

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING, BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL
TUESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2023, 5.30PM
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

PRESENT:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • The Mayor: | • Councillor M A Hopkins |
| Councillor A K Harper | • Councillor K J Jackson |
| • Deputy Mayor: | • Councillor J T Jones |
| Councillor N R Yates (5.33pm) | • Councillor A C Lawton |
| • Councillor A H Hart | • Councillor J T Salt |
| • Councillor D J Hawley | • Councillor W Rogers (Chair) |
| • Councillor F A Holdsworth | |

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mrs Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Mrs Margaret Warman - Compliance and Governance Officer
- Mrs Angela Williams – Administration Officer
- Ms Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnerships Officer

41. APOLOGIES

- Councillor C Brady
- Councillor C Smith
- Councillor C Wood (Absent)

Councillor Rogers recited the disclaimer regarding the recording of the meeting.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. None.
- ii. Other Interests: Councillor Jones declared an interest in item 45.
Councillor Hopkins declared an interest in Item 50b.

43. MINUTES

To **confirm** the Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on 25 July 2023 (approved at the Town Council meeting on 12 September 2023). All **agreed**.

44. ACCOUNTS MATTERS

- a) To **approve** the bank reconciliations for June and July 2023- all accounts (attached).

Councillor Jackson requested further information to see what the position was at this time last year.

Proposed by Councillor Hart; Jones. All agreed.

Councillor Yates entered the meeting at 5.33pm.

- b) To **receive** an update on receipts and payments to-date (attached).

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Hart.

It was **received**.

- c) To **receive** a verbal update on the application to Unity Bank

The Chief Officer reported that the bank is awaiting details from two Councillors before moving forward with the application.

It was **received**.

- d) To **approve** an internal control report completed by Councillor Hawley.

A discussion took place regarding a second Councillor to assist Councillor Hawley with an internal control report. It was agreed to add this item to the Town Council Agenda.

The job specification was discussed and a checklist of what is required when conducting the internal control report. The Chief Officer noted that work was taking place in relation to this, and would be discussed at a future meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Hart, seconded by Councillor Harper.

All **agreed**.

- e) To **approve** the external audit report and recommendations

The Chief Officer had circulated the completed audit report and accompanying letter; she confirmed that this had been advertised on the website and noticeboard. There were two minor recommendations from 2022-23; publicise the audit documentation immediately after confirmation by Town Council, and provide clearer minutes in relation to receipt of external audit recommendations. Both could be achieved.

Councillor Hopkins questioned the cost of the audit.

Proposed to agree the report and recommendations by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Yates. All **agreed**.

- 45.** To **confirm** that the Town Council will support the 30-year anniversary of the re-forming of the Biddulph Branch of the Royal British Legion.

There was a discussion around payment for refreshments at the event; the Legion funds could not cover this.

Councillor Harper proposed that the Town Council funds the refreshments, which would be approximately £150; seconded by Councillor Yates. All **agreed**.

- 46.** To **consider** the future maintenance of the Mayoral chain.
Item referred from Town Council

Several options were discussed: to move a 'swag' onto the back to create a balance or to reduce the chain to a 20th century chain, which is displayed in a case, and a 21st century chain that is worn by the current Mayor.

It was decided to seek specialist advice from the jeweller.

- 47.** To **consider** monitoring information for Biddulph Town Hall reception services

The Chief Officer discussed the reception monitoring information (circulated with the agenda) and noted the increase in footfall.

Councillor Jackson suggested that the data relating to County Council enquires could be reported to the County Council and request funds relating to this.

Councillor Rogers thanked Mrs Warman for the report.

48. POLICIES (attached)

- a) To **approve** the reviewed Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy
Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.
- b) To **approve** the reviewed Disciplinary and Grievance Policy
Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.
- c) To **approve** the reviewed Flexible Working Hours Policy
Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.
- d) To **approve** the reviewed General Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders
Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.
- e) To **approve** the reviewed General Privacy Notice for Members of the Public
Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

Councillor Hawley left the meeting at 6.25pm.

- f) To **approve** the reviewed Partnerships Protocol
Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.
- g) To **approve** the reviewed Publication Scheme and Guidance
Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

Councillor Jackson gave thanks to the Officers who had prepared and reviewed the policies; these are essential to the smooth running of the Council.

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

49.

- a) To **consider** disposal of any assets, in line with the Asset Management Policy and Financial Regulations
The Chief Officer stated that the market equipment is being audited as to whether to dispose or sell a number of the items, this will be reported back at a later date.
- b) To **confirm** approved suppliers as part of the Procurement Policy

The Chief Officer tabled a list of contractors who have completed the necessary paperwork; it was proposed that these should be added to the list as approved contractors.

Proposed by Councillor Jones, seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

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

50. CHRISTMAS

a) To **approve** the draft Christmas lights specification

Proposed by Councillor Hart, seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

This would be advertised as soon as possible.

There was consideration of the purchase of new Christmas lights in January 2024.

b) To **approve** the purchase of LED lamps to replace the current lamps in the stalls' lighting.

Proposed by Councillor Hart, seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

51. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

To **receive** a verbal update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund applications.

The Chief Officer confirmed that applications can be made for more than one project at the same time, to the same fund.

52. GLASSES AND EYE TESTS

To **confirm** an approach to the provision of glasses and eye tests for staff.

The Chief Officer presented information and benchmarking on the provision of eye tests and glasses for staff, from a range of Councils.

Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

53. MINER'S LAMPS

To **agree** an approach to tackling the miner's lamps from the St John's Road roundabout.

It was proposed to form a working group to consider discussions regarding whether to fix or replace and look into funding options.

Proposed by Councillor Yates; seconded by Councillor Harper. **Agreed**.

51. QUOTATIONS (to be tabled)

- a) To **confirm** a quotation for tree management at Moorlands Road allotment.

The Chief Officer tabled the quotation.

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

- b) To **confirm** a quotation for the repair of air conditioning at the Town Hall.

Proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

- c) To **approve** quotations for promotional items.

The quotations were presented for pens, keychains and tea towels. They were discussed and chosen.

Proposed by Councillor Hart seconded by Councillor Holdsworth. All **agreed**.

The quotations for pin badges were discussed and chosen.

Proposed by Councillor Harper, seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

- d) To **approve** a quotation for repair of flooring at the back of the Town Hall.

The quotations were tabled and discussed.

Proposed by Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

e) To **agree** an approach to re-covering chairs in the Town Hall annexe.

It was proposed to re-cover 14 chairs initially. Proposed by Councillor Yates, seconded by Councillor Jackson. Councillors Holdsworth and Hart abstained; Councillor Harper was against. All **agreed**.

f) To **approve** the removal of asbestos at the Park Lane allotment site.

The quotation was presented and discussed.

Proposed by Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

g) To **approve** fire door repair and/ or replacements

The First Floor quotation was proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Jackson. All **agreed**.

The meeting ended at 7.55pm.

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