

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held at Hay Council Offices on 19th December 2019

Present: Cllr D Price (DP) Cllr T Stedman (TS)

Cllr F Howard (FH) Cllr A Powell (AP) (Cllr J Prothero) N Burdekin

Apologies: Cllr H Davies (HD)

FIN400. Minutes of meeting dated 24th June 2019

The minutes of the meeting dated 24th June 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

FIN401. Matters Arising

None

FIN402. 2020/2021 Estimates/Precept – deadline 24 January 2020

NB had prior to the meeting circulated a copy of HTC's projected Income and Expenditure for 2019/2020. TS said that she and NB had met prior to the Finance meeting to go through this Income and Expenditure line by line. TS added that 2020/2021 is an unusual year for HTC because of the proposed purchase of Hay Cemetery and the office move.

Cllrs discussed the Income and Expenditure spreadsheet.

FH asked about the website costs projected to rise from £298.80. TS explained that the £298.80 is the annual website domain hosting fees. TS and NB have increased this to £800.00 to cover potential costs for bringing HTC into line with the new Accessibility Statement regulations (deadline for Town Councils to meet for this is September 2020). Accessibility means the ease of navigation of the website, being user-friendly for those with visual impairments and so on. There may well be a cost to meeting this regulation.

TS said that the figures in the spreadsheet are based on the assumption that HTC is only based at Council Offices for one month (April 2020). This reflects the significant decrease in amount of income expected from rent. This is slightly compensated by the fall in rates for Council Offices. But the overall loss is still substantial.

TS continued that the figures also assume that HTC moves into the Sports Pavilion in May 2020.

Subscriptions has been increased from £300.00 to £400.00 to enable NB to register with the SLCC (Society for Local Council Clerks) and network/attend meetings with fellow clerks.

Insurance is currently £1,500.00 a year for all facilities. NB to ask Zurich Municipal (HTC's current insurer) what the cost of insurance would be without Council Offices, and also the cost of insuring the Recreation Facilities separately.

Another significant discrepancy between last year's figures and next year's projected figures is that the Precept for 2019/2020 assumed Powys CC payments from car parking income for the toilets and recreation facilities. So all figures on the spreadsheet for toilets for 2019/2020 are zeroed, which actually resulted in a £9,000.00 deficit to HTC.

TS added that the toilet income for 2019/2020 is projected to be £17,900.00 (£18,000.00 was projected). DP asked if this was from 20p charge or 30p charge. NB said that the 30p charge was introduced on 28th August 2019, so the £17,900.00 is made up from both charges. TS said that having looked at figures from Healthmatic, the ratio of people not paying is approximately the same since the toilet charges were increased. The reason there has been no discernible increase in income is because footfall in Hay has so far been lower than 2018/2019, possibly due to the hot weather in Summer 2018. As such, the Precept for 2020/2021 assumes the same level of income, even with the 10p rise in entry fee.

In terms of the toilets, Cllrs discussed possible options to reduce costs. For example, work with Healthmatic to reduce the opening hours and/or cleansing regimes.

Recreation Facilities – TS said that £1,000.00 has been put in from the fundraising committee, but this is one that might change, especially if and HTC moves into the Pavilion, as HTC will then be more responsible for running costs etc. Because of this, HTC’s contribution has increased from £1,000.00 in 2019/2020 to £2,500.00 in 2020/2021.

DP raised the possibility of car park charges being introduced at the Recreation Facilities to boost income for HTC and help ensure ongoing maintenance etc. Ways to charge / recoup funds through the car park were discussed, including installing a barrier, paying Powys CC for additional traffic warden coverage (ensuring the percentage of fines goes to HTC not Powys CC). and voucher schemes for barriers. These parking charge options to be explored by Premises Sub Committee.

Christmas lights - FH asked if HTC was going to continue giving £1k a year to this. NB said it was agreed at Full Council to contribute to the lights from general grants not recycling grants.

DP said that as long as HTC is clear and transparent as to why the 19% increase (or whatever increase Full Council agrees to) then that will be helpful. For example, explain that HTC’s % is going up by x%, but HTC’s overall costs are going up by a higher %. This could be explained in February 2020’s Wye Local article. NB said that Comms was going to include a section on the Precept.

FIN402. Recommendation:

(i) That HTC requests from Powys CC a 19% increase in the Precept for 2020/2021 which would give HTC a Precept of £52,223.15, an additional £8338.15 to the precept of 2019/2020. This would leave a projected shortfall in HTC’s accounts of £7718.85.

FIN403. Bank Reconciliations – June and July 2019

NB presented DP with bank reconciliations for June and July 2019. DP, as Chair of Finance, signed off the reconciliations. NB to carry on backdating bank reconciliations from August 2019 onwards.

FIN404. Any Other Busines

None

FIN405. Date of next meeting – NB to arrange

Signed.....Date.....