



HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 19th SEPTEMBER, 2016 at 6.30pm

FINANCE REPORT no. 6 (2016-17)

Present: Councillors;

A Fleming, R Lewis, D Thomas, M Took, P Widdowson (arrived after item 8), D Wollweber

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk) 4 members of the public

Minutes

- 1) **Apologies:** Cllr T Gardner, Cllr S Leverett.
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** Non pecuniary; Cllr A Fleming for items 5, 6, 7a 13 & 14, Cllr Thomas for 5, 6 & 7a, Cllr Took for 5 & 6, Cllr Wollweber for 5, Cllr Widdowson for 14
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 18th July, 2016 and the Extraordinary Finance meeting held on the 25th July, 2016 were accepted as a true record.
- 4) **Matters arising from the minutes:** There were no matters arising
- 5) **Parking:** To receive a report on the meeting with WDC held on the 24th August (attached) and to consider the offer made by WDC to retain the free parking up to March 2018. The Clerk read out the letter to the Chair from Andrew Jarvis, Strategic Director for WDC dated 14th September, 2016. It was noted that there had been a positive response from many of the local parish councils that had been approached for contributions to the free parking for the period April 1st 2017 – 31st March 2018. The businesses had not as yet confirmed any specific contributions but it was known that one of the trader representatives had sent an email out asking for contributions at a suggested minimum figure of £120. However, Halesworth Business Connections had expressed concerns that this may exclude some smaller businesses and further that the letter should ideally be from the Town Council. The Committee agreed that it may be better not to have a minimum figure but it was for the businesses representatives to organise the request and distribution of the letters to all the businesses in the town. Cllr Fleming asked whether the Committee would consider recommending a figure that the Council should contribute thereby leaving a known target balance that the businesses could attempt to raise. The Committee felt that it may be better not to commit to an amount at this stage but wait to see what the parishes and businesses managed to raise. Cllr Thomas pointed out that the Committee needed to establish if it accepted WDC's offer first. After considerable debate it was RESOLVED that the Committee recommended that the Council accepted the offer made in the letter from Mr Jarvis (dated 14th September, 2016) but with grave reservations. It was then RESOLVED that the Clerk informs the Traders representatives and HBC representatives that the Council supports the efforts to retain the free parking and that the Finance Committee recommended that Halesworth Town Council makes a substantial contribution to the cost of the free parking for April 2017 - March 2018.
- 6) **London Rd Building:** To consider any associated costs and to consider making an offer for the building. It was noted that the structural survey from Brian Morton Partnership and the valuation from Durrants had been necessary to determine the condition and value of the building before committing any offer to WDC. It was noted that the costs of £2,000 for the structural survey and £240 for the valuation would come out of the 'Divestment of WDC services' reserve and not the current budget. RESOLVED that the Committee deferred any decisions on whether to make an offer for the building and at what level to the

London Rd Business Working Group as they were due to meet Hannah Reid of Community Action Suffolk to conclude the business plan on the following day (Tuesday 20th September, 2016).

7) **Grants & Donations:** (this item was taken earlier in the meeting after item 4 and before item 5)

a. To consider a revised grant application/donation to Campus Ltd for a bore hole.

Mr Kevin Vail explained that Campus had received other quotations but preferred the Aquarius offer that had been presented to the Committee with the Grant application as this was estimated on a 90m bore hole. Other companies figures were based on much shallower bore holes, Mr Vail thought additional costs would be more likely from these companies. The bore hole would be located somewhere between the main football pitch and the Bowls Green as the latter also needed 30,000 litres of water per week. The Chair reminded the Committee that at the last Extraordinary meeting on the 25th, the Committee agreed that it would support a new grant application for £5,000 towards a bore hole. This was in preference to the original application for financial assistance in meeting costs for mains water supply. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved the grant application to Campus Ltd for £5,000 towards the cost of the new bore hole. It was further RESOLVED that the Committee would review the CIL payments received since April 2016 at the next Finance Committee meeting.

b. To consider the grant application from Halesworth in Bloom.

Tamsyn Imison explained the aims and ambitions of Halesworth in Bloom for the next 12 months and in particular the plans to commemorate Sir William Hooker, but introducing a path in the Town Park with Rhododendrons planted along its length, new signage and developing the area behind the new play facilities. The Committee were impressed with the achievements of HIB and commended Tamsyn Imison and her team for winning another Gold for the town. It was then RESOLVED that the Committee approved the grant for £3,000. It was also noted that the Council and HIB would consider ideas, such as new planters to discourage advertising on the Saxon Way bridge but it was agreed that some advertising space needed to be kept somewhere for local businesses.

c. To consider paying for an advert for the Scarecrow event (approx. £50): It was RESOLVED that the Committee approved the request to pay for advertising the Scarecrow event in the Community News for the sum of £50.

Cllr Widdowson joined the meeting at 7.22pm

8) **Allotments and Market Rents, annual review:**

- a. Allotments: RESOLVED that the Committee would not increase the costs for this year (Allotment year runs from October 2016 – September 2017)
- b. Market Rents: RESOLVED that the Committee would not increase the costs this financial year.

9) **Financial Documents annual review:**

- a. Financial Regulations. RESOLVED that the amendments to the Financial Regulations were approved.
- b. Risk Assessment: The Clerk confirmed that he had not prepared a new Risk Assessment and so this was deferred until a later meeting
- c. Asset Register: It was noted that the Asset Register was up to date with the exception of the new play equipment in the park. The Clerk was currently still waiting for an invoice from WDC which would determine the exact list for inclusion in the asset register but would not be required for insurance purposes as WDC's insurance would cover all the play equipment in the park.

10) **Savings Account:** The Clerk reported that after spending time filling out many forms for the Ipswich Building Society they had since informed the Clerk that the company could not

offer a savings account for parish councils. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would investigate Lloyds Bank as an alternative, although the interest may be a little less it would at least safe guard the Council's reserves.

- 11) **Flag Pole:** To consider the costs of installing a Flag Pole in the Town Park. RESOLVED that the Committee approved the purchase and installation of a flag pole at the cost of £969.00 + vat which would be used to fly the Green Flag and flags for other town events. The cost would be taken from this year's Town Park budget.
- 12) **Communications:**
 - a. **Media Screen:** The Clerk explained that there were three options, two for renting (£508 and £536) and one for purchasing the screen (£646). These figures included the installation costs of £220 and electrical work at £148. It was RESOLVED that the Committee approved the option to purchase the screen to include installation costs for a total of £646.00
 - b. **Replacement Lock for Notice Board:** RESOLVED that the Committee approved replacing the lock at an estimated figure of £20
 - c. **Signs & Stickers:** RESOLVED that the Committee approved purchasing signs for the Office and stickers and plaques for HTC equipment and furniture.
- 13) **Crockery:** To consider purchasing crockery for community use. Cllr Fleming explained that the Lowestoft Magistrates office was now closed and there had been an opportunity to find a home for a large set of crockery and cutlery which was now redundant. If the Council would make a donation to charity the set could be used by the Council and community groups in the town. RESOLVED that the committee approved a donation to the Lowestoft Women's Refuge charity of £300.
- 14) **Rail Magazine:** To consider subscribing to the Rail Magazine £4.00 per issue (26 per year), can be ordered from the Local Newsagent. Cllr Fleming suggested that it would be useful to have these magazines which scrutinised the decisions of Network Rail and may also provide useful information for the Council in connection with the Barrow Crossing. Cllr Widdowson had brought a couple of copies of the magazine with him and agreed that the Clerk could make these available for the Council to view. It was RESOLVED that the Committee would instruct the Clerk to purchase the bi monthly magazines for a 6 month trial period.
- 15) **Maintenance:** To consider any maintenance costs.
 - a. **Teen Shelter:** To consider the costs of repainting the inside and /or outside or costs for graffiti removal. The Clerk was awaiting costs from Halesworth Decorators but had also spoken to the son of the artist who had originally painted the graffiti inspired paint work on the Teen Shelter and he would also offer costs and ideas to repaint the shelter.
 - b. **Runway lights in the Town Park:** To consider any costs and to receive an update from WDC/Pearce & Kemp. The Clerk reported that a vehicle had run over the lights during the clear up after the Big Gig and it was thought that this had damaged the lights and it was not vandalism as first thought. It was noted that the lights were unreliable anyway and the Committee looked forward to receiving Waveney Norse and Pearce and Kemp's sample of the intended replacement lights, these needed to be robust enough to withstand vehicles and more reliable than the previous lights. It was noted that some of the cost should be met by WDC.
 - c. **Benches:** Update on the repainting and repair of the town's benches. The Clerk reported that Mr Firmin had painted some of the benches and was currently working his way around the town's remaining benches, it was noted that at this stage there had been no invoices received, the Clerk would remind Mr Firmin.
 - d. **Byelaw signs:** To consider the costs of erecting byelaw notices. RESOLVED that the Committee approved the estimated cost of £100 to supply and erect byelaw notices at the three main entrances to the Town Park.

- e. **Black Dog Antiques:** The Clerk reported that the electricians had misunderstood the request for a quotation and had already replaced the Festive lights sensor on the old Social Club building at a cost of £45. The Committee approved payment on this occasion but would note that it would not consider any further costs of this sort.

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

<u>3714.</u>	Durrant's Valuation	250 + vat
<u>3715.</u>	Cllr Wollweber – Travel expenses for Training day	54.00
<u>3716.</u>	Pearce & Kemp – repositioning of light sensor	45.00 + vat
<u>3717.</u>	BDO - External Auditors	400.00 + vat

Bank & Cash Balances at 15th September, 2016

Current 728	£97,984.28
Community A/c	£5,269.42
Business Reserves 017	£92,231.11