

Haverhill Town Council



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Haverhill Town Council's

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 15th October 2019 at 7.00pm at Leiston Road Community Centre, Haverhill.

Present: Mayor Councillor J Burns (Chairman)
Councillor A Brown
Councillor B Davidson
Councillor P Hanlon
Councillor L Miller-Jones
Councillor L Smith
Councillor D Smith
Councillor A Stinchcombe

Apologies: Councillor P Fox
Councillor D Roach

In Attendance: Colin Poole (Responsible Financial Officer)
Martin Page (Finance Administrator)

One member of the public was present.

Welcome:

Mayor J Burns welcomed everyone to the meeting. This meeting was not recorded as it was being held away from the Arts Centre.

| | | Action |
|---------------------------|---|------------|
| F19 /029 | <u>Apologies for Absence</u> The above apologies were noted. | |
| F19 /030 | <u>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and requests for Dispensations</u> No Councillor declared an interest in items on the agenda. | |
| F19 /031 | <u>Minutes of the Last Meeting</u> It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor L Smith that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 th July 2019 be agreed as a true record, following amendment of welcome note to show Mayor Burns in the Chair. RESOLVED | |
| F19 /032 | <u>Actions Arising</u> a) F18/045c – Review of booking terms and conditions used by the Council and Trust: This had not been concluded | RFO |

- b) F18/054 – Charge Card: The application has been completed.
- c) F18/055 – Banking: The RFO confirmed no further progress completing the Barclays bank application form had been made.
- d) F19/015d – Legal action in small claims court: The Committee approved writing-off this £130 debt as it was not possible to trace the debtor.

RFO

**Finance
Administrator**

F19 **Public Forum**

/033 No member of the public wished to speak.

F19 **Report from Responsible Financial Officer**

/034 The RFO presented his report to the meeting (see separate document).

- a) Councillor L Miller-Jones confirmed that the bank balances reported match the printed statements received from the banks.
- b) The RFO had looked at the income for the Zone over the first three months of operation. The committee noted that the Zone had been closed for refurbishment during some of the summer, which is historically a time of lower attendances as people enjoy the outdoors. The removal of the old branding had given the impression the playzone was closed, this would be changed with new temporary branding being erected during Half Term. However, the growth in sales since mid-September was encouraging.
- c) The Arts & Leisure Manager would be asked to provide a copy of the specification for the cleaning contract.
- d) The Operations Manager would be provided with contact details regarding solar panel installation at the Leiston Centre.
- e) The historic debtors list was reviewed by councillors. It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that historic debts totalling £232.90 be written off.

A&L Manager

Mayor Burns

**Finance
Administrator**

RESOLVED

The Committee accepted the report of the RFO.

RESOLVED

F19 **Date of next Meeting**

/035 The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be held on **TUESDAY** 21st January 2020 at Haverhill Arts Centre. The RFO advise that an additional meeting may be called during the budget-setting process.

F19 **To Exclude the Press and Public**

/036 It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to unfettered debate as it would undermine this process and result in less robust, well-considered or effective policies.

RESOLVED

F19 Aspirations for 2020/21 budget

/037 Councillors discussed priorities they would like to see featured in the next budget. Councillors expressed support for a budget that allows for up-front investment in reducing the carbon footprint of the Council’s activities, which would also reduce costs in subsequent years in terms of power usage.
Work was already underway to write an Environmental Policy. Councillors also supported the idea of introducing proposals to help the town reduce and offset carbon use.
A review of contracts, including Christmas lighting, is required. Councillors supported the need to increase staffing resource to enable the procurement and project management work necessary to deliver these aspirations.
If Bevan House is sold, the capital receipt would be ring-fenced for capital works.
An allowance for contributions towards potential capital projects in the town may be allowed for.
It was noted that the latest data on deprivation indices indicated Haverhill needed investment in social projects. An allowance for additional investment to counter deprivation in Haverhill would be of benefit.
Councillors recognised that an up-front investment by taxpayers through the precept may be necessary to realise savings in future years. The establishment of an earmarked fund for climate change expenditure to enable the Council to offset additional expense across cost centres would allow a defined budget to be allocated to the principle of carbon reduction rather than it be ‘lost’ in a general uplift to individual cost centres.
The RFO will draw up a working document to present at the November Full Council for consideration.

F19 Closure

/038 The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21:30

Signed
Chairman

Date.....