

WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Virtual TEAMS meeting of Finance and Properties on 20th July 2020 at 7p.m

PRESENT

The Mayor, Councillor Lee Upcraft

Councillors Beauchamp, Dolton, Kidley and Whelan

Responsible Finance Officer, Michelle Taylor
Senior Officer and Minute Taker, Barbara Atkins

The Meeting commenced at 1910 Hours

139. TO ADVISE THOSE IN ATTENDANCE OF THE PROTOCOL FOR THE MEETING

Councillor Dolton went through the format and protocol for the meeting.

140. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from The Town Clerk (annual leave) and Councillors Beatty. Cattermole and Wilder were not present.

141. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Dolton pointed out that the agenda item numbers had been amended and it was Proposed by Councillor Whelan, Seconded by Councillor Kidley and

RESOLVED:

THAT in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items and that the papers relating to these items remain confidential on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public's interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted:-

Agenda item - 16 Confidential Minutes

Agenda item - 17 Aged Debtors

142. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

A Councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in our Council's Standing Orders Code of Conduct (Item 13) in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under code of conduct and his right to participate and vote on the matter (guidelines are available at the meeting and all Councillors have received a copy prior to the meeting) Information for each Member was available at the meeting.

There were no declarations of interests.

143. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – NOTIFIED AND IMPROMPTU (Total 15 Minutes)

There were no members of the public at the virtual meeting.

144. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

There was no variation of order of business.

145. MINUTES

It was Proposed Councillor Kidley, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and

RESOLVED: THAT the Minutes of Finance and Properties Meeting held on the 27th May 2020 set out on pages 14 - 18 of the Minute Book, copy circulated to members be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

146. QUARTER 4 ACCOUNTS

See attached. The Responsible Finance Officer gave an overview of the accounts and clarified points for Members of the Finance and Properties Committee. Members briefly discussed and

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Whelan and

RESOLVED: THAT the Quarter 4 Accounts ending the 31st March 2020, copy attached to the Minute Book be received and approved.

147. BILLS SCHEDULES

(i) The Responsible Finance Officer went through the bills schedules for January, February and March 2020 page by page.

January 2020 – Dog Bins – Members discussed and thought the fee was high particularly as SODC now provide combined bins which are collected by the street/town refuse collectors. They asked that a breakdown along with where the bins are situated be provided to help determine if there is a way to cut costs.

Action: Breakdown of invoice and dog bins as a future agenda item.

February 2020 – New emergency lighting had been purchased for the Recreation Rooms and the Responsible Finance Officer stated that she hoped these could be salvaged prior to demolition.

Deposit for Mayor's Dinner was also discussed and whether this event might take place next year. The Mayor suggested that a Civic and Ceremonial meeting be called to discuss all forthcoming civic events.

Action: Terms and conditions of deposit relating to Mayor's dinner and a Civic and Ceremonial meeting be called.

March 2020 – Members queried the cost of the port aloo toilets in the parks yard wondered if it would be possible to refurbish the toilet block in the park, Councillor Kidley to discuss with the parks staff. Cleaning of the refurbished toilet was also mentioned.

Members discussed the standing charge for water in the market place and the Kinecroft along with possible reinstatement of water to the fountain. Councillor Kidley to discuss with the parks staff.

Action: Councillor Kidley to discuss toilets and standing charges for water and possible reinstatement of water to the fountain.

It was Proposed by Councillor Whelan, Seconded by Councillor Kidley and

RESOLVED: THAT the schedule of bills paid in January, February and March 2020 be received and the action of The Responsible Finance Officer in paying same is confirmed.

(ii) To note that the office has been purchasing various sizes of sanitising equipment, some for our own use with some being resold to businesses in Wallingford.

The Responsible Finance Officer reported that the resale of sanitising equipment was going well with a small mark up of 10%.

148. Q1 ACCOUNTS

The Responsible Finance Officer apologised in the delay with submitting the formal accounts which was due to meetings being delayed during COVID and yearend proceedings. Members were provided with a brief overview of the position and the Responsible Finance Officer assured them that she was keeping a close eye on everything.

149. AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2019-20

Responsible Finance Officer to Report on the following:

a) Internal Audit

- i) To Receive the Internal Auditors report dated the 17.06.2020.
- ii) To Review the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit.
- iii) To discuss and action any recommendations of the Internal Audit

The Responsible Finance Officer had sent out all documents in advance for the meeting but she brought the documents up on screen for Members to discuss.

Members were pleased with the internal auditor's report and considered that the internal audit was effective. Furthermore they were pleased to see that all recommendations in the report were being actioned.

It was Proposed by Councillor Dolton, Seconded by Councillor Beauchamp and

RECOMMENDED: THAT Members of the Finance and Properties Committee had received the internal auditor's report dated the 17.06.2020, reviewed it and considered the internal audit to be effective. Members were pleased to see that recommendations 1 to 7 were being actioned. Internal Audit a i) to iii) to be recommended for adoption at Full Council.

b) To Receive and Approve the Unaudited Accounts for the 2019/2020 Financial Year

The Responsible Finance Officer asked Members for their approval for The Mayor and The Town Clerk to sign the accounts. The Responsible Finance Officer brought the statements up on screen for Members.

- i) Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020
- ii) Section 2 Accounting Statements 2019/2020

Proposed by Councillor Whelan, Seconded by Councillor Kidley and

RECOMMENDED: THAT the unaudited 2019/2020 accounts are received and approved

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 received, approved and that the Chairman (Mayor) and The Town Clerk are authorised to sign Section 1.

Section 2 Accounting statements 2019/2020 received, approved and the Responsible Finance Officer and the Chairman (Mayor) are authorised to sign Section 2 as a correct record.

c) To note, the asset register has been updated over the last financial year. **Noted by Members.**

d) To note, 2019/2020 Insurance review had been undertaken and revised. The insurance policy has been renewed. **Noted by Members.**

e) 2020/2021 The updated Financial Risk Assessment to be recommended to Council for approval.

f)) 2020/2021 Investment Policy to be reviewed and recommended for approval

Members looked at both the Financial Risk Assessment and Investment Policy for 2020/2021 on screen and asked that a definition of what is a low risk investment (%) is inserted. Wallingford Town Council must be mindful of the Icelandic collapse and must ensure that they have no large investment (% to be decided) in any one company.

The Chairman, Councillor Dolton reported that he and the Responsible Finance Officer were going to be discussing future investments.

It was Proposed by the Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Whelan and

RECOMMENDED: THAT 2020/2021 Financial Risk Assessment and 2020/2021 Investment Policy following Member's review must be amended to reflect what is a low risk investment, that no more than a certain percentage (to be determined) be invested with any one company and that both these changes are inserted prior to adoption at Full Council.

150. CHARGES FOR USE OF ELECTRICITY/WATER AT EVENTS ON MARKET PLACE AND KINECROFT

The Responsible Finance Officer reported that currently charges are not made for the use of utilities and asked Members if they wished to consider making a charge?

The Mayor stated that he believed that events held in aid of charity should have free use but that commercial hirers should be charged. Councillor Kidley stated that Centre 70 had a separate electricity meter so that they calculate how much is used. It was also reported that BunkFest had, it was believed, contributed in the past and that the fair had also contributed to the use of water for one of its rides. It was also reported that BunkFest's electricians had helped with the electrics in the market place before the event could use the electric. Members concluded their discussion and the following actions were agreed.

Actions: Councillor Kidley along with the parks foreman to monitor usage before and after events. Office to investigate any damage/repairs required to market place electrics and

previous re-charges for use of utilities. Future Agenda item to discuss results of investigations and possible inclusion of utility charges in agreements.

151. 1B ST MARTIN'S STREET – WATER USE

The Responsible Finance Officer reported that the tenant had stated that the parks staff had been using the water from 1B to water the rest garden and that the tenant had asked for her outlay in water charges to be reimbursed, this amounted to approximately £135 per year as all they had was a small sink which was currently blocked. The previous Town Clerk had apparently made arrangements for this reimbursement for previous tenants. The Mayor stated that he was, in principle, in agreement with this but that the parks foreman should provide an estimate on how much water they used.

Action: Parks Foreman to provide estimate of water usage.

It was Proposed by Councillor Dolton, Seconded by The Mayor and

RESOLVED: THAT following an estimate of water usage being obtained the Town Council will pay/reimburse a percentage of the water bill.

152. GRANT APPLICATIONS

a) Members to discuss the following grant applications and to note that the remaining grant allocation for the 2020/2021 Municipal Year is £750.00. (Applications sent out in advance of the meeting). Total grants paid to date: £750.00

- i) Oxfordshire Association for the Blind
- ii) Sue Ryder

Following Members discussion, it was Proposed by Councillor Kidley, Seconded by Councillor Whelan and

RESOLVED: THAT £250 each be awarded to Oxfordshire Association for the Blind and Sue Ryder.

b) Thank you letters/emails have been received from:

- i) Life Education Wessex & Thames Re Life Bus visit to St John's School
- ii) Homestart
- iii) Cleanslate

Members noted the above.

153. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Dog Bins
- Charges for use of electricity at events on Market Place and Kinecroft
- Grant applications
- 10 Year financial vision (Cllr Whelan)

Confidential Minutes on Page 74