

**HALESWORTH TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**6.15pm July 20<sup>th</sup> 2015**  
**HELD IN THE DAY CENTRE**  
**LONDON ROAD, HALESWORTH**

**REPORT**

**Present: Cllrs;** A Baldwin, P Dutton, A Fleming, R Lewis (Chair), D Thomas, M Took, P Widdowson, J Wagner

**In attendance:** N. Rees (Clerk), 6 members of the public.

- 1) **Apologies:** None
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr D Thomas for 6a
- 3) **Minutes:** The report of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015 attached, approved at the monthly meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2015 was noted.
- 4) **Financial Regulations:** RESOLVED it was proposed and agreed that a small working party of Councillors would look at incorporating the terms of reference, update the Financial Regulations and redraft the document for consideration and approval by the Finance Committee and the Council. It was agreed that the three Councillors would be; Cllr P Dutton, Cllr D Thomas and Cllr P Widdowson.
- 5) **Audit:** Cllrs received a signed copy of Section 4 of the Audit submission and it was noted that the External Auditors, BDO had approved the audit submission without requiring any further information. The Clerk confirmed that the documents were online and the notice to invite inspection of the records would be displayed on the notice board.
- 6) **Grants:** To consider the following grant applications:-

The Chair explained the current position with regard to the available funds in the budget for grants. It was noted that several organisations were expected to apply for grants over the remainder of the year and this could potentially create a shortfall. The Chair advised that it was therefore necessary to carefully manage the remaining funds.

- a) Halesworth Volunteer Centre (Men's Sheds) It was unanimously agreed that the Committee supported the project but that after due consideration, could not justify providing the full amount of £5,000 requested. RESOLVED that the Financial Committee approved a grant to the value of £1,000 and recommended that HVC approaches the Unappropriated Estates and Halesworth & Blyth Valley Partnership who may be able to offer additional assistance.
- b) Halesworth Heritage Open Days: This application was received from Halesworth and Blyth Valley Partnership on behalf of Halesworth Heritage Open Days and the amount requested was £1,000. RESOLVED that the Financial Committee approved a grant to the value of £500.
- c) SCC Edgar Sewter Layby: This application for £5,000 had been deferred twice before due to a lack of information. There was considerable debate over whether Town and Parish Councils should contribute to SCC Highways improvement schemes in general. The Chair of the Council, Anne Fleming said that she felt a moral obligation to pay something towards the scheme as the previous Council had been involved and other local parishes had supported the scheme. It was then RESOLVED that the Financial Committee approved a grant to the value of £2,000 but with the proviso that the Clerk makes it clear that the Council would not contribute again to this type of scheme.

- 7) **Grant Application forms and Policies:** To review the current documentation and policies: It was proposed by Cllr Thomas and RESOLVED that the working group looking at the Financial regulations (item 4) would also review the document 'Criteria for assessing grants' and the existing grant policy and bring the suggested amendments back to the Finance Committee in September.
- 8) **Market Trading:** It was agreed that the Clerk would contact other local market towns to get some comparisons Market rental prices and this would be reviewed again later.
- 9) **Allotments:** The Committee noted the costs and income from the Allotments for the last two years. It was then RESOLVED that the rent would be increased for a typical (Saxon) 10 Rod Allotment from £20 per annum to £25 per annum. It was noted that there were a great variety of sizes, shapes of allotments on three different sites but that this increased rate would be applied on a pro-rata basis.
- 10) **Teen Shelter:** To consider refurbishment options and costs: The Committee received a copy of the letter from Mr Alistair Macfarlane dated 9<sup>th</sup> January 2008 which confirmed that the Halesworth Crime Prevention Panel had passed on a cheque for £340 to the Council for maintenance for the Teen Shelter. The Clerk had checked this against the ear marked reserves (which was updated in 2012) and oddly the figure listed was £430. It was thought this might be a transposition of numbers but he would investigate further.
- 11) **Financial Position:** The Committee received and noted the financial report provided by the Chair and all committee members were invited to read the document and forward any questions before the next meeting. It was noted that all receipts and payments relating to GAPPa will be transferred to the GAPPa ear marked reserve fund to avoid confusion with the Council's accounts. At the moment there may be a technical problem with doing this in the middle of the year with the present accounts software but this would be resolved as soon as possible. The Clerk read out the current bank balances.
- 12) **Accounts for Payment:** It was RESOLVED that the following accounts for payment was approved.

#### **Accounts for payment**

<b><u>3690.</u></b>	BDO Audit	300.00 + vat (360.00)
<b><u>3691.</u></b>	Vandijk – Payroll - Quarterly bill	45.00 + vat (54.00)
<b><u>3692.</u></b>	Waveney Norse - Grass Cutting Saxon Allotments	93.77 + vat (112.52)
<b><u>3693.</u></b>	Waveney Norse - Market Clean - Quarterly bill	175.00 + vat (210.00)

#### **DD/Standing Orders**

<b><u>3694.</u></b>	Corporate Finance Photocopy Lease - Quarterly bill	130.05 + vat (156.06)
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- 13) **Staff Matters:** To consider any matters relating to personnel: The Chair confirmed that it will be a legal requirement to provide a pension for all staff by 2017 but that the Committee should consider implementing a scheme before the legal deadline. It was proposed and agreed to ask the Clerk to investigate the legal requirements and options for pensions schemes and report back at the next meeting if possible.