

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 24th NOVEMBER 2016
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, LEDBURY**

PRESENT: Councillors: R Barnes M Eager
 K Francis A Manns
 N Morris A Warmington

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs K Mitchell, Clerk to the Council
 Cllr J Simpson

F.95 - 11.16 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Cllr K Francis be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee until the Annual Council meeting in May 2017.

F.96 - 11.16 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Baker, A Bradford, E Fieldhouse and J Roberts

F.97 - 11.16 INTERESTS

None declared at this point in the meeting.

F.98 - 11.16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

F.99 - 11.16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 20th October 2016, copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F.100 - 11.16 FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Summary of Receipts and Payments

Members were circulated with a summary of receipts and payments from 1st to 31st October 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).

RESOLVED: That the invoices be approved for payment.

3. External Audit – Year ended 31st March 2016

The Clerk gave an update on the external audit as a result of a formal objection to the 2015-16 annual return by a Ledbury Town Councillor. The auditors had requested some information which had been duly returned. Additional fees for the work to be carried out would be charged at a cost of £180-325 per hour.

4. Appointment of internal auditor

The Clerk reported that the Internal Auditor's had advised that they did not wish to re-new their contract with the Town Council for a second year which meant that they would not be able to carry out a review of the draft budget for 2017-18.

In view of the time involved in appointing a new internal auditor, it was **RESOLVED to make the following**

Recommendations to Full Council: That the approval of the Budget and Precept request for 2017-18 be delayed until the Full Council meeting on 2nd February 2017.

That delegated authority be given to the Finance & General purposes Committee to appoint a new Internal Auditor.

F.101 - 11.16 BUDGET 2017/18

1. Members considered the second draft of the budget required by the Finance & General Purposes Committee for 2017/18, copies having been circulated.

Members reviewed each cost centre and identified further changes where appropriate.

Members were reminded that a working group meeting would be held on 1st December to review the 2017/18 budget across all committees.

F.102 - 11.16 TOWN CLOCK

Members considered a request from Ledbury Places for the Town Council to take on responsibility for the maintenance of the town clock.

The Clerk was requested to seek clarification on a number of questions raised regarding need, costs and current maintenance in time for further consideration at the budget meeting on 1st December.

F.103 - 11.16 RISK REGISTER

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

Cllr Morris left the meeting at this point.

F.104 - 11.16 TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

1. The Clerk reported that the heating engineer had carried out a final survey of the heating requirements for the Ceremony Room (refer F.91-10.16) and had flagged up the need for larger heaters than those originally specified. Prior to placing an order, the Clerk wished to raise her concerns about the visual impact that the increased size and colour of the radiators would have on the room. An alternative option was circulated for consideration which was felt to be more in keeping with the character of the room, however the increase in cost was £ 318, making the total revised cost £2,683 plus VAT.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the additional sum of £318 be approved and a revised order be placed for two electric heaters for the Ceremony Room.

2. Members considered a request from the Trustees of Ledbury Food Bank for use of a room to conduct client reviews on a monthly basis.

Cllr K Francis declared a non-pecuniary interest in the above item.

In view of limitations with regard to room availability and disabled access in the Town Council Offices, Cllr Eager suggested that a room could be made available at the Community Hall should the Food Bank wish to make contact with him in his capacity as Hall Manager.

3. Fire Safety

Members considered a recommendation from Chubb Fire and Security for replacement emergency lighting in the Town Council Offices.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the quotation for replacement emergency lighting be approved in the sum of £254.80 plus VAT.

F.105 - 11.16 MARKET HOUSE

Members considered a suggestion to upgrade electrical equipment, including lighting, and remove surplus items such as the redundant overhead fan heaters.

**RESOLVED: That an Accommodation Working Party meeting be held as soon as practicable to consider the matters raised.
Members being: Cllrs Barnes, Eager, Francis and Manns**

F.106 - 11.16 CONSULTATION

The Boundary Commission for England is currently consulting on initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries.

Members had been previously circulated with copies of proposals for Ledbury.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED: That Members be invited to submit comments to the office by 30th November, for collation and submission to the Boundary Commission by 5th December 2016.**

F.107 - 11.16 ALLOWANCE SCHEME FOR PARISH OR TOWN COUNCILLORS

Members considered a letter from Herefordshire Council seeking the Town Council's view on the introduction of an allowance scheme for Town Councillors, copies having been circulated.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the allowance scheme be further considered by Full Council on the basis of the letter.

F.108 - 11.16 OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Barnes presented his report from the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils East Hereford Area Committee meeting held on 9th November, 2016, copies having been circulated.

He drew attention to a proposal to consider funding for a joint project promoting and maintaining the Herefordshire Way footpath which runs through a number of parishes in the group.

Recommendation to Full Council: That the Herefordshire Way project be supported in principle.

Cllr Eager gave a verbal report of the Herefordshire Market Towns Forum held on 23rd November, 2016. Topics under discussion included the Herefordshire Economic Master Plan and s106 monies. A written report will be presented to the next meeting.

Referring to s106 monies, Cllr Warmington agreed to facilitate setting up a meeting with the Planning Obligations Manager and Cllr Barnes, Chairman of the Economic Development & Planning Committee.

RESOLVED: That these be noted.

F.109 - 11.16 CASUAL VACANCIES - NORTH AND SOUTH WARDS

The Town Council is advised that valid requests for elections in the north and south wards have been received. If contested, the elections will take place on Thursday, 12th January, 2017. (refer F.89 - 10.16)

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

F.110 - 11.16 CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

Members were advised that a copy of the Herefordshire Information and Advice Partnership's Terms of Reference had been received in the office.

F.111 - 11.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA INCLUSION

- Participatory budgeting

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee is scheduled to be held on 19th January 2017.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act, a resolution was passed to exclude the public and press during discussion of the following agenda items. The confidential nature being the consideration of comparative quotations.

F.112 - 11.16 INSURANCE

Members considered three quotations for insurance cover for 1 year and 3 year periods
See EX09/2016

Recommendation to Full Council: That the quotation from **Came & Company** be approved for a one year period, commencing 18th December 2016, in the sum of **£6,230.75**

The meeting closed at 9.26pm

Chairman

Date