committee heard from Adrian Waters, Chair of Halesworth Football Club and Groundsman, who explained that following advice from the Ground Keepers Association, the current large tractor mower needed replacing with a lighter model. This was not only because the existing mower was very old and needed constant attention but that its weight compressed the soil and made drainage more difficult. HCSL had investigated the costs of replacement mowers and had provided estimates. Cllr Fleming confirmed that HCSL would be seeking funding from two other local charities and from the Football Association's small grant fund and would also be putting on fund raising events to make up the difference. It was noted that the football club had around 100 members and this was increasing in numbers and also now included some female players. The Chair, Cllr Lewis explained that HTC would request any grant monies to be returned if the necessary funding could not be found to purchase the equipment. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved a grant of £3,000 with five in favour and three abstentions. The Clerk was asked to record the abstentions for Cllr P Dutton, Cllr A Fleming and Cllr D Thomas.
- g. Halesworth Events Management (Not on original agenda). The Clerk explained that this application was received too late to include on the agenda but asked the Committee to consider a recommendation to take to the next monthly meeting. It was noted that the Festive Lights event was increasing in size and popularity every year but the costs for putting on the event was also increasing. The Committee agreed that the Festive Lights was a very successful and important event for the town and appreciated the efforts of Halesworth Events Management in organising it and for their fundraising throughout the year. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee recommended that the council approves the grant application for £3,000.
- 8) **Station building:** To review the Station building rents. It was noted that HTC had increased the rent in April 2017 for the Station users and as the rent HTC paid to Abellio Anglia had not increased for 2018-2019 it was RESOLVED to keep the rents unchanged for the Museum, HACT and Mencap for this year.
- 9) **Allotments:** To review the Allotment rents. It was noted that there had been additional expenditure last year for a skip and new numbered stakes for all the allotments but despite this there had been a small operating profit of £162. It was RESOLVED to keep the existing rents unchanged for 2018/2019.
- 10) **Market:** To review the Market rents. The Clerk reported that the Market rents had produced a profit of £3,000 for the year. The matter of whether the Market could be increased in size to accommodate more stalls was discussed but the Committee felt that this was dependent on whether a suitable diversity of Market stalls could be found that did not clash with local shops. There were also issues with parking in the Market Place which would be further increased by adding more stalls. It was considered that the Market rent was currently in line with other towns and there was no advantage in changing the rent. It was then RESOLVED that the Market rent would remain unchanged for 2018/2019.
- 11) **Youth Workers:** To consider engaging Detached Youth Workers. It was noted that the Council had received two quotes for detached youth workers, one from Impact and one from Eric Sewell (Apollo Youth Centre). The Committee agreed that in the light of recent anti-social behaviour and the proposed re-siting of the Teen Shelter that it should engage the services of youth workers in May. The Committee was not certain which option would be preferable and so it was RESOLVED that Cllr Wollweber would investigate further and make recommendation to the Council in May.
- 12) **Music in the Park event:** To consider allocating money to an event in the Park organised by the Town Council. Cllr Fleming reported that together with Cllr Wollweber they had

been in discussion with Miles Berry about putting on a free music event in the Park. As it was a free event there would be no need for formal security thereby reducing the costs. Local businesses would be approached to provide food and drink, there would be a bar, ice cream van children's activities. It was primarily aimed at families and the music provided would be relaxed, acoustic and/or jazz style without undue amplification. Families could bring their own picnics, similar to the Queen's birthday event in 2016. Although a free event it was hoped to arrange some system of tickets so the numbers of people attending could be calculated. At this stage there was no firm costs or details but it was RESOLVED that the Committee would approve a fund to a maximum of £3,000 for the event.

13) **Maintenance:** To consider any maintenance costs: The Clerk reported that there had been damage to one of the seats in the Memorial Gardens and his understanding was that the benches and shelters were owned by WDC. The Committee noted that these items had never appeared on the Council's Asset Register and therefore HTC probably did not own them. It was agreed that the Clerk would report the damage to WDC.

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

<b>3714.</b>	Information Commissioner's Office: Data Protection register (LGA1972 s111)	35.00
<b>3715.</b>	EPS Transfers Bus Shelter crest and town signs (LGA1972 s144)	55.00 + vat
<b>3716.</b>	Greater Anglia – Station Building Rent	465.14
<b>3717.</b>	HRG Services – brass plaque – from Gappa reserves	132.00

**DD/Standing Orders:**

<b>3718.</b>	Barclays Bank – Bank Charges (LGA1972 s112)	16.46
<b>3719.</b>	EDF Energy – Market Place No 2 Electricity (Food Act 1984 s 50)	31.00
<b>3720.</b>	EDF Energy – Market Place No 3 Electricity (Food Act 1984 s 50)	25.00

**Approved at the meeting:**

<b>3721.</b>	Halesworth & District Twinning Society grant (LGA1972 s144)	965.00
<b>3722.</b>	Halesworth Arts Centre grant (LGA1972 s144)	500.00
<b>3723.</b>	Citizens Advice Grant (LGA1972 s137)	1,000.00
<b>3724.</b>	Halesworth Community Sports & Leisure grant (Open Spaces 1906 ss9 & ss10)	3,000.00

**Bank & Cash Balances at 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2018**

Current 728	£76,287.22
Community A/c	£5,273.63
Business Reserves 017	£92,304.78
Petty Cash	£52.38

The meeting was closed at 8.15pm