



MINUTES OF THE
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 27th FEBRUARY 2019 AT 2pm AT 25(a) LOAD STREET

PRESENT

Councillor J Byng, Committee Chairman
Councillor A Coleman
Councillor R Coleman
Councillor L Davies
Councillor P Harrison
Councillor D Killingworth, Committee vice-Chairman

In attendance:

One member of the public and one non-committee member of the Town Council
Sharon Hudson, Town Clerk
Gill Lungley, Temporary Office Manager

f&gp/072 Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the committee meeting.

f&gp/073 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from committee members Cllrs J Beeson, and G Yarranton and from the Treasurer, David Moore

f&gp/074 Declarations of Interest

Cllr J Byng declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as the spouse of a member of staff for which a standing dispensation has been granted when there is discussion on general staffing matters.

Cllr D Killingworth declared an interest in Riverside North Park as a trustee.

f&gp/075 Councillor Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

f&gp/076 Public Question Time

A A list of questions had been submitted which were expected to be referred to during the meeting.

B The Bewdley Theatre Group had submitted an application for grant funding. Having applied for a grant last year, the group undertook to provide the Town Council with information relating to all outgoings regarding the pantomime.

f&gp/077 Minutes

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 30th January 2019 were approved and will be signed by the Chairman.

f&gp/078 To receive an update from the Treasurer on the Council's current financial position.

The Treasurer's schedule of accounts for February 2019 had been prepared; 3 copies were circulated and will be added to the agenda for the Town Council meeting on 04/03/2019.

f&gp/079 Review of budget for 2019/20 (yet to be approved by the Town Council) to reflect likely costs of election on 02/05/2019, Neighbourhood Plan progress, Wyre Hill Play Area equipment improvements and paddling pool obligations.

Minor internal adjustments were made to the previous proposal, but this did not affect the overall totals.

It was **agreed** to put the final proposal to the Town Council meeting on 04/03/2019.

The Mayor put to the meeting a request for expenditure of £800 from reserves to support a topographical survey of Dowles Road by WCC Highways in their quest to install improved road safety features. The District Council ward members and County Council division member would be asked to recompense for this in the next financial year. It was **agreed** to support this request and seek ratification from the Town Council meeting on 04/03/2019

f&gp/080 To receive an update on progress since the preceding meeting of this committee including:

.1 Town Clerk's action regarding the Internal Auditor's recommendations:

- Review of the Town Council's internal controls include all contractual arrangements: The Town Clerk has met with the committee Chairman and vice-Chairman to progress this;
- Review of Financial Regulations and Standing Orders
The Town Clerk has reviewed both the Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations with copies forwarded with the agenda for this meeting for comment.
- Review of risk management and risk monitoring arrangements
The Town Clerk is arranging for valuations of Town Council assets and is working on the council's system of internal controls.
- Arrange for effective checks on payroll
This is work in progress.
- Ensure the setting up of appropriate office management systems
This is work in progress
- Review of special events held in 2018.
It was agreed to appoint a working party at the next meeting of the Town Council.
- Production of Action Plan
This is work in progress

.2 It was noted the purchases recommended for approval had been approved by the Town Council: including a new computer, 2 x grit bins, accounting software.

.3 Update regarding invoices received for work to the Neighbourhood Plan: the contractor would be advised payment would be made after the work had been completed.

.4 The Town Clerk, committee Chairman and vice-Chairman had met with the insurance broker to check the insurance policy was fit for purpose.

.5 The Town Clerk had been in contact with Wyre Forest DC with regard to the lease for the Paddling Pool at Riverside North Park but had yet to receive any appropriate paperwork.

f&gp/081 To review the Grants Policy and Small Grants Scheme

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Town Council as follows:

- A to dispense with the Small Grants Scheme (awards of up to £100 for community events) and incorporate it into the main grants scheme;
- B to bring the awarding of grants into conformity with the Town Council's timetable so that it will be the relevant council that awards the grants in the respective financial year (rather than, in an election year, one council awarding but the next council paying).

f&gp/082 To consider for approval applications for grant funding during 2019/20 financial year.

In light of minute no. f&gp/081 above, the ten funding applications received to date would be considered at a later date. The applicants would be so advised.

f&gp/083 To review and approve the following policies.

- a) Financial Regulations and
- b) Standing Orders – both updated by the Town Clerk and circulated to members by email.
- c) Expenses Policy and
- d) Investments Policy were circulated to all members with the agenda for this meeting. It was **agreed** to adopt the amended documents at a) and b) and to adopt the Expenses and the Investments Policies.

f&gp/084 For progress on the scheme to improve facilities at Wyre Hill Play Area, to receive information from the Wyre Hill Sand Park regarding their preferred style of replacement equipment, receive an update on the response from the landlord (WCC), agree funding already in place and agree next steps including seeking requests for sealed tenders.

It was noted that the tendering process was not quite in keeping with the council's financial regulations however it had been difficult to make progress due to the office circumstances since July 2018; members were approving of the preferred scheme and that it had been a consultative approach.

Funds had been raised by the Friends and the Town Council had managed to cover the cost of the proposed equipment in the budget for 2019/20.

The Landlord (WCC) had been asked to approve the installation of new equipment and a site meeting has been arranged with an officer of Wyre Forest DC to review the suitability of the site for various activities and alternative equipment.

It was **agreed** to recommend to the next meeting of the Town Council the purchase of new play equipment for the Wyre Hill Play area at a cost of £14,981.03.

f&gp/085 To receive any urgent matters not on this agenda subject to prior notification.

None

f&gp/086 No confidential discussion was required.

f&gp/087 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 20th March 2019 at 2pm.

These minutes are signed as a true and accurate record:

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Chairman, Finance and General Purposes Committee

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Date