

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING, BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL
TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2022, 6PM
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

PRESENT:

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| • The Mayor: | • Councillor D J Hawley |
| Councillor J Garvey | • Councillor K J Jackson |
| • Deputy Mayor: | • Councillor J T Jones |
| Councillor C Perkin | • Councillor A J McLoughlin |
| • Councillor J Davies | • Councillor W Rogers |
| • Councillor D A Hall (Chair) | • Councillor J Salt |
| • Councillor K Harper | • Councillor N R Yates |
| • Councillor A H Hart | |

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mrs Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Ms Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnerships Officer
- Ms Elizabeth Norton – Finance Officer
- Mrs Margaret Warman – Compliance and Governance Officer
- Mrs Angela Williams – Administration Officer
- Two Members of the public

59. APOLOGIES

- Councillor C Brady (Absent)

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: None.
- ii. Other Interests: None

61. MINUTES

- a) The Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on 27 September 2022 (approved at the Town Council meeting on 11 October 2022) were **confirmed**.
- b) The Notes of the Asset Management Working Group meeting held on 4 October 2022 were **confirmed**. Proposed by Councillor Harper, seconded by Councillor Perkin.

62. POLICIES

- a) To **reaffirm approval** of the attached Pensions Discretions document, created in 2019.

Proposed by Councillor Perkin, seconded by Councillor Harper.

- b) To **approve** the reviewed Volunteer Policy.

Councillor Salt questioned whether the policy covers those on work experience. The Chief Officer confirmed that there is a young person policy.

Proposed by Councillor Perkin, seconded by Councillor Hawley.

- c) To **confirm** that the Financial Transactions Policy will be archived as no longer relevant following a change of IT package; this has been replaced with revised work instructions.

Proposed by Councillor Perkin, seconded by Councillor Yates.

63. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE 'BIDDULPH WORKS TOGETHER' PROJECT AND TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS

The Chief Officer tabled the report. The recommendations were that the Town Council makes £500 available for contingencies.

This amount can be approved by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee, as set out in the Financial Regulations.

A 'contingency' is an absolute emergency; a safety net that can be responsive when other provision is not available.

The Contingency Fund will be for the provision of:

- *One emergency food supply per individual/ family, for three days food. The expectation is that the household will work with existing services, funded through the 'Works Together' scheme and Foodbank provision. The referral may come from a Councillor, local community organisation, or via contact at the Town Council. There will be no means test, but consideration should be given to the level of vulnerability. The Town Council will hold a small supply of food, but may need to top this up, depending on the level of need.*
- *Top-up of gas/ electricity where a pre-payment meter is in place, up to the value of £20. The aim will be to work with an organisation such as FuelBank to deliver this. The expectation is that support will then be provided by organisations such as Citizens Advice, Moneywise or Green Doctor.*

Councillor Salt suggested an increase may be required. It was discussed that the amount will be reviewed after the 'Biddulph Works Together' group has received relevant data.

64. TO CONSIDER THE ATTACHED ROOM HIRE QUESTIONNAIRE IN RELATION TO TOWN HALL USERS

The Chief Officer distributed the room hire feedback form which is to be sent to regular hirers. Once received, this data will be shared. All agreed.

65. TO RECEIVE THE ATTACHED MONITORING INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE TOWN HALL RECEPTION USAGE

The Chief Officer tabled the report. Councillor Jackson questioned whether reception is open Thursday and Friday. The Chief Officer confirmed that reception is now open every day with the exception of Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Opening hours are Monday to Friday, 9am until 1pm. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 2pm till 4pm.

66. TO RECEIVE A REVIEW OF THE MAYORAL YEAR 2021-22

The Chief Officer reported that £4,000 was raised during the Mayoral year.

67. TO APPROVE THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL BECOMES A COMMUNITY HELP POINT

The Chief Officer explained that conversations had been ongoing with the County Council Public Health team.

Councillor Salt suggested that all staff complete safeguarding training, and an enhanced disclosure and bar service (DBS) check (for front of house staff). The Chief Officer would look into this.

Councillor Salt proposed that the Town Council becomes a Community Help Point, and signs the agreement attached; seconded by Councillor Harper. Voted in favour.

68. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- a) To **receive** electricity readings for the Town Hall, taken throughout October 2022

Councillor Yates requested additional data; to work out average usage and create analysis of the exceptions. Agreed.

- b) To **receive** bank reconciliations for September and October 2022 Received.

- c) To **receive** a receipts and payments summary report including variances, as at 16 November 2022.

Both b) and c) above were moved together. Proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Perkin.

69. 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.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

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.

70. QUOTATIONS

a) To **approve** costs in relation to signage outside the Town Hall
It was agreed there would be no changes at this time.

b) To **approve** the use of a grant from Staffordshire County Council for 'thermo cards'
Agreed.

c) To **approve** market spend and a request for Staffordshire Moorlands District Council funding.
Agreed.

d) To **approve** costs in relation to the main hall lighting
Agreed.

e) To **approve** costs in relation to hall floor repairs
It was agreed that this improvement was not practical this financial year.

f) To **approve** heating improvements at the Visitor Centre
An additional timer should be added to the immersion heater and an energy survey should be completed.

71. TO CONSIDER THE SUPPORT STAFFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY OFFICER ROLE IN 2023-24

The Chief Officer should provide additional costings. Agreed.

Councillor Rogers left the meeting at 7.47pm.

Councillor Jackson returned to the meeting.

72. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BIDDULPH IN BLOOM CONSTITUTION

The Chief Officer advised that the solicitor should be instructed to review the constitution. All agreed.

73. TO NOTE THAT A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST HAS BEEN RECEIVED IN RELATION TO HEATING THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

The Chief Officer reported the Freedom of Information request and will respond accordingly. Agreed.

74. TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE IN RELATION TO THE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE TOWN HALL

The Chief Officer would contact Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to discuss the discrepancies.

The meeting ended at 8.18pm.

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