

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 15th AUGUST 2016
IN THE MARKET HOUSE**

PRESENT: Councillors: R Yeoman – Chairman
D Baker R Barnes
A Bradford M Eager
N Morris J Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs K Mitchell, Clerk to the Council
Cllrs A Harrison and E Harvey
1 member of the public

F.68 - 09.16 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs P Bettington, E Fieldhouse, K Francis, A Manns and A Warmington.

F.69 - 09.16 INTERESTS

None declared at this point in the meeting.

F.70 - 09.16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None at this point in the meeting.

F.71 - 09.16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7th July 2016, copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F.72 - 09.16 FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Summary of Receipts and Payments

Members were circulated with a summary of receipts and payments from 1st July to 31st August 2016.

RESOLVED: That the summary, as presented, be approved and adopted.

2. Quarterly Summary of Receipts and Payments against Budget
Members received the quarterly summary of receipts and payments related to the budget.

RESOLVED: That the summary be noted.

3. Invoices for payment
Members considered a list of invoices for payment, copies having been circulated. (Schedule to be lodged with the Minutes).

RESOLVED: That the invoices be approved for payment.

4. Bank Reconciliations

Members were advised that bank reconciliations from July to August 2016 had been verified.

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

5. Precept 2017/18

The Town Council is requested to submit its precept request for 2017/18 to Herefordshire Council by 31st December 2016.

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

6. Grant Funding

6.1 Specified Grants

Members considered the release of earmarked grant monies to the following organisations:

Organisation	Amount Awarded £
Carnival Association	1,000
Community Association	2,500
Poetry Festival	2,200
Age UK Hereford & Localities	2,750
Community Action Ledbury & District	7,000
Primary School	700

Members considered the purchase of new chairs for Ledbury Community Hall from the allocated grant funds for Ledbury Community Association. Any unspent monies from the £2,500 earmarked amount will be issued as a cheque in the normal way.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the specified grants be released and chairs purchased for Ledbury Community Hall.

6.2 Unspecified Grants

Members considered the following applications:

- i) Friends of The Master's House - to develop a town wide approach to heritage and volunteering in Ledbury.

Councillors R Barnes, M Eager and R Yeoman declared non-pecuniary interests in the application due to their involvement with Ledbury Places

Recommendation to Full Council: That the sum of £1,000 be granted to The Friends of The Master's House.

- ii) Ledbury Bowls Club - refurbishment of toilet facilities.

RESOLVED: That, in line with the Council's Donations/Grants policy, the application be rejected as grants cannot be awarded to organisations for premises maintenance and overheads.

- iii) Herefordshire Information and Advice Partnership.

A letter outlining the proposed service had been circulated to members.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the sum of £450 be granted to Herefordshire Information and Advice Partnership.

6.3 Review of grant funding awarded to Love Ledbury (Ledbury & District Community Benefit Society) in the sum of £7,400, in 2014. It was noted that an interim report provided by Love Ledbury had identified unspent grant funds.

Members were reminded that projects should be completed within one year of a grant offer and that applicants receiving a grant may at the Council's discretion, be requested to provide an End of Project Report.

RESOLVED: That Love Ledbury be requested to provide an End of Grant report.

6.4 External Audit – Year ended 31st March 2016.

The Chairman drew members' attention to the possible impact to the budget as a result of Cllr Harvey's challenge to the Ledbury Town Council Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2015-16. (C.98-07.16 refers). The matter is now in the hands of the external auditor; costs are as yet unknown.

F.73 - 09.16 CASUAL VACANCY - NORTH WARD

Members considered the use of poll cards for the election to fill the casual vacancy in the North Ward. The Clerk advised that the cost had been estimated at £2,250. If contested, the election will take place on Thursday, 3rd November 2016.

Recommendation to Full Council: That poll cards be issued in the event of a contested election.

F.74 - 09.16 ICT

Proposal for hosted computing. Refer **EX04/2016**
This item was deferred to the end of the meeting for consideration in private session.

F.75 - 09.16 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members considered the renewal of the Town Council's annual subscription to the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE).

Recommendation to Full Council: That the subscription to CPRE be renewed in the sum of £36.

F.76 - 09.16 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. Members received a report from the Policies Task and Finish Group and copies of the following documents showing proposed revisions in tracked changes. (Copies having been circulated to members ahead of the meeting)
 - i) Donations and Grants
 - ii) Risk Management Policy
 - iii) Risk Management Strategy

Recommendation to Full Council: That the revised documents as presented, be approved and adopted.

2. Risk Register.

Members reviewed the risk register; there were no new risks or changes identified.

The Chairman advised that a review of risk will be included as a standard item on every Finance & General Purposes Committee agenda.

F.77 - 09.16 TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

1. Rental of the 1st floor offices - The Clerk reported that in the light of legal advice it had not been possible to proceed with the lease due to the prospective tenant's reluctance to provide a financial guarantee.
2. Replacement of office heaters – Members considered a suggestion to proceed with the replacement of two heaters in the panelled room.

RESOLVED: That a quotation for replacement heaters be presented for consideration at the next meeting.

3. Room hire - Members considered setting a hire charge for the use of a room in the Town Council offices for conducting interviews relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct by Ledbury Town Councillors.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the room hire rate be set at £10 per hour.

F.78 - 09.16 AWARDS

The Town Mayor presented a proposal for an inaugural award for pupils at John Masefield High School (JMHS) in honour of former Town Mayor and JMHS teacher, Chris Holbourn. The award would recognise pupils who have demonstrated integrity, respect and courage. Members wholeheartedly supported the proposal

Recommendation to Full Council: To support an award in honour of Chris Holbourn, and, that a trophy/cup be purchased for this purpose.

That an Awards Task and Finish Group set the criteria for the award.

F.79 - 09.16 HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET CONSULTATION FOR 2017/18

The Town Council is advised that Herefordshire Council launched its budget consultation for 2017/18 and is asking residents to participate and have their say. Consultation closing date is 7th October 2016. Further information available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay

Members had been previously circulated with a report and budget slides outlining saving requirements up to 2020.

It was noted that whilst the consultation questionnaire was mainly targeted towards residents there were a number of questions which were appropriate for a Town Council response. Councillors were requested to look at the consultation material and bring points to the next Full Council for consideration.

RESOLVED: That relevant questions be identified for consideration at the Full Council meeting on 29th September, 2016.

F.80 - 09.16 OUTSIDE BODIES

Members received the Minutes of the Herefordshire Market Towns Forum meeting held on 27th July 2016 together with notes prepared by Cllr M Eager.

Accompanying documents previously circulated by email:

- Market Towns Forum Customer Services and Libraries Natalia Silver Assistant Director - Communities
- Article 4 and HMOs Marc Willimont Head of Regulatory and Development Management Services
- Improving Access to Advice in the Market Towns – Herefordshire CAB

RESOLVED: That these be noted.

F.81 - 09.16 CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

Members were advised of correspondence received from:

Herefordshire Council Budget Consultation 2017/18 at the Shire Hall, Hereford on Thursday 28th July 2016 at 6.30pm.

The City of Culture, Tourism and Festivals Working Group meeting notes and actions 29th June 2016.

Thank you letter from The Maritime Cadets for the recent grant award.

F.82 - 09.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA INCLUSION

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee is scheduled to be held on 20th October, 2016.

F.74 - 09.16 ICT (Continued)

Members considered a proposal from Microshade VSM to move the Council's IT provision to a hosted system. (EX04/2016 refers)

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve a 2-3 year option for the installation and migration of applications and data to Microshade VSM hosted system, in the sum of: £725 for one-off set up costs, plus a monthly fee of £143.90

Chairman Date