

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of Haverhill Town Council's

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held remotely on Monday 20th July 2020 at 7.00pm under regulation 6 of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Present: Mayor Councillor J Burns (Chairman)
Councillor B Davidson
Councillor P Hanlon
Councillor L Miller-Jones
Councillor D Roach

Apologies: Councillor L Smith

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

No members of the public were present.

Welcome:

Mayor J Burns welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the meeting was being recorded.

F20 Apologies for Absence

/010 The above apology was received after the meeting.

F20 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and requests for **/011** Dispensations

None.

F20 Minutes of the Last Meeting

/012 It was proposed by Councillor B Davidson, seconded by Councillor D Roach that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2020 be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

F20 Actions Arising

/013 Covid-19 has had an impact on the normal running of the council, so some works have not been possible

- a) F18/045c – Review of booking terms and conditions used by the Council and Trust: This had been overtaken by events and the Operations Manager was looking at the terms and conditions for bookings under Covid-19 regulations relating to community halls and the activity type. Different regulations restrict some of the

Action

Operations
Manager

activities carried out by hirers. Hirers would have to pay for additional cleaning between hires, or each rental will cost us more than we charge.

- b) F18/055 – Banking: The RFO confirmed no further progress completing the Barclays bank application form had been made.
- c) F19/034c – Cleaning Contract specification: The Clerk had been in discussion with our current contractor, Gleam Cleaning, in respect of the practicalities of reopening and the likely cost of additional cleaning due to Covid-19. In the case of the Zone and Arts Centre it is unlikely that it would be practical to open until such time as covid-19 regulations only require hand sanitiser stations as social distancing is simply not practical. A new specification can only be drawn up when the regulations are relaxed to the point we can consider reopening. The working group on tendering will meet before the end of July and will see the specification before it is used.
- d) F20/006c - Panto cost analysis: The RFO and Finance Administrator agreed the scope of the work to establish the cost, but it requires access to documentation that is harder to get hold of during lockdown. This has been knocked off the to-do list through the weight of other urgencies. We do not know if our usual provider will be able to put on a panto as they need a full auditorium. It was noted that nationally it was recognised that theatres need to fill auditoriums to make pantos sustainable for the production company. The RFO has asked the Arts & Leisure Manager to investigate alternatives to traditional shows, in order to have the Arts Centre being used.
The RFO asked that the Finance Administrator investigate the availability of December 2019 rotas.
- e) F20/006d – Meal deals: The Marketing Manager has not progressed this due to lockdown.
- f) F20/006e – Popcorn machine: The RFO did some initial work before lockdown but was only finding machines that heated ready-popped popcorn.

RFO

Operations
Manager

CLERK

Arts &
Leisure
manager

Finance
Administrator

F20 **Public Forum**

/014 No public were present.

F20 **Report from Responsible Financial Officer**

/015 The RFO presented his report to the meeting (see separate document). He thanked the Finance Administrator for getting the June report done. It was quite sobering to see the number of lines in the main accounts with zero against expenditures. Whilst 'better' financially than we would have been, it is a reflection on the services not being offered.

- a) The Administration department 101, no-one is furloughed, this department is effectively working 'as normal'.
- b) The Zone is a commercial operation, so this is losing money as a result of not being opened.
- c) Bank reconciliation: Mayor J Burns confirmed that the bank balances reported match the printed statements received from the banks. Funds are robust and should last until the end of September.

- d) The Finance Administrator provided commentary on debtors and creditors. The majority is, as always, inter-company debts and credits. Nine debts totalling £1,749 are 90+ and are mostly regular users who have promised repayment but not yet made, for whatever reason. The debts appear collectable and are relatively small. We will not be over-zealous on debt collection as they may be in a difficult financial position and we do not want to destabilise groups.
- e) Hartseats: Arts Centre café has been closed the entire financial year so far, so it is only fixed overheads being paid. We are receiving CJRS funding in respect of all the Hartseats staff.
- f) Zone café is in the same situation as the Arts Centre Café. £850 is the new extraction canopy for the kitchen.
- g) Haverhill Community Trust: Again, just fixed overheads, no activity from the various groups under the HCT, with the exception of Haverhill In Bloom which has paid for the High Street planting, which will appear in the July accounts. Some hanging baskets have been delivered to the Zone.
- h) Some detached youth work may start soon, subject to risk assessment.
- i) Volunteer centre has received further income.
- j) The Arts & Leisure Manager has new plans agreed with West Suffolk for the Community Chest funding for the Community Kitchen.
- k) All the funds for the HCT are restricted, so there is no free resource being created by the enforced underspends.
- l) Historic Debtors: 9 HTC total £1749 and 6 HCT total £1282 90+days. The Finance Administrator will continue to chase.

F20 **Date of next Meeting**

/016 To be advised - The RFO advised that the Council needs to regularly check expenditure against budget, so the next meeting is likely to be October, even though there is relatively little financial activity.

F20 **Closure**

/017 The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 19:49

Signed

Chairman

Date.....