

MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 2nd JUNE 2016
IN THE MARKET HOUSE

PRESENT: Councillors: R Yeoman – Chairman
D Baker A R Bradford
M Eager N Morris
N Roberts – substitute for E Fieldhouse

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs K Mitchell, Clerk to the Council
Mrs M Bradman, Deputy Clerk to the Council
3 Members of the Public

F.40 - 06.16 APOLOGIES

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

F.41 - 06.16 INTERESTS

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) declared by:
Councillor M Eager referring to item 5.2 Invoices for Payment (28).
Councillor N Morris referring to item 5.2 Invoices for Payment (19).

F.42 - 06.16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr C Jupp, Links and Visits Co-ordinator for the Ledbury-Strömstad Twinning Association spoke in support of the joint award from the two councils.

In the interest of expediency the Chairman brought the Awards item forward.

F.43 - 06.16 AWARDS

Members considered starting up a joint award with Strömstad Council to recognise organisations or people who have promoted links between the two towns.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Town Council support the joint award in conjunction with Strömstad Council.

F.44 - 06.16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 17th March 2016, copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F.45 - 06.16 FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Summary of Receipts and Payments

Members were circulated with a summary of receipts and payments from 1st March to 30th April 2016.

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

2. Invoices for payment

Members considered a list of invoices for payment, copies having been circulated. (Schedule to be lodged with the Minutes). The Chairman pointed out that due to Cllrs Morris and Eager's DPI declaration, and in order to avoid the meeting becoming inquorate, consideration of payment of invoices 19 and 28 would have to be deferred to the Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED: That invoice no's 1-18, 20-27 and 29-31 be approved for payment.

3. Participatory Budgeting Grant Distribution

Members considered the following applications for funding.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Town Council award the following grants:

Group	Grant Request	Project Cost	Grant Award Recommendation
Ledbury Brass Band	£750	£6,000	£750
Age UK Ledbury	£750	£8,800	£750
Ledbury Community Day	£300	£450	£300
JMHS – Library	£568	£568	£568
Ledbury Food Group	£400	£2,715	Not supported

Maritime Cadets	£4,000	£14,000	On hold – to be reconsidered if grant application to Herefordshire Council is successful.
Herefordshire Wild Play	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
Visually Impaired Support Group	£300	£300	£300
Marches Family Support Network	£1,000	£78,626	£1,000
Catcher Media Social	£1,500	£329,746	£1,000

4. Members considered a request for grant funding from the Ledbury Station Master towards seating on the Hereford platform.

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve the request in the sum of £300 for seating on the Hereford platform.

5. Internal Audit

5.1 Members considered the Internal Auditor's report for the year ended 31st March, 2016.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Asset Register records items over £1,000.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Town Council be recommended to approve the Internal Auditor's Report noting that accurate financial record keeping is being maintained.

5.2 Members considered a letter from the Internal Auditor, copies having been circulated, regarding:

- a) a request for payment for additional works as instructed by the 2015/16 F & GP Chairman, and
- b) quotations for future additional works as requested by the 2015/16 F & GP Chairman.

Referring to a) Members were concerned that the instruction for works had been issued without authority from the Council, contrary to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Following a lengthy discussion,

It was **RESOLVED: That Cllr Harrison be requested to provide an explanation for incurring unauthorised expenditure in the sum of £192 + VAT, and to provide a report on the 1½ hr discussion with the internal auditor.**

Referring to b) Members considered the quotations (1-3) for future additional works over and above the approved contract for internal audit, provided at the request of the 2015/16 Chairman:

1. Discussion with Chairman of F & GP following each internal audit visit.
2. Increased narrative to internal audit report.
3. Reviewing and checking financial reporting of the NDP.

Members unanimously agreed that items 1 and 3 were not required.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Internal auditor be instructed to provide an increased narrative to reports following each internal audit visit, in the estimated sum of £96 + VAT

RESOLVED: That the invoice from internal auditor be approved for payment in the sum of £738 + VAT.

6. Annual Return for the year ended 31st March, 2016.

Members were advised that the internal auditor had checked the accounts and had completed the annual return section for the internal audit report confirming that all control objectives had been met.

Members considered the following accounting statements, copies having been previously circulated:

Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement

Members considered the annual governance statement, items 1 to 9, and answered YES to statements 1 to 8, and N/A to no.9.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the annual governance statement for 2015/16 be approved for submission to the external auditors.

Section 2 - Accounting Statements for 2015/16

Recommendation to Full Council: That the figures as presented in Section 2, Accounting Statements for Ledbury Town Council's External Audit 2015/16, be approved and adopted.

7. Earmarked Reserves

Members considered the allocation of earmarked reserves as at 1st April 2016, copies having been circulated.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the sum of £15,215 be transferred from general to earmarked (NDP) reserves to account for grant funding received.

Recommendation to Full Council: That earmarked reserves totalling £247,613, be approved.

F.46 - 06.16 SUBSCRIPTIONS

1. Members considered the renewal of the Clerk's membership to The Society of Local Council Clerks.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the annual renewal of the Clerk's membership to the Society of Local Council Clerks in the sum of £260.00, be approved.

2. Members considered the renewal of the Town Council's annual subscription to HALC in the sum of £1,878.82 plus VAT.

Recommendation to Full Council: That annual membership to HALC in the sum of £1,878.82 plus VAT be renewed.

F.47 - 06.16 HOSPITALITY

Members considered providing hospitality for the Ledbury in Bloom Judging Day on Monday, 18th July 2016.

Recommendation to Full Council: That hospitality be provided for the Ledbury in Bloom Judging Day on Monday 18th July 2016.

F.48 - 06.16 ICT

Members considered upgrading/replacement of the office computers.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Clerk ascertain requirements and present the findings to a Task & Finish group for consideration.

F.49 - 06.16 TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

The Clerk informed members that after a year on the rental market, a local company had expressed an interest in renting one of the vacant offices in the Town Council building, however a request to renegotiate the service charge had been received.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the service charge for office 1 be reduced to £70 pcm and for office 2 to £100 pcm.

F.50- 06.16 YOUTH COUNCIL

Members considered the request to apply for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for adult Youth Council helpers.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Town Council support the Youth Council by applying for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for adult Youth Council helpers in the sum of £14.90 plus VAT per volunteer.

F.51 - 06.16 WORKING PARTIES

1. Democratic Participation Working Party

Members received a report from the meeting held on 21st March, 2016.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2. Confirmation of Working Parties

RESOLVED: That the following Working Parties be retained.

**Accommodation
ICT
Awards
Democratic Participation**

3. Working Party Membership

RESOLVED: That working party membership be made up as follows:

**ACCOMMODATION
R Barnes, M Eager,
K Francis, R Yeoman**

**ICT
R Barnes, A R Bradford,
M Eager, R Yeoman.**

**AWARDS
D Baker, K Francis,
N Morris.**

**DEMOCRATIC
PARTICIPATION
A Bradford, K Francis,
N Morris.**

F.52 - 06.16 OUTSIDE BODIES

1. Members received a report of the Market Towns Forum meeting on 21st March 2016 as prepared by Councillor Eager.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2. There were no other reports presented.

F.53 - 06.16 CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

Members were advised of correspondence received from:

Mr L Meredith advising that flags had been flown on 42 occasions between 1st May 2015 and 30th April 2016.

Chairman of the Friends of the Master's House seeking support for a Heritage Lottery Application.

HSBC advising of the closure of the Ledbury branch on 1st July 2016.

Chief Executive of Halo Leisure in response to concerns raised over 'village' style changing rooms at Ledbury Swimming Pool.

F.54 - 06.16 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 7th July, 2016.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm.

Chairman Date