



# HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MONDAY 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 at 6.30pm

## FINANCE REPORT no. 33 (2018-19)

Present: Councillors;

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

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk), 2 members of the public (Ink Festival).

### REPORT

- 1) Apologies. Cllr P Dutton.
- 2) Declarations of Interest: Non-pecuniary interests: Cllr Thomas for 6 & 7, Cllr Widdowson for 6 & 7, Cllr Wollweber for 8, Cllr Prime for 6 & 7, Cllr Took for 6 & 7, Cllr Fleming for 6 & 7, Cllr Lewis for 6 & 7, Cllr Allen for 13.
- 3) Minutes: The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) Matters arising from the minutes. ATM, the Clerk had contacted Gt Yarmouth Borough Council who had confirmed that the cash points along the sea front had been provided by the banks. The Committee asked the Clerk to investigate whether the CashZone organisation could provide ATMs. It was noted that in the paper there had been a list of banks supported by the ATM in Coopers and the Communications Committee would look at relaying this message to the residents. The Clerk would write to Coopers and ask them to consider an external ATM and he would also chase the Co-op to see whether they had progressed the idea of an external ATM.
- 5) Finances: The Committee received and noted the monthly report of expenditure against the budget.
- 6) Free Parking: The Clerk reported that he had received an email from Mr Kerry Blair, Head of Operations at WDC, indicating that the proposal of £15,000 for free parking to all the car parks, except the Thoroughfare, would be accepted subject to Cabinet approval. The other details of the proposal, such as the half hour free spaces in the Thoroughfare car park was not mentioned specifically. The Clerk confirmed that he had included the notification that the rebate for the use of free parking spaces by Lloyds Mobile would be deducted from the bill unless a credit with the correct amount was received.
- 7) Budget: To consider if there are any amendments to the Committee's recommendations. It was noted that the Precept had been agreed and set but the Committee would look at the budget in the light of item 14.
- 8) Station Building: To receive an update on the damp repairs and Mencap's lease. The Clerk confirmed that the damp proof repairs were scheduled for June but there may be a possibility of bringing this forward. The Clerk confirmed that Mencap had now relinquished

the lease and returned the keys. The Clerk had informed the Museum and they would be considering a proposal to use that side of the Station building. The Clerk advised that the Committee should consider any other uses of the building but bearing in mind the lease with Network Rail stipulated community use. The Committee agreed that the Council should consider this at a later date.

9) Allotments: Anglian Water (Wave) sewage bills – site inspection. The Clerk reported that Anglian Water had been attempting to invoice around £850 for sewage on the Swan Lane Allotments. After many phone calls and emails and following an inspection of the site that had revealed no sewage connection, Anglian Water had withdrawn the demand and removed this element from the account.

10) Maintenance: To consider any maintenance costs:

- a. To consider proposals (attached) for upgrading the computers in the office. The Clerk explained the purpose to replace a PC that was about ten years old, an upgrade to an existing PC and a storage solution. The Committee considered the suitability of the proposals and whether there was any other alternatives. The Committee then approved the purchase of the equipment, as quoted, with the proviso that the Clerk investigates the shared storage option further to see if this was necessary and if there were any other comparisons worth considering before placing the order.
- b. To consider options (attached) on Councillors emails and online storage. The Committee did not consider separate emails as necessary and the Clerk would defer this until the new Council was in place.
- c. Noticeboard options: This matter was deferred pending further quotations and options to repair the existing Noticeboard.

11) Correspondence: None.

12) News Items: To consider any items for the website/newsletters: Information about the banks (item 4), free parking once it had been confirmed.

13) Accounts for Payment: To following list of accounts was approved for payment:

<u>3714.</u>	Kingfisher Direct – Grit Bin (GPoC)	69.99 + vat
<u>3715.</u>	Day Centre – 2018 Meetings (LGA1972 s133)	200.00
<u>3716.</u>	T Allen – Noticeboard repairs (Till Receipts) (LGA1972 s111)	22.97
<u>3717.</u>	Apollo Centre – Out Reach youth services	400.00
<u>3718.</u>	SALC – Cllr Training two days	103.00 + vat
<u>3719.</u>	J. Reece – Travel to Councillor Training – two days (LGA1972 s111)	66.60

Bank & Cash Balances at 13th February, 2019

Current 728	£139,456.91
Community A/c	£5,281.52
Business Reserves 017	£92,442.93
Petty Cash	£66.40

14) Staff Matters: Pensions. The Chair and Cllr Wollweber explained the complications that had arisen about the pensions. The Clerk’s contract stipulated the Local Government Pension Scheme but he had been enrolled in the NEST pension scheme instead. This had been a genuine misunderstanding due to a lack of knowledge on the subject. It was accepted that this was an unusual situation where the previous Council had agreed the contract but the present Cllrs and the Clerk had no knowledge of the LGPS. The Council’s accountants had also advised that they had no previous experience with LGPS and had

suggested the NEST scheme instead as they were familiar with it. It had transpired that the LGPS was run by Suffolk County Council, local authorities, schools and similar bodies were eligible to join the scheme however, no one at the time had realised what the significant differences were between the pension schemes. The Committee were made aware that following investigation there was a considerable difference in ongoing contributions and legally the previous year's contributions may need to be back dated. The Committee would also need to consider how this affected the budget for 2019-2020. It was noted that the Personnel Working Group had consulted the Local Council Public Advisory Service and was currently awaiting further advice and confirmation of what the liabilities may be. In the meantime the Clerk was checking with the insurance company to see if this may be covered by the Council's policy.

The meeting was closed at 7.25pm