

FINANCE, ASSET & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Asset & Resources Committee held

on 21st October 2021 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors: Cllr P Jones (Vice Chair) G Elner,
P Goulbourne, D Lunn, M Hancock, T Hunter

Town Clerk and RFO: Jo Butterworth

FAR 10/21/01 **To Receive Apologies and Reason for Absence**

RESOLVED – that the apologies received from Cllr A Wignall and Cllr G Hutchinson due to family commitments be accepted.

FAR 10/21/02 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Items on the Agenda**

None received.

FAR 10/21/03 **Grant Dispensations**

None granted.

FAR 10/21/04 **Minutes**

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr G Elner and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

FAR 10/21/05 **Town Council Accounts.**

(a) Town Council Income & Expenditure report for 2021/22, 2nd Qtr.

(b) CWG Income & Expenditure Report for 2021/2022, 2nd Qtr.

(c) Council Detail Report, 2nd Qtr.

It was moved by Cllr T Hunter, seconded by Cllr D Lunn and

RESOLVED: to approve all 3 reports.

FAR 10/21/06 **Biennial Tree Survey.**

The Clerk reported that 3 out of the 5 companies approached had provided quotations for the tree survey, there were like for like quotes with varying prices.

Company No	Amount (Excl VAT)	Comments
1	£900	
2	£1,970	
3	£2,800	

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr T Hunter and

RESOLVED: to accept the quotation from company 1 for £900 (exc VAT), to survey all the trees on the Town Council owned and managed sites as it offered best value. The successful contractors were Llanerch Arboriculture.

FAR 10/21/07 **Oak tree – Beech Grove.**

The Clerk reported a resident had raised concerns over the safety of overhanging branches of an oak tree on Beech Grove Football field. Using her delegated powers due to the health and safety concern, the Clerk had instructed Egerton's Tree Care (who has previously contracted for the council) to assess the level of works required. It had been recommended to dead wood the crown at a cost of £380 exc VAT. The Clerk had authorised these works be carried out as soon as it was possible for the safety of the resident and his family.

Noted.

FAR 10/21/08 **Temporary Roof Repairs – Town Hall Roof**

Four contractors had visited the Town Hall to look at the required works to make temporary repairs to the committee room roof. Only 2 like quotations had been received.

Company No	Amount (Exc VAT)	Comments
1	£8,000	£4k for each roof
2	£2,930	Cost for one roof

It was moved by Cllr T Hunter, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED: to accept the quotation for £2,930 (exc VAT) from Company 2 to make temporary repairs the roof above the committee room. The successful contractors were Jonathan Roberts Roofing Contractors Limited and it was agreed to ask them for a quote to carry out temporary repairs to the main hall roof whilst they were here.

FAR 10/21/09 **Replacement Fire Doors – Town Hall**

Councillors considered the 3 quotations received for replacement doors with new door furnishings and a weather board in the main hall at the town hall.

Company No	Amount (Exc VAT)	Comments
1	£988.00	
2	£1085.00	
3	£790.00	

It was moved by Cllr Hunter, Seconded by Cllr Goulbourne and

RESOLVED: it was agreed that although company 2 was the more expensive the standard of past work was very high so quote number 2 for £1,085 was accepted. The successful candidate was D M Holt Joinery.

FAR 10/21/10 **CCTV Camera Cross Street**

The Promenade on Cross Street had been identified by the police (as well as councillors on the annual walk) as an area that would benefit from CCTV coverage. A quotation of £981.67 (exc VAT) had been received from Technical Services (with whom the Town Council holds their CCTV contract) for a new camera to be installed on Cross Street toilets to cover the benched area to the side of the building.

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr G Elner and

RESOLVED: to accept the quotation of £981.67 from Technical Services.

FAR 10/21/11 **RBL Donation**

Discussions took place as to how much of the £100 budget allocated for Remembrance Sunday would be donated for the Remembrance Wreath.

It was moved by Cllr Hunter, seconded by Cllr Goulbourne and

RESOLVED: to donate £70 to the Royal British Legion for the Wreath and spend £30 on refreshments.

FAR 10/21/12 **Cemetery Lodge**

The Committee considered a request from Ellesmere Rural Parish Council to consider a rent review on Cemetery lodge, the last time this had been conducted was 2019 when the Town Council with the recommendations from the Cemetery Working Group agreed to keep the rent the same for 2019/2020.

Clause 1.7.8.4 of the tenancy agreement states 'In clauses 1.7.8.2 and 1.7.8.3 the Rent will increase by the amount stated for the annual increase in the CPI (Consumer Price Index as quoted by the Office of National Statistics) as quoted for the month 2 months prior to the month of the increase. Regardless of CPI, the amount of rent will be subject to a minimum of 2% to a maximum of 5%.

CPI rose to 3.2% in August 2021, with this in mind a suggested rent increase of £25 per month from Bowenson and Watson and taking into account that the tenants have been good long-term tenants, committee agreed to recommend an increase the rent as from the 1st April 2022 to £575, which is a 4.54% increase and to ensure that the tenants are given plenty of notice.

It was moved by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Hunter and

RESOLVED: To RECOMMEND to full council an increase in rent on the Cemetery Lodge of £25 to £575 as from the 1st of April 2022 as long as ERPC agree.

FAR 10/21/13 **Town Hall Hire Charges**

Cllrs G Elner, P Goulbourne, P Jones. D Lunn, T Hunter volunteered to form a working group to review the Town Hall Hire Charges for 2022 to be considered by council during budget deliberations. It was also agreed to write to all regular town hall users to give them notice that the charges are currently being reviewed and that they will be given plenty of notice before any new charges are implemented.

RESOLVED: Cllrs G Elner, P Goulbourne, P Jones. D Lunn, T Hunter volunteered to form a working group to review the Town Hall Hire Charges for 2022

FAR 10/21/14 **Conditions of Hire for Birch Road Recreation Ground**

The Clerk had produced a set of conditions and regulations for hire for Birch Road Recreation ground which had been circulated with the agenda. All members agreed that that under the Insurance & Liability section, Item 2, should read. Ellesmere Town Council also accepts no liability for any injury that may be caused to people

attending the hirer session during the time of hire. This is the hirers responsibility. The Clerk will make this amendment.

FAR 10/21/15 **PA System at Ellesmere Town Hall**

A proposal to install a new PA System at Ellesmere Town Hall had been received from the Cellar Church and circulated to councillors for consideration.

Proposal in Summary:

Cellar church have budgeted for costs of a new PA System and installation works, estimated to be £925, to be installed for in the Main Hall at the Town Hall for use by them and other town hall users. They would pay for any ongoing upkeep costs and upkeep costs except in the case where damage was caused by a different group hiring the hall. If they ever leave the building, they will cover the costs of making good or preferably leaving the system in situ for the use of the Town Hall.

The Clerk reported that there are only 2 small groups that use a microphone once a month for their members to hear during meetings, the request would not affect or be of benefit to any other users as anyone hiring the hall for a Disco, brings their own systems.

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by T Hunter and

RESOLVED: To allow the Cellar Church to install the new PA System providing that if they were to ever leave the building, they gift the system to the Town Hall to ensure that the building is not left without one.

FAR 10/21/16 **Business Rate Overpayments**

A company had approached the council offering to help assess if they had been overpaying their business rates at the Town Hall. The proposal was to assess the property and if they felt that premises met the criteria set by the Valuation Office Agency they would charge £1,300 to carry out the required survey, if successful they would charge the Town Council 25% of 1 years savings.

The proposal was considered, and councillors felt that this is a task they can carry out themselves using the HMRC Business rates guidance. It was agreed that the following Cllrs would like to set up a working group to investigate the matter further.

RESOLVED: Cllr P Jones, G Elner, P Goulbourne, D Lunn, M Hancock, will form a working group to look at the Town Hall Business rates.

FAR 10/21/17 **Jointly Owned Property**

The Clerk had circulated a report prior to the meeting updating members on the meeting held with Shropshire Council to discuss the jointly owned property. A discussion took place regarding the Town Council's profits from the properties, and it was clear that members were under the impression that the Town Council's profits were ring fenced for the Mere but having attended the meeting it was highlighted that all funds budgeted for Shropshire Council's Outdoor Partnership Team were divided by all 25 of the sites they manage, which includes the Town Council's profits.

Members agreed that all of the Town Council's income from the Jointly owned property should be paid back to them annually so that they had a say where their

profits should be spent.

It was moved by Cllr Elner, seconded by Cllr Lunn and

RESOLVED: To RECOMMEND to full council that they write to Shropshire Council to request that all of the Town Council's profits from their jointly owned properties (50%) are paid annually to the Town Council, so that the Town Council can work collaboratively with the Outdoor partnership team to decide where the profits would be best spent for the benefit of the town, its residents and tourists.

FAR 10/21/18 **Community Policing Post**

The Clerk reported that a meeting with West Mercia Police, the Mayor and herself had taken place and they are hoping to occupy the building from 1st December 2021. She had been quoted £1,000 plus VAT for the Solicitors to draw up the lease, which she has asked the PCC if they will cover. Members felt that £1,000 plus VAT was expensive and asked the Clerk to look for alternatives to this price or drawing up the lease.

The heads of terms for the lease were looked at and it was agreed by all members that the Rent Reviews clause should have the same terms as that in the Tenancy agreement for the Cemetery Lodge and that under lease costs, these should be discussed further with West Mercia.

RESOLVED: The Clerk will amend the heads of terms as requested and further explore lease costs and options.

FAR 10/21/19 **Welcome Back Fund**

Councillors heard that the Clerk had met with Shropshire Council and their contractors to discuss the projects applied for through the welcome back fund. Quotations will be provided to Shropshire Council who will take the lead on the works, and they will report back to the Town Council in due course.

To note.

FAR 10/21/20 **Cross Street Toilet Vandalism Reimbursement**

The Clerk reported that a reimbursement of £294 to replace the door at Cross Street toilets had now been received.

To note.

The meeting closed at 21.21pm

Chair:

Date: