



HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY 19th November, 2018 at 6.30pm

FINANCE REPORT no. 30 (2018-19)

Present: Councillors;

T Allen, P Dutton, A Fleming, R Lewis (Chair), K Prime, D Thomas, M Took, D Wollweber.

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk). Cllr Greenberg present for item 5, no members of the public.

REPORT

- 1) **Apologies:** Cllr P Widdowson
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** Non-pecuniary interests; Cllr Allen for item 5
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 15th October, 2018 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) **Matters arising from the minutes.**

Grant for the Poppy Trail. At the last meeting the Committee agreed to increase the donation from £450 to £550 to cover the costs of an additional 40 poppies. These additional poppies were never delivered and the Royal British legion would return the cheque and another cheque would be reissued for £450.

Bank Card/Internet Banking: The Chair reported that after considerable time spent on the phone and in the Bank, Barclays had produced a form to apply for a Debit Card. However this would need to be in the name of one of the Councillors and was therefore not a solution. The Chair advised that it was advisable to wait until after the elections in 2019 to set up the dual authorisation for internet banking as then the Clerk would have signatories for the next four years. In the meantime the Clerk would be looking into the possibility of a prepaid card.

- 5) **Staff Matters:** Secretarial hours for the Neighbourhood Plan:
 - a. **Additional Hours:** The Clerk reported that the Assistant Clerk could not provide any further hours to cover the Neighbourhood Plan meetings but was happy to use the hours previously allocated for the TDC which had since been dissolved. Any additional hours or extra evening meetings for the Communications Committee would need to be taken in lieu from the normal office hours. To minimise this the Communications Committee members **agreed** to meet during the Assistant Clerk's normal office hours. The Clerk advised that he would prefer any hourly adjustments to be made on Fridays if possible.
 - b. **Payment for Secretarial Duties:** Cllr Greenberg explained that WDC's contribution and any funding from 'Locality' was not intended to pay for secretarial services or employment. The Clerk had been given some conflicting information and had subsequently invoiced WDC for Neighbourhood Plan costs which had included the Assistant Clerk's additional hours. It was noted that in Jo McCallum's absence there had been no response from WDC and this was frustrating as it was not known if there was a problem or not. The Clerk advised

that regular additional hours should be part of the Assistant Clerk's contract. In view of the agreement under item 5 (a) it was then **RESOLVED** that if WDC did not agree to pay for the additional hours this would be taken from HTC's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group's budget for 2018-2019 and any further hours (over and above 5 hours per month now allocated for the Neighbourhood Plan) would be taken in lieu (on Fridays if possible). It was also agreed that the Clerk would contact WDC and if no satisfactory response is received then he would contact Nicole Ricard or a higher authority to get an answer.

6) **Finances:** The Committee received and noted the monthly report of expenditure against the budget. It was noted that the Council still had to allocate the donation of £300 from Screen Suffolk and the Town sign might be a good use for this donation, the Clerk also reminded the Committee that Halesworth Antiques Street Market had offered £200 towards the repair of the Town Sign.

7) **Budget:** The Committee received and noted the suggested figures for the budget for 2019/20 which would form the basis of the Precept. The Committee agreed some provisional adjustments and the Clerk would reissue the revised figures for the next meeting in December.

Parking: The Committee considered WDC's fee for the free parking for 2019/2020 which was £34,000 including vat. This amount seemed disproportionate to the amount of £9,000 that the Committee understood that Bungay Town Council were being asked to pay. Cllr Thomas believed that the use of parking revenue to support WDC's budget deficit was illegal and that the Council should consider legal advice. The Clerk advised the Committee to ask WDC to justify the costs however it was **RESOLVED** to seek legal advice on the amount offered for the 1hr free parking by WDC and the legality of it and the reasonableness of it and if there is any case for the Town Council to consider taking further action. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek legal advice from Prettys Solicitors via SALC and the Local Councils Public Advisory Service.

8) **Bungay High School Awards:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee agreed a £20 donation for Creative Writing and a £20 donation for A Level Product Design.

9) **Maintenance:** To consider any maintenance costs:

a. Town Sign: It was noted that the Clerk's office had contacted four companies or individuals to price for the repair of the Town Sign. So far only one quotation had been offered (Men's Sheds). Cllr Prime had another contact that may be interested in quoting. The Committee also discussed the possibility of obtaining a new sign. In the meantime, Cllr Wollweber and the Clerk would try to find out more about the history of the sign.

b. Notice Board: The Clerk reported that a quote had been received by this was only for the pin board but sealing the glass/Perspex was vital otherwise the boards would need to be replaced again. Despite advertising on Facebook and elsewhere no one else appeared to be interested in the work. Cllr Allen offered to look to see whether he could repair the Notice Board.

10) **Correspondence:** The Committee considered the offer of 2 x 2 hour free parking from WDC for the 4 week period leading up to Christmas. It was agreed that 4 hours would be requested for Saturday December 22nd, 9am – 12 Noon.

11) **News Items:** To consider any items for the website/newsletters. Once the free parking as requested under item 10 was approved, this would be put on Facebook and all other media outlets.

12) **Accounts for Payment:** The following list of accounts was approved for payment.

3714.	Vic Coulsen – Allotment Container paint (Allotments Act 1908 s23)	101.70
3715.	Community News – Poppy Trail news (LGA 1972 s142)	30.00 + vat
3716.	Green Magic Co – Neighbourhood Plan Leaflet dispenser (Neighbourhood Planning – Localism Act 2011 sch9) VAT not re-claimable as invoice is made out to Cherry Tree Inn	52.68

DD/Standing Orders:

3717.	BT Broadband and Telephone (LGA1972 s111)	173.05 + vat
--------------	----------------------------------------------	--------------

Bank & Cash Balances at 13th November, 2018

Current 728	£150,418.32
Community A/c	£5,278.89
Business Reserves 017	£92,396.86
Petty Cash (13/07/18)	£66.40 (02/11/18)