

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING, BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL  
TUESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2022, 5.30PM  
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

**PRESENT:**

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • <b>The Mayor:</b>           | • Councillor A H Hart    |
| Councillor J Garvey           | • Councillor D J Hawley  |
| • <b>Deputy Mayor:</b>        | • Councillor K J Jackson |
| Councillor C Perkin           | • Councillor J T Jones   |
| • Councillor J Davies         | • Councillor J Salt      |
| • Councillor D A Hall (Chair) | • Councillor N R Yates   |
| • Councillor K Harper         |                          |

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Mrs Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Ms Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnerships Officer
- Mrs Margaret Warman – Compliance and Governance Officer
- Councillor A Lawton
- Mr James Connolly – Biddulph Chronicle

**41. APOLOGIES**

- Councillor C Brady
- Councillor A J McLoughlin
- Councillor W Rogers

**42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

Councillor Hall declared an interest in item 49 with regard to the Foodbank at English Martyrs'.

- ii. Other Interests: None.

**43. MINUTES**

- a) The Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on 26 July 2022 (approved at the Town Council meeting on 27 September 2022) were **confirmed**.

#### **44. POLICIES**

- a) To **approve** the reviewed Severe Winter Weather Management Policy

Councillor Yates said we should encourage the County Council to grit the roads and not rely on the grit bins. He had submitted an alternative route to the County Council – but had not received a reply; Councillor Jones had too. The Chief Officer asked Councillors Yates and Jones to resubmit their suggestions via her and she would raise them with County.

Proposed by Councillor Perkin; seconded by Councillor Hart and agreed.

- b) To **approve** the reviewed Health & Safety at Work Policy

Councillor Salt suggested an outdoor First Aid Course be completed by at least one Officer and thought stress should be a stand alone item. The Chief Officer stated we have a separate 'Stress Management Policy', which we could reference to.

Proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Perkin and agreed.

#### **45. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE 'BIDDULPH COMES TOGETHER' PROJECT AND LIKELY COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS**

The Chief Officer gave an overview of what had been achieved so far, she confirmed there were gaps in provision on Mondays and Wednesdays and we also need to look at holiday cover. Councillor Jackson suggested groups could put in for funding now and we could 'top up' with the £10k from our Co-op bid if we're successful. The Chief Officer confirmed she'd received a couple of emails requesting funds.

It was agreed to call the scheme 'Biddulph Works Together'.

Discussion and personal anecdotes lead everyone to agree the situation is serious. It was agreed the Chief Officer could allocate funding to groups without referring back to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

#### **46. ITEM REQUESTED BY COUNCILLOR HARPER**

Councillor Harper suggested a review be carried out in relation to expenditure, on all current and forthcoming projects. Councillors agreed it is their role to scrutinise all costs. After much discussion, Councillor Harper proposed a review of expenditure via each Committee, linked to the Council's Action Plan; seconded by Councillor Davies. Voted in favour. Councillor Jackson voted against.

**47. TO NOTE THAT THE CHIEF OFFICER HAS BEEN INVITED TO SPEAK AT A NUMBER OF EVENTS, REPRESENTING THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Chief Officer advised she was speaking at a County Climate Change conference, at a Volunteering Workshop at Staffordshire University and with partners at a 'Community Players' event.

Councillor Hart said he was happy for the Chief Officer to accept invitations and promote the achievements of the Town Council. It was duly noted.

**48. TO CONFIRM THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH MYERS AND CO. SOLICITORS IN RELATION TO EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT**

Proposed by Councillor Perkin; seconded by Councillor Hart and agreed.

**49. TO APPROVE THAT THE FOODBANK (ENGLISH MARTYRS') CAN USE THEIR 2022-23 GRANT ALLOCATION FOR ELECTRIC BLANKETS, RATHER THAN HEATERS**

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Harper and agreed.

Councillor Salt suggested contact is made with the Fire and Rescue Service to complete home fire risk checks.

**50. TO RECEIVE A REVISED VALUATION FOR THE MAYORS CHAIN AND OTHER TOWN COUNCIL JEWELS**

The Chief Officer confirmed she'd shared the revised valuation with the Council's insurance provider. It was duly noted.

**51. TO CONSIDER EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2022-23 AND BEYOND**

Proposed by Councillor Davies; seconded by Councillor Hart and agreed.

*James Connolly left the meeting at 8.04pm.*

**52. BANKING REPORTS**

- a) To **receive** a breakdown of utility payments to date

The Chief Officer shared the payments. Councillor Yates requested further clarity and suggested daily meter readings to more closely monitor spend.

After discussion, Councillor Yates proposed daily meter readings for the Town Hall only for a period of one month, to be brought back to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee to analyse the value of doing so; seconded by

Councillor Garvey. Voted in favour. Councillors Jones and Hawley voted against.

**b)** To **receive** bank reconciliations for June, July and August 2022  
Councillor Perkin confirmed he and Councillor Hawley had completed internal monitoring controls and had found no 'red flags'. A formal report would follow. Councillor Hawley said the Compliance and Governance Officer had done a great job (covering in the absence of a Finance Officer) and things were tying together a lot more than they used to with the new system.  
Proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Hawley and agreed.

### **53. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

- a)** To **consider** disposal of any assets, in line with the Asset Management Policy and Financial Regulations. None.
- b)** To **confirm** approved suppliers as part of the Procurement Policy. None.

*In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1, the Council is to determine which items, if any, should be taken with the public excluded.*

### **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

### **54. QUOTATIONS**

- a)** To **consider** costs for additional cabling within the Town Hall
- b)** To **consider** costs for additional IT equipment for new starters

Approval was granted.

- c)** To **confirm** costs for equipment to enable to hybrid and broadcasting of meetings

Approval was granted.

- d)** To **consider** remedial work to the Town Hall alarm

All in favour to get the alarm system fixed.

## **55. MINING MEMORIAL PROGRESS**

All were in favour to get the design costed via the architect.

## **56. TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL FROM BP ARCHITECTS IN RELATION TO THE STATION ROAD SITE**

Independent advice would be sought.

## **57. TO CONSIDER COMPLIANCE AND MAINTENANCE ACTIVITY ACROSS THE TOWN COUNCIL ASSETS**

The Chief Officer advised the Compliance and Governance Officer was working on a Health and Safety Report. It was duly noted.

## **58. TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL IN RELATION TO SUBSIDISED TRAVEL ON THE 93 BUS**

Councillor Lawton put forward his proposal. Councillor Yates proposed accepting the solution; seconded by Councillor Salt and agreed.

The meeting ended at 9.26pm.

Signed..... Date.....