

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 at 10.00 in the Roden Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem

Present: - Cllrs R Dodd (Chairman), P Broomhall, P Glover, C Granger, D Parry

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

**1 To elect a committee chairman.**

**Resolved:- to elect Cllr Dodd as Committee Chairman.**

**2 Apologies** - to receive any apologies and reasons for absence.

**Resolved:- To approve the following apologies for absence Cllr Soul, Cllr Towers.**

Absent Cllr Johnson.

**3 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

a) Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting and which is not included in the register of interests.

None declared.

b) To consider any applications for dispensation.

None received.

**4 Committee Minutes** - to approve as a correct record the minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on 12.1.21.

**Resolved:- to approve as a correct record the minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on 12.1.21 and they were duly signed as a correct record.**

**5 Progress Report** – to note.

**Resolved:- to note.**

**6 2020-21 Accounts**

a) **2020-21 year end accounts** - for review.

**Resolved:- to note the 2020-21 year end financial reports.**

b) **Internal Audit report** – for consideration

It was reported that the AGAR had been updated to remove the PPE purchases from staff costs and the finance risk assessment will be updated to include supplier procurement fraud.

**Resolved:-** to note the internal audit report and to update the risk assessment as recommended.

**c) 2020-21 Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)** – to review in advance of the June meeting of the Town Council.

Section 1 and 2 of the AGAR were reviewed in advance of the Town Council meeting and it was

**Resolved:-** to recommend that

- **The Council answer yes to questions 1- 8 on the Annual Governance statement and n/a to question 9 and**
- **To approve the Accounting Statements in section 2**
- **To approve the significant variances report and date for the advertisement of electors' rights.**

**d) Earmarking Reserves** – to consider reserves for earmarking.

The report was considered and it was

**Resolved:-** to recommend the following allocations are earmarked in reserves

<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>Amount 31.5.21</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>2021-22 Recommendation</b>
Bulmer Cottage Reserve Fund	£44703	From sale of Bulmer Cottage for Expenditure on Recreation Ground/ Swimming Pool/ Butler Sports Centre.	Maintain
Developers Contributions Account	£35082	Provision of play equipment/ public open space maintenance equipment. Funds received from developers contributions	Maintain
Transformation Approved 27.4.17	£23000	Asset transfers / upgrades	<b>Allocate £10,000 from underspend in 2020-21 service transformation budget code.</b>
Streetlighting Remaining allocation from £60,000 LED conversion approved 27.4.17	£21480	Column replacement	Maintain
Neighbourhood fund	£24,882	Maintain for upgrading play equipment on the Recreation Ground (approved at Full Council on 12.12.19).	Maintain
Elections	£5024	Election costs	Maintain
Pensions	£8846	Future pension increases	Maintain

Highways	£1886	Temporary traffic system Signage contribution	Maintain
Cemetery Extension	£8000	Extension of cemetery	Maintain
Christmas Lights Approved 24.9.20	£1212	Hire of fixed lighting	Maintain
Heads up Project	£9000	Mental Health Project	<b>Allocate £3000 from 2020-21 Youth Projects underspend</b>
Public Toilets 24.9.21	£10,000	Covid rates grant	<b>Recommended that balance be reduced by £5000 and £5000 be reallocated to Recreation Ground Toilets where it will be earmarked in reserves for future renovation/ demolition costs.</b>
Old Toilet Block		Reopening /demolition recreation ground toilets	<b>Allocate £4700 from underspend in 2020/21 recreation ground toilet budget</b>
Small Grants	£0	Underspend from Grants / Town promotion cost center	Spent (allocation agreed 27.5.21)
Office move and recruitment		Costs associated with office move, equipment and recruitment	<b>Allocate £5000 from underspend in 2020-21 staffing budget.</b>
Remembrance Project		Purchase of lamppost poppies	<b>Allocate £300 allocation from general reserves.</b>
Play Equipment		Large Slide replacement  Skate park replacement	<b>Allocate £5400 from underspend in 2020-21 recreation budget. Allocate £2000 from underspend in 2020-21 skate park budget.</b>

**7 Policy review – to review the following policies/procedures and registers (delegated by Town Council on 20.5.21).**

a) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

**Resolved:- to recommend the following minor changes to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

**Standing Orders – amendment to item 28**

**Virtual Meetings.**

**The following meetings are currently permitted to meet remotely**

**Liaison Groups**

**Task and Finish Groups**

**Working Parties**

**Committees, Sub committees and Full Council are not legally permitted to meet remotely. Should regulations be amended to give Council's the option to conduct meetings remotely**

**the Council will predominantly use Zoom Platform and Councillors will adhere to the Virtual Meeting protocols as adopted 28.5.20.**

### **Financial Regulations**

**4.1 – removal of line 8 and 9.**

**6.10 – addition of the following, prior to authorising payment members permitted to authorise payments through the Town Council’s internet banking facility will be sent a copy of each invoice for payment. A hard copy of a screenshot of the authorisation sheet will be retained in the Town Council accounts file.**

b) Complaints Procedure

**Resolved:- to approve the review with no changes.**

c) Freedom of Information Act 2000

**Resolved:- to approve review with no changes.**

d) Asset Register

**Resolved:- to approve.**

e) Staff Policies including staff handbook – to consider quote from Shropshire Council to review the policies and procedures.

It was reported that the quote had not been received from Shropshire Council in time for the meeting.

**Resolved:- to delegate authority to the Clerk and Committee Chairman to approve the expenditure of up to £200 on the review of the staff handbook and staffing policies.**

**8 Training Statement of intent - to review previous council term and updated statement.**

**Resolved:- to approve.**

**9 Staffing**

a) Contract review – to consider draft contracts.

It was reported that the draft contracts had not all been received in time for the meeting.

**Resolved:- to defer to the July Town council meeting.**

b) Project and Finance Officer Vacancy – for update and to agree revised timeline. The job description and appointment timeline were considered and it was

**Resolved:- to recommend that**

- **Key responsibilities be amended to state, The post holder will act as deputy to the Town Clerk as directed following the satisfactory completion of appropriate training.**
- **The provisional timetable for appointment be approved and that the vacancy is advertised online only.**

- That the order is placed for the purchase of office equipment for the new post.
- The job title be amended to Finance and Project Assistant.

c) Office move – to discuss.

The Clerk presented one quote that had been received which Councillors felt was too high for the work involved. A discussion took place and Councillors expressed the view that as the office was next door to the current office and most items were on wheels the work could be carried out by staff and Councillors.

**Resolved:- to recommend that the office move be completed by staff and Councillors.**

**10 Cyber Security** – to consider Clerk’s audit report and draft policy.

**Resolved:- to defer this item to the next meeting to enable the Town Clerk to discuss the policy with IT support.**

**11 Date and time of next meeting** – to note.

**Resolved:- to note that the next meeting will take place on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 10.00.**

Meeting ended 10.55

Chairman.....