



HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 15TH, 2016 AT 6.30PM
HELD IN THE DAY CENTRE
LONDON ROAD, HALESWORTH

REPORT

Present: Cllrs; P Dutton, A Fleming, R Lewis (Chair), D Thomas

In attendance: N. Rees (Clerk). No members of public

- 1) **Apologies:** Cllrs; A Baldwin, S Leverett, M Took, P Widdowson
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** To receive declarations for pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. No interests were declared.
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 18th January 2016 was accepted as a true record.
- 4) **Matters arising from the minutes.**

It was noted that Mr Alistair Macfarlane had provided the names and addresses for the owners of the properties in Quay Street and Holton Road that had suffered from graffiti on their walls. The Clerk would be writing to the house holders to request the graffiti is removed but to offer the costs obtained from Waveney Norse for the removal.

The Clerk also reported that he had contacted Pearce & Kemp to obtain a price for installing a new power point and cables for the media screen in the Library.

- 5) **Budget:** To receive an updated 'Detailed Receipts and Payments' report and to review the budget for 2016/17. The Clerk advised the Council that there was a payment due of £1,265.28 for the VAS signs but he had not received an invoice as yet and so it was not on the budget figures provided. The Committee received and noted the budget figures for 2016/17 and after consideration it was RESOLVED; that the allocation for all budget items (which totalled £90,600) agreed in November, would remain unchanged and that an additional line for 'Divestment of WDC services fund' would be added and this would be for £9,400. This figure being the difference between the budget total of £90,600 and the new agreed Precept figure of £100,000 and would directly relate to the proposal made by Cllr Sandra Leverett at the monthly meeting on February 1st, 2016. Furthermore it was RESOLVED that any balance left over from the budget in 2015/2016 would be ring fenced and allocated to a new reserve to be known as 'Divestment of WDC services reserve' and that at the end of the financial year 2016/2017, any amounts unspent from the budget line 'Divestment of WDC services fund' would be transferred to the Divestment of WDC services reserve.

The Committee noted that it would carefully monitor all the costs accrued against this new budget item over the course of the year to ensure that it was only spent on the purpose it was intended.

- 6) **Grants/Donations:** It was RESOLVED that the Committee approved a payment of £250 to Oxblood Molly for the Day of Dance event which was being held in March 2016.
- 7) **Maintenance:** To consider any maintenance issues. The Clerk reported that he still had not received a quotation from anyone interested in refurbishing the town's benches. It was agreed to ask Mr Kevin Firmin for a quotation and Cllr Thomas would also approach Mr Stephen Beales to see if he was interested.
It was noted that the Clerk had arranged for Mr Mark Jolly, a licenced Pest Controller to come and evaluate the perceived rat problem in the town on the 18th February, 2016.

It was also noted again that the bus shelters needed cleaning, it was agreed that the Clerk would ask Waveney Norse to provide a price. Cllr Dutton also brought up the issue of the grass verge in front of the brick bus shelter in Norwich Rd as being a hazard or an inconvenience when it was wet. The Clerk could not understand this as was easily possible to negotiate around the grass verge without stepping off the pavement.

It was also noted that the hole in the Thoroughfare car park was getting worse and it was agreed that the Clerk would contact WDC to ask if they could fill it in, even if it was only a temporary repair.

8) **Accounts for Payment:** The following list of accounts were approved for payment.

<u>3714.</u>	Cllr Anne Fleming - Postage	5.70
<u>3715.</u>	Essex & Suffolk Water (Swan Lane Allotments)	54.57
<u>3716.</u>	Essex & Suffolk Water (Saxon Allotments)	35.06

DD/Standing Orders

<u>3717.</u>	CF Corporate Finance – Photocopier Lease	156.06
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9) **Staff Matters:** To consider the employment of an assistant Clerk. The Clerk confirmed that in his opinion an assistant clerk who could cover the normal opening hours of the office would be preferable. It would also be beneficial for both the Clerk and the assistant Clerk that they are in the office at the same time rather than trying to individually cover other periods when the office is not officially open. Cllr Fleming also felt that the Council should officially retain the office's closed days of Tuesdays and Thursdays which gave the Cllrs a break from email messages so they could concentrate on other matters. It was noted that there would be a model contract and job description available from SALC or the SLCC and the Clerk would email this to the Committee members. After consulting the National Joint Council for Local Government Services pay scales it was RESOLVED that the Council would advertise for an assistant Clerk to cover the hours of 9am – 1pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with an agreed figure of £9.90 per hour (Ref LC1 20) but with some flexibility to cover the occasional evening meeting. The Clerk would prepare an advert and email around for approval.

10) **Office Equipment:**

- a. To consider the purchase of an office computer. The prices obtained for an additional computer for the Assistant Clerk from Viking were received and noted. The Clerk advised that there would be other costs involved such as purchasing software such as Microsoft Office which might add another £100 or so to the cost. It was agreed that the Clerk would also obtain quotations from the Computer shop in the Market Place and Edge Computer Solutions in Beccles, both of which would offer support and backup.
- b. To consider the costs for purchasing 20 lanyards and name badge holders. It had been agreed previously that lanyards were preferable to a pin badge and the Clerk had obtained a quotation from Viking to supply 20 blank name badges with lanyards, where a name plate could be easily printed and inserted in the badge holder. RESOLVED that the Clerk would purchase 20 Lanyards in red and name badge holders for the total price of £64.97 + vat.

The meeting was closed at 7.30pm