

Minutes of the Finance Committee remote meeting held on 5th March 2021

Present: Cllr D Landymore (DL) Cllr T Stedman (TS)
Cllr F Howard (FH) Cllr R Golesworthy (RWG) Cllr J Prothero (JPR)
Cllr S Morris (SM) N Burdekin (NB)

Apologies: None

FIN499. Minutes of meeting dated 15th January 2021

TS proposed that the minutes of the meeting dated 15th January 2021 were a true and accurate record. RWG seconded. *Unanimously approved*

FIN500. Matters Arising

(i) Appointment of Internal Auditor

NB confirmed that DM Jones had agreed to act as HTC's Internal Auditor for 2020/2021. They have sent HTC a quote of £800.00 to carry out the work, £50.00 more than the previous year. NB had sent DM Jones the External Auditor's report from 2019/2020 as requested by Councillors. NB added that DM Jones still need to sign the Appointment of Internal Auditor letter and return to HTC.

(ii) External Auditor query re. Trust Funds

NB has e-mailed the External Auditor (Grant Thornton) querying why their report for 2019/2020 said that HTC is responsible for Trust Funds and should have ticked the 'yes' box not 'no'. TS said that HTC has never before ticked 'yes' to this as HTC is not responsible for Trust Funds. NB to speak with Grant Thornton to clarify.

(iii) Any other items not on the agenda

TS reported that she had written to Michael Eccles, Hay Public Library, informing him that HTC will be awarding the library £1,000 as a one-off grant, not being part of an annual commitment via the annual Precept. Michael had replied very positively by letter to say thank you. TS added that the library is behind in its funding target, so if they are not able to progress as they wish, they will return the £1k to HTC.

TS said that in terms of the office move to the Sports Pavilion, JM had now received three quotes to demolish and remove the existing garage. Talgarth Building Supplies had provided the most competitive quote. They have their own stone crusher. FH suggested using the crushed stone on car park surfacing. **Action:** As this item wasn't on the agenda, a decision could not be made in this meeting. NB to add as an agenda item to next Finance Sub Committee meeting.

FIN501. Bank Reconciliations: October – December 2020 and Jan to Feb 2021

NB said that now he had the bank statements he had completed all the bank reconciliations. NB and DL to meet outside the meeting to enable DL to sign all reconciliations.

FIN502. 2020/2021 Accounts - Expenditure against Budget at 24th February 2021

NB had circulated the budget to all Councillors prior to the meeting and took Councillors through the budget. The main areas highlighted by NB related to utilities. OPUS electricity (for Council Offices) owes HTC almost £900.00. E-on has taken over from Npower and the latest invoices for electricity at the Recreation Facilities seem too high. Also, rates are still being paid to Powys CC for the 2 rooms last used by HTC in Council Offices (Broad Street). **Action:** NB to check all these issues and recover money where relevant.

TS queried what seemed an overspend on grass cutting. NB said that the additional costs related to OTM carrying out hedge cutting, as part of the revised tender for 2020-2022. TS asked NB to take this cost out of grass cutting and put instead into the estate maintenance cost code. **Action:** NB to transfer additional costs from grass cutting to estate maintenance.

No other major areas of concern were raised by NB or Councillors.

FIN503. Cleaner/caretaker role – Job Description/Person Specification to be drawn up

DL said that she has access to job description and person specification templates for similar roles. **Action:** DL to send draft Job Description/Person Spec to Finance Councillors and SM week commencing 8th March. NB to e-mail DL the latest salary scales provided by NALC (National Association of Local Councils).

FIN504. HTC charges for statutory testing/cleaning for sports clubs to consider

FH said that the charges offered to the sports clubs could be based on the salary agreed for the caretaker role. TS added that once the caretaker's role/salary is completed, charges for the sports clubs can then be drawn up. DL suggested deferring this item until the caretaker role/salary has been agreed.

FIN505. Hay Markets – possible allocation of contingency funding

FH said that she had spoken to John Evans, and one of the main costs facing Hay Markets is the storage of tables at Cusop and the subsequent transportation costs. FH and RWG have discussed this issue and whether HTC could install a lean-to shed-type building near Pila Pala off Market Street. RWG said permission for the building would be needed from the owner.

DL said that there is a private garage behind her shop (Charlottes' of Hay) and the owner had been previously looking to hire the garage out. **Action:** DL to contact garage owner to enquire. Depending on the outcome, FH will then contact John Evans.

RWG raised the issue of Hay Market's current financial situation. TS said that HTC had recently given the Markets a general grant of £1,000. TS added that there is a limit on Town Councils through the s137 payments which Councillors need to be mindful of. On this basis, RWG proposed awarding Hay Markets a grant of £2,000. FH seconded. *Unanimously approved*

FIN505. Recommendation

(i) That Hay Town Council awards Hay Markets a grant of £2,000.00 to help with the running of markets in Hay during 2021/2022

RWG proposed, FH seconded. *Unanimously approved*

FIN506. Sports Clubs outstanding fundraising funds – request from Hay Football Clubs/Steve Jenkins

Prior to the meeting, NB had circulated a request from Steve Jenkins to use some of the remaining Sports Clubs' fundraising money (currently £820) for buying new tables and chairs. TS said that the Cricket Club would also have to agree as the furniture proposed is for the main sports room at the Recreation Facilities which is for both clubs. FH and TS both thought the chairs in the photos provided looked heavy and difficult to manoeuvre and so not particularly flexible in their use. SM added that there are already a significant amount of chairs and tables in the room.

FH suggested that NB contacts Steve and ask him to use the existing chairs/tables in the interim and, when Covid-19 restrictions allow, hold a site visit to look at what is already there and what might be replaced. DL said that a representative from each club and HTC would need to be present. **Action:** NB to update Steve.

FIN507. Dial-a-Ride Office Costs/Rent

TS said that HTC doesn't have, as yet, all the costs for putting up a new-build office at the Recreation Facilities or the connection costs. FH added that once all costs are to hand, HTC could then look at what the monthly rental costs would be to Hay Dial-a-Ride if they were to pay back the costs of the new office over a 7-year period. This might mean the monthly rent is more than £200 as originally proposed by Councillors. SM said that he didn't think Dial-a-Ride should be asked to contribute to the connections costs and that HTC should pay for all set-up costs. This would make it much easier further down the line should Dial-a-Ride wish to leave the new office and ask for money back.

Item deferred until next meeting awaiting quotes.

FIN508. Draft new Grant Guidelines (to replace Recycling Grant guidelines) – deferred from 15th January 2021

NB had circulated the existing grant form and guidelines, and the proposed new grant and guidelines prior to the meeting.

FH requested that point 6 on the new grant form "Welsh Language & Culture" be removed, and the reference to the Welsh Language & Culture in the new guidelines (Section E) be removed. Cllrs agreed to remove this reference.

TS asked that the checklist on the grant form be slightly amended to change, "Who to make the cheque payable to" to, "To whom should any cheque or payment be made payable to..."

TS also said that the checklist on the grant form which asks for a list of board and committee members could be altered as many grant providers don't provide grants if people on boards live in the same property.

TS asked NB to include a line on the new guidelines that organisations cannot re-apply for a grant after being awarded a grant for a minimum of 18 months.

On the basis of the above amendments being made, the following recommendation was made:

FIN508. Recommendation

(i) That Hay Town Council adopts the new "Small Grants" application form and criteria to replace the existing "Recycling Grants" award programme.

FH proposed, TS seconded. *Unanimously approved*

Cllr RWG left the meeting at 9.45 am

FIN509. Utility Aid Proposal for HTC's energy costs – deferred from 13th January 2021

TS and FH did not wish to pursue this, whereby Utility Aid would contact all HTC's energy providers to see if they could provide a better quote for HTC's energy needs. Councillors agreed not to take this any further.

FIN510. Legionella quote – deferred from 13th January 2021

NB had prior to the meeting circulated a quote from Alcumus (who had previously competed risk assessments for HTC) to carry out renewed legionella risk assessments as follows:

- Clock Tower toilets £150
- Oxford Road toilets £150
- Sports Pavilion £400

FH proposed going ahead with the new risk assessments, TS seconded.

Unanimously approved **Action:** NB to book Alcumus to carry our risk assessments.

FIN511. George Tofarides Town Crier – Follow up request re. pay rise and additional cries in Hay

NB said that George had called him to ask about his previous request for a possible pay rise. SM said that we need a copy of George's contract. FH agreed. FH added that following Covid restrictions a review of how many Town Cries HTC would like could be held with a view to possibly changing George's contract for 2022/2023. This could include additional cries. TS said perhaps the review could take place in around 6-9 months to give time to make any changes to the contract in time for the start of 2022/2023 and therefore included in the next Precept. DL suggested adding an agenda item on this issue on Finance's agenda in September 2021. **Action:** NB to contact George with a holding response. NB to try and locate George's current contract.

FIN512. A.O.B.

DL asked if there had been any progress with Scribe Accounts. NB said he had received an e-mail from them beginning the process of setting up HTC's accounts using their software and that training will follow.

FIN513. Time and date of next meeting – Friday 23rd April 2021, 9.00 am