

**HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held at virtually over Zoom on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July following the Crematorium & Cemetery Sub Committee.

**MINUTES**

Present: Councillors: A Beevor; A Blackwell; J Cole; A Diaz; C Doyle; S Gifford; V Hufford; P Kadewere; P Kennington; B Luckham; S McAdam; P Pearce (Chairman); T Shrapnel; S Sweek and K Webb.

Absent: Councillors: A Sedgwick and T Shrapnel.

*Clerks note: Cllr P Kadewere and Cllr Sweek joined the meeting at 7.00pm.*

Before the meeting commenced the Chairman extended his sincere condolences to Cllr Veronica Hufford, for her family bereavement. It was noted that our thoughts and prayer were with her family.

112. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors: P Brown and T Sanderson.

113. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

114. **PUBLIC ADDRESS**

There were none.

115. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 (M9) were presented to Members. The Chairman asked Members if there were any comments, there were none. It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes, which would be signed by the Chairman at a later date

116. **RECOMMENDATION OF SUB COMMITTEES**

Members had before them minutes from the Finance Sub Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (M5).

The Chairman of the Finance Sub Committee highlighted an error in item 30, regarding the PWLB interest rate. It would be removed.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Finance Sub Committee, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (M5) subject to changes noted above.

#### 117. **MONTHLY EXPENDITURE**

Members had before them a copy of the monthly expenditure of Huntingdon Town Council for April and May 2020. Members were requested to email any questions or comments to the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO), Town Clerk and Chairman of the Finance Committee prior to the meeting.

The following queries were received by the RFO:

- 17/04/2020 - Medway Gas, it was advised that the gas supply could not be switched off, metre readings had been taken and a rebate application would be made as the building was closed.
- 07/06/2020 – Depot roller doors, a minor repair was required.

With no further questions or comments. It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to approve the monthly expenditure for April and May 2020 and the reports would be signed by the Chairman at a later date

#### 118. **BANK RECONCILIATION**

Members received a copy of the bank reconciliation for months ending 30<sup>th</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. The Chairman asked Members whether there were any questions. There were none. It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations for month ending 30<sup>th</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 and copies of the bank reports would be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

#### 119. **BUDGET VS ACTUALS**

Members were presented with the Budget vs Actuals up to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. The Chairman asked for comments and questions:

A Member enquired why there were two entries for The Coneygear Centre, it was advised that one was for running costs and the other for building costs.

The Chairman noted that the precept budget had been reviewed by the Finance Sub Committee and the new budget would be presented under this item at future meetings. Thanks, were extended to the RFO, Town Clerk and Members who were involved with the budget review.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to note the budget vs actual up to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

#### 120. **CREMATORIUM & CEMETERY LOAN**

The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to update Members on the Crematorium and Cemetery Loan. The first half of the Public Works Loan of £6.7m had been received and it was time to start the process of application to secure the second half of the

loan to complete the Crematorium project, Depot and Glasshouse, plus all ancillary equipment. The Finance Sub Committee were presented a budget and recommended that a further £6.8m was applied for from PWLB.

There were VAT implications with the project as there were strict guidelines on what public bodies could claim back from crematoriums. HTC had claimed VAT expenses up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and some would be required to be paid back. No further VAT claims were made; the Finance Manager was awaiting advice at the end of the financial year.

Taking this into consideration, the Chairman shared concerns that the proposed £6.8m may not cover the cost of the project including VAT. It was suggested that the maximum cost of the loan was increased to £7.34m. The full project was originally estimated at £11.7m, with the VAT element there was an additional £2.34m to be added to this figure. It was noted this was an iconic project for Huntingdon Town Council and had garnered national interest.

The Chairman asked Members for questions and comments.

A Member queried how quickly the additional funds would be required, it was advised that the current payments were £600,000 every few weeks as and when the project developed. However, this may increase due to the equipment required and build phase.

A Member asked whether there were alternative funding options, it was advised that the PWLB were the best option with the lowest interest rate.

A Member noted that it was a substantial sum to pay on VAT. It was advised that HTC sought advice from the VAT specialist at SSLC, who created a report for HTC on VAT, it was advised there were strict guidelines which could not be appealed or deviated from.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to approve the application of a further £7.34m from the Public Works Loan Board to complete the Crematorium, Cemetery and Depot project.

## 121. **CCTV**

At the Leisure & Community Services Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020, Members discussed CCTV provision for Coneygear and Bloomfield Park, due to antisocial behaviour at both places. The Town Clerk outlined the following costs to Members:

- 1 CCTV camera at Coneygear Park - £17,081
- 1 CCTV camera at Bloomfield Park - £19,639
- 2 CCTV cameras at Bloomfield Park - £12,860 (if installed at same time)

There was £36,000 in the budget to cover the service charge of CCTV. It was advised that a proposal was currently in discussion with HDC, Cambridge Council and South Cambridge Council to reduce the cost of the service charge by 50%, to make the service more attractive to parish councils.

Members were asked to decide the number of cameras required and the site(s) of installation.

Members agreed that it was important to have one camera installed at each park, to keep residents and The Coneygear Centre facility safe. Concerns were raised about the cost of the three cameras, with the review of the budget in the current climate.

A Member queried where the camera would be placed at Bloomfield Park, the Town Clerk screenshared the proposed location provided by the CCTV company. This would cover the entrance to the park from the Town Centre, the band stand and play area.

It was noted that a Public Open Spaces Order (POSO), would also be investigated for both Parks, CCTV provision would aid the police in identifying perpetrators and gathering evidence for more prosecutions. Anti-social behaviour had increased in the Town, with four areas now affected. HDC were responsible for the other two sites (Sapley shops and Sapley car park), and it was understood different groups congregated at each public spaces.

A Member suggested that two CCTV cameras were purchased, one for each park, then the CCTV could be reviewed in the next financial year and further discussions on purchasing a second camera for Bloomfield Park.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to purchase two CCTV cameras, one for Bloomfield Park and one for Coneygear Park and to review CCTV provision in the next financial year.

## 122. **CRICKET PAVILION**

The provision of a new Cricket Pavilion and care centre was discussed at the Leisure & Community Services Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020. An application was made to the Community Capital Fund, HTC were through to a second round, which required building plans. Members were asked to consider commissioning an architect to create drawings of the Cricket pavilion, the initial drawings for pre application were quoted as £2,970. If the application was accepted a further £3,350 would be required, however it was noted this would be applied for as a grant from CCC.

The Chairman asked for any comments or questions, there were none.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to approve the commissioning of an architect to create initial designs for the Cricket Pavilion for £2,790.

## 123. **OVER £1,000 INVOICES**

Members were presented with a report including a list of over £1,000 invoices the Town Clerk approved using delegated powers during government lock down due to the coronavirus pandemic.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to approve the list of over £1,000 invoices the Town Clerk approved using delegated authority.

124. **DATE & AGENDA OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted as to be confirmed, Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon.

**CHAIRMAN**