

Whitchurch Town Council

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Finance Committee

Minutes of the Virtual Finance Committee held on Thursday 8th October 2020 at 7pm via Zoom

Virtual committee held due to the Coronavirus Pandemic lockdown restrictions

Councillors: A. Chesters, B. Duffy, J. Sinnott, S. Hamlyn, J. Martin.

Also in attendance:

Cllr A. Hall

Cllr W. McDonnell

Cllr A. Cooper

Cllr H. Vasey

Zoë Dean – Town Centre Manager/Assistant Town Clerk

Gillian Bailey – Locum Town Council Officer

3 members of the public

59. Apologies

Cllr R. Shepherd – work commitment

60. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

61. Minutes

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn,

It was **FIN/44/2021 RESOLVED** to and sign the minutes as an accurate record of the Finance Committee meeting held on 10th September 2020.

62. Public Participation

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn,

It was **FIN/45/2021 RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders, inviting the public to make representations and ask questions.

A member of the public asked why committed expenditure column was never filled in? The Chairman agreed to obtain this information from the Council's Accounts Officer and let the member of the public know.

Cllr Hall asked for further information regarding legal fee expenditure. Cllr Hall also asked why a lot of funds had been allocated for CIL which were not budgeted for?

Following a proposal by Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Sinnott,

It was **FIN/46/2021 RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

63. Accounts

The Chairman reported that the rebate of rates from Shropshire Council masked the income being slightly down. The loss of income had however been helped significantly by the rates rebate. The Chairman also noted that all committee chairs need to think about budgets for next year and revenue to assist with planning.

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Duffy, It was **FIN/47/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the accounts for Month 6.

64. Monthly Purchase Ledger, BACS and Cheque Payments.

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, It was **FIN/48/2021 RESOLVED** to approve the Purchase Ledger, BACS and Cheque payments for Month 6.

65. Council Credit Card

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Duffy, It was **FIN/49/2021 RESOLVED** to approve the Credit Card payments for Month 6, September 2020.

66. Internal Auditor

Committee noted that there were no costs contained within the letter and more information was to be obtained prior the October Full Council meeting.

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Duffy, It was **FIN/50/2021 RECOMMENDED** to accept the proposal subject to reasonable costs.

67. Councillor Internal Audit Review

Cllr Martin noted that the internal audit had been completed for January to March 2020.

Following a proposal from Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, It was **FIN/51/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the Councillor Internal Audit

68. Earmarked Reserves and Doubtful Debts

The committee considered the matters surrounding room hire and noted that issue needed to be examined in more depth, with possible amendments to the existing policy.

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Duffy, It was **FIN/52/2021 RESOLVED** to agree the recommendations received in the report.

- a) Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, It was **FIN/53/2021 RESOLVED** that the items marked in yellow are all to go back to General Reserves/cost centres as detailed within the report.
- b) After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Hamlyn, It was **FIN/54/2021 RESOLVED** to write of the doubtful debts, tidying up the accounts.

69. VOIP Phones & Business Broadband Quotations

It was agreed to set up a working group consisting of Cllrs Hamlyn and Duffy, and officers Z. Dean and G. Bailey.

70.DCK Beavers Accounting

The committee noted that in future the percentage rise breakdown would be required.

Following a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Duffy, It was **FIN/55/2021 RESOLVED** to send the item to Full Council due to lack of information.

71. Review Expenses (CIL)

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Duffy, It was **FIN/56/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the report subject to the Wheatsheaf Drive alteration.

72. Christmas Lighting Repairs

The Chairman stated that there was a budget for these repairs for the lights which had to be tested annually, noting that the Council should not give up on its Christmas lights this year.

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, It was **FIN/57/2021 RESOLVED** to agree the Christmas lighting repair costs.

73. Request for Free Room Hire

Shropshire Council had requested free room hire of the Market Hall as a potential site for COVID-19 testing and vaccines.

Following a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Duffy, It was **FIN/58/2021 RESOLVED** that the Town Centre Manager and Accounts Officer work out a nominal running fee based on heating and cleaning costs.

74. Confidential Business

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, It was **FIN/59/2021 RESOLVED** that under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of private and confidential information or staff matters.

75. Payment Plans

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, It was **FIN/60/2021 RESOLVED** that Direct Debits are to be agreed, based on what the debtor(s) can afford, which are to be cleared within 12 months.

76. Working from Home Allowances

This item was referred to the Personnel Committee.

Meeting closed 19:53

Chairman:

Date: