

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held at Hay Council Offices on 24th June 2020

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

Cllr J Pearson (JP) Cllr A Powell (AP) Cllr D Landymore (DL) N Burdekin (NB)

Apologies: Cllr F Howard (FH)

FIN423. Minutes of meeting dated 28th February 2020

The minutes of the meeting dated 28th February 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

FIN424. Matters Arising

NB said that FIN 409 – amending the Financial Regulations – has now been completed and NB has saved the document with a note saying which meeting approved this (Full Council 2nd March 2020).

FIN412 – NB has altered the accounts by moving the spend on 3 interpretation boards from the Gliss budget to the Fingerpost budget as requested.

FIN414 – Financial Risk Assessment. Item deferred until the next meeting.

FIN419 – Town Crier’s request for a pay rise. Councillors agreed to defer this item until lockdown measures ease.

FIN421 – NB has scanned NL’s death certificate and e-mailed it to Barclays following a further letter from Barclays. NB suggested holding a meeting with Barclays Bank once safe to do so to talk about HTC’s accounts and electronic banking. JP suggested that NB contacts other Councils to see how they do their online banking.

FIN425. Bank Reconciliations – 24 February; 24 March & 31 March 2020

Prior to the meeting, NB had circulated the bank reconciliations for 24 February, 24 March and 31 March 2020. DP will come into the office to sign all reconciliations and bank statements. This will mean all bank reconciliations for 2019/2020 will be ready for the Internal Auditor and Annual Return.

FIN426. Annual Return 2019/2020 – Expenditure vs Budget at 31 March 2020

Prior to the meeting, NB had circulated HTC’s budget spreadsheet as of 31 March 2020. NB explained that the approximate budget deficit for 2019/2020 of £23,000 is largely because of the following items being paid:

- Council Offices roof repair (£10,750);
- TTOW EU invoice (£5,500);
- Loss of Council Offices rent (£4,200);
- (x3) invoices from sports clubs (£4,000).

Cllrs went through the budget line by line. NB noted that there is still some outstanding rent owed to HTC. Dial-a-Ride owes £1678 for the period April – September 2019 (when they left Council Offices). Wye Valley Mediation owes one month's rent (£350).

There were no major areas of concern highlighted. The following items were highlighted:

- NB said that Communications had overspent, but that it was very important for HTC to communicate its role and to be transparent
- NB said that the Citizens of the Year Award is included under Town Events. Cllrs asked NB to remove the Citizens of the Year line for 2020/2021
- Training budget has been overspent due to NB's CiLCA qualification. However, TS noted that IK and DL will need to attend the Code of Conduct course and possibly one other if the Cllr vacancy is filled
- Cllrs Allowance - £450.00 will go out of the budget in 2020/2021 as the cheques for 2019/2020's Cllr Allowances were only issued in April 2020
- Council Offices electricity – one meter has been over-estimated by Opus by some margin. NB to contact Opus for a rebate/credit
- Grant contributions and recycling grants. Cllrs asked NB to amalgamate these two headings into one single line: Grants. NB was asked to put together a draft General Grants application form/grants criteria
- Insurance – NB to get a revised insurance quote without Council Offices for the move
- Project Account – NB to transfer £1000 from Main Account into Project Account

Councillors unanimously approved the draft accounts.

FIN427. Internal Audit – Information Required / Timeframe

NB reported that he has spoken to Chris Lewis, Internal Auditor. Chris has said that he needs:

- Cheque books
- Bank statements
- Bank reconciliations
- Payroll
- HMRC spend
- Income and Expenditure spreadsheet 2019/2020
- List of all meetings
- Annual Return form

NB has completed all of the above and will e-mail/give to Chris Lewis following the meeting.

FIN428. Carried forward balances for 2020/2021 – Proposal / Discussion

Councillors discussed the balances carried forward document that NB had circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed to amalgamate the following headings:

- 'Land Maintenance' and 'Finger Sign Post' to become 'Estate Management'
- 'Play Areas' and 'Brecon Rd Play Area & Car Park' to become 'Play Areas'
- 'Town Plan' and 'Town Plan Projects' to become 'Town Plan'

Suggested Account Balances to be carried forward from 2019/20 to 2020/2021

Account	Amount	Notes
	£	
Bench fund	557.25	
Recycling Fund	9506.28	HTC gave out £1200 recycling grants in 2019/2020
Gliss Project	7627.70	
Play Areas	2439.66	This heading is an amalgamation of what used to be 'Play Areas' and 'Brecon Rd Play Area & Car Park'
Finger Sign Post Grant	0.00	HTC spent £2840 in this account 2019/2020
Estate Management	2182.46	This heading is an amalgamation of what used to be 'Land Maintenance' and 'Finger Sign Post'
Shared Spaces Project	0.00	Grant project now completed
Office Maintenance	0.00	To fund roof repairs - now paid
Election Reserves	397.21	
Town Plan Projects	27898.46	This heading is an amalgamation of what used to be 'Town Plan' and 'Town Plan Projects'
TTOW	0.00	To cover refund to EU - now paid
Fund Raising	700.52	
Sports Clubs	-4000.00	Sports Clubs owe HTC £4,000 for 2019/20 contributions
Building Maintenance	2690.50	
Grounds Maintenance	5400.00	
Water	4486.00	
Rates	569.99	
Gas/Electric	2181.50	
Insurance	588.00	
Contingency	3211.45	
Recreation Facilities - VAT	-121.28	

FIN428. Recommendation:

That the above accounts be ringfenced and carried forward to 2020/2021

FIN429. Fixed Asset Register for 2020/2021

Councillors studied the Fixed Asset Register that NB had circulated prior to the meeting. NB explained that the register is the same as 2019/2020 but with the inclusion of (x7) wooden sculptures (£4,200) and (x2) card payment machines for the toilets (£1,300). NB was asked to add to the Asset Register the metal Miles Without Stiles sign at a cost of £1,000.

Hay-on-Wye Town Council - Fixed Asset Register 2020/2021				
		31st March 2019	Additional Purchases	31st March 2020
	Asset	Estimated Value		
		£		
1	Christmas Lights	29226		29226
2	Playground Equipment	9348		9348

3	Compaq Computer	100		100
4	Epson Printer	0		0
5	Toshiba Computer	100		100
6	Oki Printer	100		100
7	Screen	100		100
8	Town Criers Bell	200		200
9	Mayoral Chain	1000		1000
10	10 benches	3798		3798
11	Bus Shelter	1		1
12	15 Litter Bins	15		15
13	Town Criers Outfits	150		150
14	1 mace	50		50
15	Mayors Consorts chain	50		50
16	6 tables	300		300
17	Canon Printer	124		124
18	Coin Sorter	145		145
19	Citizen of the Year Board	200		200
20	Tools(wheelbarrow and shovel)	74		74
21	4 dog fouling bins	997		997
22	2 Nayax card payment machines toilets	N/A	1300	1300
23	7 Wooden Sculptures Old Railway Line	N/A	4200	4200
24	1 metal Miles Without Stiles sign	N/A	1000	1000
Land				
L1	Land at Warren Close	1		1
L2	Picnic Area by Bridge	1		1
L3	Railway Line	1		1
L4	Black Lion Green	1		1
L5	Land at Bottom of Wyeford Road	1		1
L6	Fishing Warren Cottage to Dulas Brook	1		1
L7	Land at The Meadows	1		1
	TOTAL	46085		52585

FIN429. Recommendation:

That the above Fixed Asset Register be approved by Hay Town Council

FIN430. Public Conveniences

NB said that a meeting on site has been arranged with representatives from Healthmatic on 1 July 2020. The meeting is to look at re-opening the toilets in Hay that are still closed. Powys CC has sent out a recommended risk assessment to all Town and Community Councils in Powys. The risk assessment includes enhanced cleaning regimes, signage to promote social distancing/queueing and appropriate hand sanitisers being available. AP is able to attend the meeting. RWG as chair of Premises had already agreed to attend. The meeting will also discuss HTC's SLA with Healthmatic for 2020/2021 and a possible rebate to HTC due to lost cleaning hours from end of March to end of June 2020.

FIN431. Allocation of Reserves for 2020/2021

The allocation of reserves is all the carried forward budget headings as outlined in FIN428 above, plus £40,000 for the purchase of the new Hay Cemetery and £20,000 for the office move.

FIN432. Sports Clubs' Invoices for 2019/2020 – 3 outstanding

NB explained that three sports clubs have not yet paid their invoices for contributions to the Sports Pavilion for 2019/2020. The clubs that have not paid are:

- Senior Football Club (£1,500)
- Hay Bowls Club (£1,500)
- Cricket Club (£1,000)

Hay Junior Football Club has paid its contribution for 2019/2020 (£1,500). JP said that as the Junior Football Club has paid, it is only fair that all clubs pay. TS added that HTC has also lost money because of Covid-19. TS proposed that the sports clubs pay their invoices, the debt to HTC remains, but given the pandemic, the clubs should be given the opportunity to pay back what they owe in several payments/over time. JP seconded. *Unanimously approved.* NB to draft letter to sports clubs.

FIN433. VAT claim 2019/2020

NB informed Councillors that the VAT claim for 2019/2020 will be approximately £9,000. CW has almost completed the VAT claim form. NB/CW will send the claim form in once both are back in the office.

FIN434. Possible re-allocation of business rates Sports Pavilion – Valuation Office Agency

NB reported that he had spoken again to Powys CC in terms of re-allocating the rooms at the Sports Pavilion to the individual sports clubs. Although Powys CC had previously argued that as the Sports Pavilion is licenced to HTC, the Sports Pavilion is thereby not eligible for rate relief. NB said that at Council Offices, also licenced to HTC, individual tenants there had been allocated individual rooms/business rates with relief. Powys CC said that they cannot change the valuation of offices regarding business rates. However, the Valuation Office Agency can. NB added that he has looked at the VOA's website, and there is a form where you can challenge valuations. One category of challenge is to divide a property into 'properties' based on occupiers. NB asked Councillors if they would like him to complete the form. If the VOA agrees with the challenge, this could save 80% rates for each of the sports clubs. Councillors were happy for NB to complete the form.

FIN435. A.O.B.

NB raised the following issues on behalf of FH who had given her apologies:

- There has been a Facebook message about when the toilets will re-open. JP agreed to respond to say some toilets are already open and never closed, and the remaining toilets will be opening shortly once the risk assessments/measures identified have been put in place. JP will put HTC's response on Facebook and on Hay's Community Noticeboard.
- Possible free car parking at Oxford Road/possible effects on HTC's plans to raise money at the Recreation Ground through the introduction of paid parking. Councillors agreed with this point and to monitor the situation. It was thought that by the time the move to the Sports Pavilion happens, any free parking might not still be available
- Hay Cemetery – this needs to be a priority given the loss of funds Powys CC might be experiencing through Covid-19. Councillors agreed that this is urgent. NB to contact Mike Harris, Powys CC and Jeffreys & Powell as an absolute priority.

NB said that Maggie Budd has spoken to him about the cleaning job at the Sports Pavilion and that Maggie feels it is a very different role which she does not want to continue with. TS said that Maggie has been offered another job broadly similar to the current cleaning role at Council Offices. HTC's current position is that as the job is broadly the same, HTC cannot make this role redundant, because when we move offices, HTC wouldn't be able to advertise for a role of cleaner as the job had been deemed redundant.

NB to write to Maggie to say that HTC's position is that the role that has been offered at the Sports Pavilion is broadly the same as her current work at Council Offices. Maggie will need to write to HTC and explain why she thinks the role is significantly different. Councillors agreed that if Maggie does not provide a convincing case, she cannot be offered redundancy.

FIN436. Time and date of next meeting

NB to arrange towards the end of July once the Internal Audit report has been completed.