

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14 MARCH 2016 AT 7.30 PM IN THE ROBING
ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Cllr Miss Chantal Geall, in the Chair

Councillors: P Boyle, R Deering, Mrs S Newton, Dr L Radford, P Ruffles and Miss J Sartin

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Whelan, Town Clerk
Ms P Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager
Mr S Davies, Finance Manager

495. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Stevenson (family Commitment)

496. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Miss Sartin and Miss Geall	DPI	Museum Grant Request	Museum Trustees
Cllr Ruffles	DPI	All Grants	Cllr Ruffles declared an interest in all applications and left the room during all discussions
Cllr Boyle	DPI	Hertford Choral Society Grant Request	Cllr Boyle's mother is a member of the Choral Society
Cllrs Dr Radford and Miss Geall	Personal	Grant request – Hertford Choral Society	Patrons of the Choral Society
Cllr Miss Geall	Personal	Grant request – Friends of Wildeshausen	Cllr Miss Geall's mother is the applicant on behalf of the Friends of Wildeshausen.

497. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the Finance, Policy & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 4 January 2016 be approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

498. ACTION SHEET

Museum Lease

The Town Clerk confirmed that two queries on the lease remained but it was expected that the lease would be finalised within the next month.

Militia Colours

It was confirmed that the Town Clerk would shortly be meeting with the Museum Curator to assess the way forward with regard the preservation of the Militia Colours.

TTIC Lease

A draft lease had recently been received and whilst there remained one query with regard to rateable value it was expected the lease would be completed within a month.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The action sheet be received and noted.

499. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

Note: Cllrs Boyle and Ruffles, having declared DPI's, left the room for all discussions relating to Grants.

500. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HERTFORD MUSIC FESTIVAL

An application had been received from Hertford Music Festival for funding of £1200 towards the marketing and equipment hire of the event

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £1,200

501. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – COUNTRY BUS RALLIES

An application had been received from the Country Bus Rallies for funding of £680 towards the costs associated with organising of the annual rally on 1 June.

The Committee requested that the Marketing Manager liaises with the organiser to try and ensure that next year's event be encompassed within one of the Council's events, marketed and included in the Events programme. It

was further requested that this year's rally be publicised through the Council's website and social media accounts.

It was noted that this grant would be funded from the 2016/17 budget.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £680 towards the costs of running the annual bus rally.

502. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HOME START EAST HERTS

An application had been received from Home Start East Herts for £1,000 towards the costs of funding activities, events and outings etc. It was noted that this would be funded from the 2016/17 Grants fund.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee approves a grant of £1,000

503. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – FRIENDS OF WILDESHAUSEN

An application had been received from the Friends of Wildeshausen for funding towards the cost of an exhibition of the work of Hartmat Berlincke.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £750.

Note: Having declared a personal interest, the Chairman Cllr Miss Geall did not chair this item nor take any part in the discussion. The Vice Chairman, Cllr Deering chaired the item.

504. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – PINS AND FEATHERS PRODUCTIONS

An application had been received from Pins and Feathers Productions for funding towards the cost of staging a production called 'Seeing it through' a drama about life on the home front during WW1 in Hertford and Villages.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £1,200 provided the rest of the funding required could be raised.

505. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HERTFORD BOOK FESTIVAL

An application had been received from the organisers of the Hertford Book Festival for work to updating and improving the website. It was noted that no

accounts had been supplied with the grant application and the Committee would not consider the application until the information was provided.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The grant application be **deferred** until full accounts were provided, at which point the request would be considered by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committee.

506. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – HERTFORD CHORAL SOCIETY

An application had been received from the Hertford Choral Society for funding of £800 towards the cost of a Choral Singing Day.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant of £800.

507. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION – EXCITE-ED COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

An application had been received from Excite-ed Community Interest Company for funding towards the promotion of cybersafe workshops in schools.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** a grant for £500 but requested that the grant be spent in Hertford schools only and not Hertfordshire generally and evidence be submitted as to the success of the project.

508. PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE

The Committee received a copy of the draft minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee held on 1 February 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the draft minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee held on 1 February 2016.

509. POLICY – GENERATING INCOME THROUGH SPONSORSHIP

The Committee received a draft policy setting out guidance on how the Council generates income through sponsorship, for recommendation for inclusion within the Constitution. This Policy had been considered by the Development and Leisure Committee, where several changes had been made and incorporated into the final document.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **recommends** the adoption of the policy to the Full Town Council for inclusion in the Constitution.

510. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Committee received revised copies of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which incorporated amendments relating to tendering arrangements required under changes in legislation.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Committee **recommends** the adoption of the revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for re-adoption within the Constitution.

511. APPOINTMENT OF NEW STAFF

The Committee was asked to formally approve the appointment of the Town Clerk, Mr Joseph Whelan and the Town and Tourism Development Manager, Mrs Jenny Bullen.

The Committee considered that in future it would only be necessary to formally report the recruitment to the statutory posts of Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** the appointment of Joseph Whelan to the post of Town Clerk on spine point 59 with effect from 4 January 2016 and Jenny Bullen as Town and Tourism Development Manager on spine point 28 with effect from 1 February 2016.

512. FINANCE

(a) Bank Reconciliations

The Committee received the bank reconciliation summaries for December 2015 and January 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the bank reconciliation summaries for December 2015 and January 2016.

(b) Payment Schedules

The Committee received the payment schedules for December 2015 to February 2016. The Chairman sought clarification on selected points which will be amended prior to publication.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the payment schedules for December 2015 – February 2016

(c) Debtor and Creditor Payment Times

The Committee received a report outlining the time taken for the Council to make payments to its suppliers and receive payments from its customers in the first three quarters of 2015/16. It was noted that KPI's were largely met except in the case of one or two disputed invoices.

In regard to income from sponsorship for events, the Committee directed that full payment must be received prior to the event taking place.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

(d) Internal Audit Report.

The Town Clerk provided members with a verbal report providing overview of the findings of the Internal Auditor.

The recommendations included changes to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulation to reflect legislative changes in respect of tender requirements, more detailed information to be supplied within the asset register and the requirement to formally confirm within the minutes the appointment of the Town Clerk.

Further recommendations included tightening up of procedures for obtaining three quotations for work over £5,000.

The Chairman advised that she had asked the auditor to carry out additional work in regard to budget allocations and Toil and holiday records, and the Chairman requested that the full report be forwarded to all members.

It was **RESOLVED** that

The Committee **notes** the interim Internal Audit Report.

(e) Income and Expenditure to 31 December 2015

The Committee received details of the third quarter income and expenditure. It was requested that in future more detailed information

be provided as commentary which clearly indicated reasons and actions taken/to be taken on adverse budget lines. Similarly, it was requested that favourable/adverse budget lines more clearly reflected whether it related to income or expenditure.

It was also requested that the commentary included information on the net overall figure to date, both per department and overall.

The Town Clerk advised that a monthly update would be sent to members of each Committee, with information of progress in between meetings. The updates and any responses would be channelled through the Chairmen of the Committee.

Increase in Museum Grant

Note: Having declared DPI's, Cllrs Miss Geall and Miss Sartin left the room during the discussion on this item.

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Deering chaired this part of the meeting.

The Museum's annual grant request had unfortunately been overlooked during the preparation of the budget and consequently only a 1% uplift had been approved. The Committee considered the request for a further increase amounting to an additional sum payable of £1411 for 2016/17. The Committee was happy to approve the additional payment

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Committee **notes** the third quarter income and expenditure.
2. The Committee **approves** the increase in the Museum grant by an additional £1411 for 2016/17

Cllrs Miss Geall and Miss Sartin returned to the meeting.

513. BANK MANDATE (Current Account)

The Committee was asked to approve changes to the Bank Mandate to reflect the appointment of the new Town Clerk and remove the name of the previous Clerk.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** the changes to the bank mandate to reflect the staff changes.

514. BANK MANDATE (New Client Account)

The Committee was requested to approve the opening of a new Client account to hold rent and key deposits. The banking of damage bonds for

hirers would be discussed with the Chairman of the Development and Leisure Committee prior to changing the current process of holding cheques.

A query was raised regarding the legality of holding rent deposits, and whether it was required for the deposits to be held by a third party. The Finance Manager agreed to investigate this point and report back to the Chairman.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **approves** the opening of a Client Account.

515. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that:

In view of the confidential nature of the following items, which relate to the business matters of other individuals and organisations, the public shall be excluded while the following items are discussed. This is in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1972.

516. DEBTORS OVER 90 DAYS

The Committee received a report outlining outstanding debts over 90 days and the Town Clerk advised the majority of the debts had been repaid since the report was published.

It was requested that debtors be more closely monitored in future.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the 90 day debtor schedule and the repayment information.

The meeting closed at 20:55