

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 DECEMBER 2014 AT 7.30 PM IN THE ROBIN**  
**ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Cllr A Stevenson, in the Chair

Councillors: Miss C Geall, Mrs S Newton, Dr L E Radford, P Ruffles, Miss J Sartin and A Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr P Boyle  
Ms N Villa, Town Clerk  
Ms P Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager  
Mr S Davies, Finance Manager

**325. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M McCormick and Cllr Miss I Sigmatic (Work Commitment)

**326. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Geall	DPI	Agenda item 6, Hertford Choral Society	Friend of Hertford Choral Society
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**327. THE MINUTES**

**Min 222 – Enhancements to Maidenhead Street**

Last sentence, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph amend:

Regular reports on progress should also be presented to the meetings of the Development and Leisure Committee and the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee.

To read:

Regular reports on progress should also be presented to the meetings of the Development and Leisure Committee.

**Min 224 (e) – Financial Risk Assessment**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sentence, amend,

Further changes included the deletion of the item for provision of glasses for VDU use for staff as this did not correlate with Council policy.

To read:

Further changes included the deletion of the item for provision of glasses for VDU use for staff.

The Committee acknowledged that the Council Policy had not yet been amended to no longer include a provision of a contribution towards glasses for VDU use, and considered it appropriate to make an ex gratia contribution of £30 to the two staff that had requested a contribution towards glasses for VDU use. No future requests would be considered and the Council Policy would be amended to delete the provision.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) Having given effect to the above amendments, the Minutes of the Finance, Policy & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 13 October 2014 be approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

**Note:** Cllr Turner arrived at 7.40pm.

### **328. ACTION SHEET**

#### Investment opportunities

The Chairman advised that he was currently seeking investment advice from Hertfordshire County Council.

#### New TTIC post

It was confirmed that the job description for the new TTIC post had been drafted and the job would be advertised shortly.

#### Museum Lease and SLA

It was confirmed that a meeting was due to take place on 22 December to finalise these matters.

#### Mind Lease

The continued delays with this lease lay with the Solicitor. The Town Clerk advised that if the lease had not been finalised within the next two weeks she would consider seeking a new solicitor. The Committee supported this but requested that a wider review should take place of which Solicitor should be used going forward.

#### Militia Colours

The Town Clerk confirmed that she was investigating grant opportunities for the restoration of the Militia Colours, which had been bequeathed to the Council in a will. It was requested that a future agenda item be included to arrange for a formal policy to be drafted around will bequests, and to consider whether financial support should be provided for conservation of bequests

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The action sheet be received and noted.

**329. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

None.

**330. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HERTFORD CHORAL SOCIETY**

An application had been received from Hertford Choral Society in the sum of £500 towards the cost of the annual HCS Choral workshop.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £500.

**Note:** Having previously declared a DPI, Cllr Geall left the room during the discussion on this item.

**331. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HERTFORD AND WARE YOUNG SKATERS GROUP**

An application for a grant of £350 had been received from the Hertford and Ware Young Skaters Group in respect of funding towards a residential weekend in Liverpool for 15 young people.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £350.

**332. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HERTFORD CRICKET CLUB**

An application had been received from Hertford Cricket Club for further funding towards new tennis nets

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £1200

**333. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – SELE FARM WOMEN'S CLUB**

An application had been received from Sele Farm Women's Club towards payment for better quality speakers and to subsidise two social events.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £200.

**334. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – EAST HERTS AND BROXBOURNE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM (HERTFORD CONTACT CENTRE)**

An application had been received from the East Herts and Broxbourne Domestic Violence Forum (Hertford Contact Centre) for £1200 towards running costs. Running costs were not normally funded through the grant scheme, however the Committee requested further information regarding the activities taking place in Hertford and the specific cost of operating the Hertford portion of the Forum.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **defers** a decision on the grant application to obtain further information.

**335. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HERTFORD ROTARY CLUB**

An application had been received for funding of £1200 towards the cost of organising Hertford Carnival in 2015

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £800 for specific funding towards the cost of toilet facilities and St John's Ambulance cover.

**336. PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE**

A copy of the minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee held on 10 November 2014 had been circulated to the Committee. These had yet to be approved by the Sub Committee, however, on being approved by the Sub Committee it was requested that the following amendment be made to ensure accuracy for audit purposes:

Min 264 Staff Salaries 2015/16

Resolution (d) Add:

The one off payment of £200, to be paid in December, will not be subject to the pro-rata calculation for part time staff and will be non-pensionable.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report of the Personnel Sub Committee held on 10 November 2014.

**337. DISABILITY ACCESS TO THE CASTLE**

The Committee had received a request from the Chairman of the Disability Support Group to consider the ease of access to the Castle for less able bodied individuals.

The Town Clerk outlined the current arrangements for disabled access to the Castle, which included the permission to drive around to the rear entrance, where entry to the Castle was on flat ground, however members wished to pursue the possibility of installing a handrail at the front entrance to assist those individuals with mobility issues. The Town Clerk reported that she was currently waiting to hear whether East Herts Council would approve listed building consent for the installation of a handrail at the front entrance and would shortly be establishing costs.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Town Clerk should continue to progress the possibility of installing a handrail at the front entrance to the Castle to assist mobility impaired visitors to the Castle.

### **338. NEW HOMES BONUS**

The Committee had received a report outlining the level of funding anticipated from the New Homes Bonus.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report.

### **339. REVIEW OF SCHEDULE OF LEASES AND CONTRACTS**

The Committee had received a report with a schedule of the main Leases, Contracts and other agreements currently in force at Hertford Town Council.

The schedule was a useful reference document which enabled the Council to be clear of the various leases and contracts it held and it was requested that the document be updated and referred to the Committee annually.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the Schedule

### **340. FINANCE**

#### **(a) Bank Reconciliations**

The Committee received the bank reconciliation summary for the month ending October 2014.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the bank reconciliation summary for month ending October 2014.

(b) Payment Schedules

The Committee received the payment schedules for October and November 2014.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the payment schedules for October and November 2014.

**Note:** Cllr Mrs Newton left the meeting at 8.45pm.

(c) Past Due Debtors

It was noted that there were no debtors over 90 days.

(d) Non Cheque Payments for First Half Year 2014/15

The Committee had received details of the non-cheque payments for the first half year 2014/15.

It was **RESOLVED** that

- a) The Committee **notes** the non-cheque payments for the first half year 2014/15

(e) Salary Apportionments

The Committee received a report of salary apportionments as a result of the recent time sheet exercise. The Finance Manager confirmed that the timesheet exercise would continue to be monitored over the next three months, following which more detailed apportionments would be established and referred to the Committee for re-apportioning within the accounts for the financial year 2015/16.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report.

(f) Events Cost Breakdown

The Committee received a report outlining the costs of staging the events. The Committee acknowledged the report as being a good starting point in establishing the real costs of staging events, however the report did not include the day to day staffing costs incurred in events organisation.

It was requested that the financial reporting around events continued to be enhanced and referred annually to the Development and Leisure Committee. Financial reporting of one off civic events should continue to be referred to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report.

(g) Draft Budget 2015/16

The Committee had received the proposed budget for 2015/16 including a list of optional projects across all three Committees.

A discussion took place regarding the recommendation from the Community Services Committee for a £4,000 reserve towards the cost of purchasing a new van when the need arose. The Committee acknowledged that the need for a new van will occur at some point, however the Council's reserves and funding levels were currently good and that funding would be made available for a new van when necessary and that a separate reserve was not required. The Committee approved that the £4000 proposed as a replacement van reserve be utilised to increase the War Memorial refurbishment budget from £5000 to £9000.

Discussions took place regarding the likely costs of the refurbishment of the Militia Colours. The Committee approved £5000 towards the initial cost of purchasing a new case for the Colours and a costed design proposal.

The Committee confirmed that it would be prepared to consider a contribution towards the cost of repairing the wall adjacent to St Andrew's Churchyard, subject to Committee approval, should the need arise and East Herts Council was not able to establish ownership.

The Committee formally approved the budget for recommendation to the Full Town Council at £1,049,700, representing a 0% increase on the precept. The Committee however also acknowledged that additional projects may come forward during the year which would be appropriate for funding under the New Homes Bonus, with the refurbishment of the Ashley Webb Shelter being one such project.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the draft budget; and
- b) The Committee **approves** the optional projects with adjustments as discussed.
- c) The Committee **approves** funding Town Council Notice Boards and Taxi Marshalling £10,000.
- d) The Committee **approves** the creation of an earmarked reserve account for the development and ongoing costs of the Pinehurst Play Area.
- e) The Committee **recommends** a Precept of £1,049,700 to Full Town Council at a meeting to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

The meeting closed at 21.20

