

**MINUTES OF A MEETING  
OF THE  
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER 2015  
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

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**PRESENT:** Councillors: A Harrison - Chairman  
D Baker R Barnes  
P Bettington M Eager  
M Mackness A Manns  
N Morris A Warmington  
R Yeoman

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs K Mitchell, Clerk to the Council  
Mrs M Bradman, Deputy Clerk to the Council

**F.44 - 10.15 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors A Crowe, K Francis and E Harvey.

**F.45 - 10.15 INTERESTS**

Councillor R Yeoman declared a Non Pecuniary Interest in item 6 referring to youth provision.

**F.46 - 10.15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

**F.47 - 10.15 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015, copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record.

**F.48 - 10.15 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1. Summary of Receipts and Payments

Members were circulated with a summary of receipts and payments from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2015.

**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 appended to the Minutes.

**RESOLVED: That the invoices, no.s 1-7, as presented, be approved for payment.**

3. Annual Return for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

Members were advised that the External Auditor’s certificate and report had been received. On the basis of the review of the annual return and supporting information, the external auditor had reported that there were no matters giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met, and, that there were no other matters to draw to the attention of the council.

**RESOLVED: That the conclusion of the external audit be noted.**

The Committee passed a vote of confidence in the Clerk in her ability to manage the Council’s finances.

**F.49 - 10.15 BUDGET 2016/17**

Members considered the second draft of the budget required by the Finance & General Purposes Committee for 2015/16.

Referring to Town Council Offices: The clerk was requested to obtain estimates for replacement of storage heaters.

Referring to Grants: Councillor Yeoman presented a case to increase budget provision to support a Youth Drop-in, run by a community group.

Following discussion it was decided to move sums from the following budget lines to combine with the Youth Budget:

4860 JMHS	550
4865 Busy Bees	550
4890 Unspecified Grants	<u>2,000</u>
	3,100
4870 Youth Budget	<u>1,500</u>
New Youth Budget Total	£4,600

The Chairman asked members to send in any comments on the draft budget before the next meeting.

**F.50 - 10.15 RISK REGISTER**

The Chairman informed members that the risk register was still being collated and would need to be deferred to the next meeting.

**F.51 - 10.15 TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

1. Councillor Mackness gave a brief overview of her proposal for the use of the bay windows in the Town Council offices, copies having been previously circulated.

**RESOLVED: That additional quotations for lighting be sought for consideration at the Full Council meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2015.**

2. Non domestic rates

Members considered applying for separate listings of the two rental offices on the first floor for Non Domestic Rates, in order to allow prospective tenants to claim for small business allowance. The clerk informed members that the Town Council would be responsible for the extra costs as a result of the separate listings if the rooms were not let.

**Recommendation to Full Council: That separate listings be applied for once the rooms are let.**

3. Ceremony Room Advertising

Members considered advertising the Ceremony Room in the 'Celebrate in Herefordshire' Ceremonies Brochure.

**Recommendation to Full Council: That the quarter page advertising space is purchased at a cost of £400 (4k copies) for a two year period to include listings on two websites.**

**F.52 - 10.15 WORKING PARTY MATTERS**

Members were circulated with the Democratic Participation working party report of the meeting held on 11th August, 2015.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

Referring to item 6. Community Governance Review. The Clerk advised that Herefordshire Council was proposing to carry out a review and had extended the deadline for comments to 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2015.

The Community Governance Review letter and guidance had been previously circulated via email with the agenda packs for the September meeting.

**Recommendation to Full Council: That the following comments be submitted:**

1. Referring to altering boundaries of existing parishes/parish councils; Query whether this is the responsibility of the Boundary Commission. Would need the co-operation of neighbouring parishes to do this.

- 2. **Could be beneficial in allowing councils to increase council tax.**
- 3. **That the current no of Councillors (18) on Ledbury Town Council is considered to be appropriate. There is no appetite for reducing numbers as this may make inquorate meetings more likely.**

**F.53 - 10.15 OUTSIDE BODIES**

- 1. Members received a report, prepared by Councillor Francis, from the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils Executive Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

- 2. Members received a report from the Market Towns Forum meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015. The Clerk was asked to ascertain whether a Councillor may attend the Market Towns Forum meetings as an observer.  
Referring to Item 4. Council Tax Reduction Grant – The Clerk reported that in response to the Forum’s request to the Leader of Herefordshire Council to continue passing on the grant to Town and Parish Councils, Cllr Johnson had replied stating that due to its financial position, Herefordshire Council would be unable to continue to do so.

**F.54 - 10.15 CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION**

Thank you letters had been received from Ledbury Primary School and Ledbury Carnival Association for their 2015/16 specified grants.

**RESOLVED: That these be noted.**

**F.55 - 10.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee is scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

Chairman..... Date.....