

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** held on Tuesday 15th January 2019 at 7.00pm in the Library, Church St, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Winser, Knight, Simpson, Farrell and Crane
Also present: Town Clerk, RFO

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Brookman
The committee suggested inviting the acting chair Cllr Hudson in Cllr Brookman's absence
2. **Declarations of interest** – Cllr Winser – Item 4 (Tourism SE Event)
3. **Minutes – Propose minutes of F&GP meeting on 13th November 2018 and outcome of any actions** – *Cllr Simpson proposed agreement of the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Knight, Cllr Crane abstained, rest in favour.*
Action: Cllr Knight will send out a pro-form check list before the end of the week.
It was noted the tax base has gone down for Hungerford and the total tax base for the whole of West Berks showed only a small increase, with Newbury TC also having a reduction. The Clerk advised the process to set up the Cllr emails is proving very slow. **Action:** Also set up an email address, admin@ to help direct some of the emails away from the Clerk.
4. **Finance: -**
 - **Propose acceptance of bank reconciliation reports** – *Cllr Winser proposed the December report, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*
 - **Consider increased cost to hire Town Hall** – The cost was £50 but this is increasing to £95.83 which includes a £25 set up fee. The committee were not happy with such a sharp increase. **Action:** *Cllr Simpson proposed the Clerk speaks with T&M to obtain a regular user discount and looks at availability of other venues. The decision will be deferred until the next meeting, seconded by Cllr Winser, all in favour.*
 - **Propose £300 from the advertising budget for the Tourism South East Event** – *Cllr Knight proposed up to £300 is put aside for this event, seconded by Cllr Crane, Cllr Winser abstained, rest in favour.*
 - **Update on VAT clarification on memorials** – The RFO has checked with our auditor and with DCK Beaver. The advice is if we haven't opted to tax on the cemetery (which we haven't) we shouldn't be charging VAT on permissions to erect memorials. There is no benefit to opt to tax on St Saviours as there are no buildings. Since this advice, all changes have been

made to exclude VAT. **Action:** *Cllr Winser proposed the RFO tries to claim back the VAT paid in error to HMRC, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*

- **Review of Internal Audit visit findings – refer to report attached** All three points have been noted. *Cllr Crane proposed agreement of the audit findings, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*
- **Propose purchasing software for completion of online forms** – Options include purchasing Acrobat Pro DC Business at £12.64 a licence per month or using Google Drive which is free. **Action:** *Cllr Simpson proposed the Clerk proceeds with the best option, seconded by Cllr Farrell, all in favour.*
- **Consider Contracts for April 2019-2020 refer to report** – After discussion *Cllr Knight proposed renewing contracts 1 to 4 outlined in the report, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour*
The Clerk is obtaining alternative quotes that may be required for future sick leave cover.

5. **Youth & Community Centre – Update on lease** – The Clerk reported this is on-going due to one point that has yet to be agreed in the lease renewal. **Action:** Bring to Full Council for an update.
6. **GDPR – Propose acceptance of the data audit – refer to report** – *Cllr Winser proposed the data audit report, seconded by Cllr Simpson, Cllr Farrell abstained, rest in favour.*
Update on progress with Councillor emails – discussed earlier see item 3
Action: *Cllr Winser proposed the Clerk arranges group GDPR training in Hungerford for Cllrs and staff, seconded by Cllr Farrell, all in favour.*
The Clerk needs to create an IT security policy, and has been advised to create a Subject Access request policy and a Handling of Data Breach policy, ahead of the deadline.
Cllr Knight proposed the Clerk as the person responsible for Data Protection at HTC, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.
7. **Asset List – Progress on update (as required in Auditor’s report)** – The spreadsheet of benches has been updated by Cllr Downe and the RFO has completed updates to the rest of the asset list. Thanks, were expressed to both.
Consideration of purchase of new software for asset list – The software would allow uploading of photos and would integrate with the accounting software and help tie up the insurance value from the asset list. The software is on special offer at an initial cost of £147 as opposed to £295 and then an ongoing annual cost of £119. After discussion it was decided not to proceed due to the staff time required to populate the new system and the limited benefit. The RFO was invited to bring this back to council for reconsideration if circumstances change.
8. **Review of Internal Audit List findings** – Already discussed see item 4 (duplicate agenda item)

9. **Review of Annual Risk Register** – *Cllr Winser proposed acceptance of the F&GP section of the register which has been reviewed by staff and Cllr Winser, seconded by Cllr Crane all in favour.*
10. **Consider update to standing orders – (amended standing orders will be displayed on our website)** – *Cllr Simpson proposed the following amendment to the standing order 3e (shown in bold) as advised by the Clerk, ‘Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of business on the agenda, **providing they do so within the 15 minutes allotted time period (limited to 3 minutes per speaker) given at the beginning of each meeting. Any questions should be submitted in advance by 2pm on the day of the meeting. Public will not be permitted to interrupt, question or participate at any other point during the meeting unless invited to do so by the Chair.***
*which will include an addition ‘timings are at the discretion of the chair’, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour. **Action:** Clerk to make amendments and publicise these via the noticeboard and on the agenda. Laminated copies of rules to be available at meetings.*
11. **Consider creation of a Visit Hungerford website and agree domain name** – *VisitHungerford.com has been chosen. The advert we are placing in the Great West Way publications will refer to this domain for further information and it will have links to other relevant Hungerford websites. Some aspects of Hungerford.co.uk will be useful and a website does not need to be built straightaway. HTC will own the domain. It was queried whether this should belong to the Chamber of Commerce. **Action:** Cllr Crane will fact find and bring back to committee. He is meeting with Penny Post and will ask JOG school if gifted/able students would consider building a tourist website.*
12. **Croft Field – Consider increase to hire fees and necessary improvements – (see attached report)** – **Action:** *Cllr Simpson proposed an increase and restructure to the fees as drafted (this will exclude the Town Band who have a separate agreement), seconded by Cllr Farrell, Cllr Crane abstained, rest in favour. **Action:** Cllr Crane will speak with the president of the Town Band about their finances and report back. **Consider purchase of Freehold of Croft Field**– HTC are currently paying £3k annual rent for the Croft Field. It was noted HTC bought the Freehold of Triangle Field to keep as an open space in perpetuity which West Berks were keen to support. Prior to HTC taking on the lease of the Croft Field, West Berks Council considered building houses there. *Cllr Farrell proposed all examine the Croft Field Lease (Clerk to circulate) and Cllr Simpson speaks with D Small, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.* The condition of the Croft Field building was discussed. **Action:** Clerk to report a water leak to our insurers. Defer replacement of carpet in main hall until this matter has been concluded. It was suggested a working party of volunteers could paint the main hall in the spring.*

Confidential

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

- 13. Consider office staff workload and TOIL** – This was discussed. Outstanding toil should be sorted by the end of the financial year and be monitored more closely. *Cllr Winsor proposed the RFO provides a calculation to pay outstanding TOIL and this is brought to February Full Council part 2 for agreement, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*
Cllr Simpson proposed that a policy to agree future TOIL be discussed at February Full Council part 2, seconded by Cllr Knight, all in favour.
Cllr Knight proposed advertising the job vacancy for Deputy Clerk at 20 hours a week, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.

- 14. Consider future of staff meetings** – Deferred to next meeting

Meeting closed 9.20pm

Hungerford Town Council - Internal Audit 2018-19

Interim Audit Observations

Audit date Priority Observation Recommendation Status Comments

8 November 2018 M

The Town Council set a precept for the year 2018-19 of £273,596 however the actual precept raised and reported to Central Government was £278,866. It is understood that there was an additional amount raised, as precept, by the local District Council.

Council to note that the actual precept raised on residents was £278,866. Pending

The Council approved a number of grants totalling £19,700, which were approved by F&GP Committee in May and subsequently by Full Council in June. The Minutes record the total value of the grants approved, however a detailed schedule of the grants approved agreeing to this total was not separately available. (It was possible during the audit visit to verify the total value of grants paid during the year)

When grants are approved the listing of the grants should be signed and dated by the Chair of the meeting.

Pending

As at the date of the audit the Council has not undertaken a review of risk. It is understood that this will be carried out prior to the end of the financial year.

Council to ensure a review of risk is Minute prior to year end

Pending

CROFT FIELD ACTIVITY CENTRE

Prices include VAT and are per session

Hire sessions available:

Morning 8am-1pm

Afternoon 1pm-6pm

Evening 6pm-10.30pm

Cost per session

User

Regular User

Main Room incl kitchenette, toilets, showers

£27.60 (£23 + VAT)

£22.80 (£19 + VAT)

North Room, toilets & showers

£22.80 (£19 + VAT)

£17.40 (£14.50 + VAT)

Field/standpipe/toilets/showers

£17.40 (£14.50 + VAT)

£12.60 (£10.50 + VAT)

Entire Complex

£60.00 (£50 + VAT)

£50.40 (£42 + VAT)

Overnight Stays

(cost is per session 12 noon to 12 noon)

up to 10 people

11-20 people

21-40 people

Field/standpipe/toilets/showers

£36.00 (£30 + VAT)

£50.40 (£42 + VAT)

£63.00 (£52.50 + VAT)

NOTE: No overnight sleeping is permitted in the Croft Field Centre

but if rooms are required for storage purposes, a fee of **£12.60** (£10.50 + VAT) is payable per room overnight.

Daily Commercial Rate (e.g. fete etc.) £90.00 (£75 + VAT)

Premises address: Croft Field Activity Centre, The Croft, Hungerford, RG17 0HY

For bookings contact townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk, tel: 01488 686195

In addition to the above fees:

Hungerford Town Council reserve the right to charge a deposit of up to £200.

