

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **F&GP Meeting** held on Tuesday 9th July 2019 at 7.00pm in the Town Council Office, Church St, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Gaines, Crane and Chicken
Also, RFO, Clerk and Cllr Hawkins

1. **Apologies:** Noted from Cllrs Knight, Simpson and Winser. It was agreed Cllr Gaines would chair the meeting in the absence of the both the Chair and Deputy.
2. **Declaration of Interests:** Cllr Gaines – item 4 (trustee of the Children’s Centre), item 5 (member of H2036)
3. **Minutes – Propose minutes of F&GP meeting on 4th June 2019 and Extraordinary Meeting of 28th May and outcome of any actions not on the agenda – Cllr Crane proposed both sets of minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.**
Action: One action is outstanding from the last set of minutes. Clerk to upload reports to the Cllrs section of the website.
4. **Consider allocation of further grants as follows: -**
 - **Receive further details as requested from Youth & Community Centre (Y&CC) in support of their grant 15976 on the Good Exchange -** A representative from Y&CC attended the meeting. Their full accounts have been submitted. As they are providing a service devolved from West Berks Council (WBC), comparable to the Hub, they would wish for similar support from HTC. They will struggle if they do not receive core funding from HTC as this will impact on their access to other grants as they need to demonstrate local community support. Their wish is to employ a youth worker to obtain professional support and connections with other bodies/organisations. They pay JOG School rent of £5k a year. Town & Manor support the Y&CC financially. The Centre is well used by community groups, but they do have free evenings when they could hold another youth club. They would be keen to have a longer-term commitment from HTC financially.
Cllr Gaines proposed donating £3270.31 to their grant application 15976 and inviting Y&CC to present to the 7th October Full Council meeting so F&GP can further consider a 3-year plan for financial support at its following meeting, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.
 - **Consider further details from Hungerford Cancer Support Group in support of their application 14834 on the Good Exchange -** Representatives from the support group attended the meeting to explain that HTC’s offer to provide a free of charge venue would not be conducive to successful group meetings. They need a more central venue where they can meet regularly, and the Hub is ideal for this. Their group is unique as it also supports carers past and present. They are part of the PPG, receive referrals and rely on funding.

Cllr Chicken proposed donating £250 to their grant application, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.

- **Consider further details from Armadillo on the direct benefits to Hungerford residents reference their applications 14766 and 14778 on The Good Exchange** – *After discussion Cllr Crane proposed donating £100 to both of Armadillo's grant applications, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.*
- **Late grant application from Hungerford Nursery for their sensory garden** – *After discussion, Cllr Chicken proposed donating £300 to the Nursery grant application 16093, seconded by Cllr Crane, one abstention, rest in favour.*
- **Late grant application from the Rotary towards the Rosemary Appeal** – *Cllr Crane proposed no donation, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.*
Action: Clerk to advise Rotary, HTC prefer applications through the Good Exchange rather than by an email. If HTC wished to donate to the Rosemary Appeal, they would choose to do so directly through the Good Exchange in order to obtain matched funding.
- **Consider request from the Town Band to install sound absorbers to the Croft Field ceiling – Refer to the quotations** – It was noted HTC have already donated £1400 to the band this year. Concern was expressed that sound absorbers may not be sufficient, and H&S should be considered. It was suggested the ceiling could be raised instead to the rafters. *Cllr Gaines proposed we defer the decision to grant a donation, invite Town Band to present to Full Council and consider the possibility of improvements to the ceiling as part of overall improvements planned for the centre once S106 money is received, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*
Action: Clerk to invite Town Band to next Full Council.

5. Finance: -

- **Propose acceptance of bank reconciliation** – The RFO advised chair of F&GP had already checked the reconciliation. *Cllr Chicken proposed acceptance of the reconciliation of 31st May, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*
- **Propose renewal of funds of £85k with Close Brothers** – *Cllr Chicken proposed renewal of the £85k investment with Close Brothers at 1.15%, seconded by Cllr Gaines, All in favour.*
- **Effectiveness of Safe-guarding public money – refer to attachment** – The RFO talked through the document and advised this needed to be reviewed annually. *Cllr Chicken proposed the document as satisfactory for HTC, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*
- **Propose acceptance of quote for a further order of Freedom of the Town Medals** – *Cllr Gaines proposed ordering 20 medals at the reduced rate, at a cost of £1560 (money to be taken from the civic expenses budget), seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*
- **Propose agreement for office to order an additional trophy for Hungerford in Bloom residential 'best in category' in honour of Margaret Wilson and consider planting of a rose** – *Cllr Gaines proposed ordering the glass trophy (preference for blue) at a cost of £33 to be named 'The Margaret Wilson Trophy', seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*
Action: Clerk to add the planting of a rose to the Sept Full Council agenda.
- **Propose authorisation to H2036 to appoint a PlanET consultant to assist with site assessment criteria including expenditure up to £1750** – *Cllr Crane proposed authorisation of expenditure up to £1750, seconded by Cllr Chicken, one abstention, rest in favour.*
- **Propose acceptance of renewal of Great West Way Designated Destination Ambassador membership for year 2 at £1250 plus vat** – Previously Town & Manor (T&M) had agreed to support this initiative financially but then pulled out. Year 1 has been funded by HTC.

Benefits of the membership are ambassador status, promotion of Hungerford and inclusion on the map.

Cllr Gaines proposed deferring the decision on payment to the 5th August Extra Full Council meeting, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.

Action: Cllr Crane to re-approach T&M for a contribution ahead of this meeting.

Action: Cllr Crane to deliver the invoice for half the costs of the Great West Way sign to the AONB.

- **Consider funding of H1 bus route for longer than one year. Previously had a 4-year agreement in place (subject to agreement with WBC)** – It was agreed continuity of a 4-year agreement to keep the costs stable and the vital bus service in place would be preferable. *Cllr Gaines proposed the Clerk approaches WBC for a 4-year agreement (at approx. £4k a year), seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.*

6. **Priority Tree work – See attached report**

- **Propose acceptance of quotation for work to the perimeter of Triangle Field to remove ivy and branches in danger of falling into the road**
- **Propose acceptance of work to trim back oak branches overhanging gardens in Park Way and take out dead wood, following several complaints**
- **Propose acceptance of quote to remove trees undermining fence of Swimming Pool House**
- **Propose acceptance of quote to trim tree root affecting grave**
- **Propose acceptance of quote to lift canopy of trees overhanging the church clapper gate pathway**
- **Propose acceptance of quote to finish dead wood removal to the smaller trees at St Lawrence**

After consideration of the above proposals and costs as detailed in the tree report (attached), Cllr Chicken proposed proceeding with all the works at a cost of £2450, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.

7. **Agree protocol** – *Cllr Gaines proposed adoption of the new guidance of May 2019, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*

Action: Office to issue a table of actions to accompany it.

8. **GDPR: - agree to defer the following to Sept F&GP**

- **Consider adoption of Community Engagement Policy** – The Clerk has circulated a draft policy for consideration at a future meeting.
- **Consider adoption of retention policy**

Cllr Chicken proposed deferring both items, seconded by Cllr Gaines, all in favour.

9. **Update on Croft Field-** The Clerk has registered an expression of interest on the portal on WBC website for a reduction in rent (ideally to rent free) or for the option to purchase the freehold. This will be looked at by the devolution team and we wait to hear back.

Meeting closed 8.30pm

FGP190709trees

Hungerford Town Council

Public Report to: F&GP 9th July 2019

Agenda Item No 6: Priority Tree Work

Background A tree programme has been created and outstanding tree work prioritised

Reference to Action Plan Aim – Ensure public open spaces are well maintained (Medium to High Priority)

Objective Make safe trees that HTC is responsible for, particularly where adjacent to the roadside, in public open spaces and where damage is being caused to third party property.

Agree the following works which have been identified as the most urgent.

Options (including quotations)

Triangle field - A considerable amount of work to be done but in the short term make sure the branches encroaching into the road are cut back and ivy addressed. 2 days' work at £400 per day = £800

Recreation Ground – Cut down Cherries that are affecting the Swimming Pool House wall, shorten back branches on Oak that neighbours are complaining about, remove any significant dead wood from these trees, chip branches which have been dumped on grass heap. Remove and dispose of waste = £800

St Lawrence's - Raise canopy of various trees along the path from Parsonage Lane entrance to church as these are too low to walk under and will give more light to grass. Complete deadwood removal on roadside lawn. Chip, remove and dispose of waste = £800

St Saviour's – Cut root at St saviours churchyard that is close to grave and complaint has been received - £50.

Available budget (£s) including cost centre Approx. £4200

Health & Safety and Legal implications Liable for third party property damage and injury to members of public

Consultation:

Permission required from Tree officer at West Berks for work within a conservation area other than work to remove dead wood

Other information

Complaints have been received from residents of Park Way and Swimming Pool House residents

Recommendation(s)

Agree all works identified, totalling £2450, to be carried out asap. Dead wood removal required whilst trees are in leaf.

Signed: Town Clerk 3/7/19

Review of Effectiveness of safeguarding Public Money

Background

There is a requirement for members to ensure that the Council has in place safe and efficient arrangements to safeguarding public moneys.

This review should be undertaken on an annual basis.

Review

Attached is a review of the Council methods of managing the risks and Members are encouraged to question and raise issues if they are not satisfied with the way the arrangements are presently managed.

Conclusion

Subject to any amendments that Members may wish to make, Council are requested to confirm that: -

The attached risk review of effectiveness' of safeguarding Public monies meets with Council's requirement.

Jeff Ford

Responsible Financial Officer

13th June 2019

Risk	Demonstration how Council Meets it Responsible	Frequency	Who is Responsible
Loss of Petty Cash through lack of Control	Petty Cash is under control of Clerks Assistant Maximum £200. Petty cash slips are produced and signed with supporting documentation. When further cash required Withdrawal request with supporting documentation is presented to the RFO. RFO checks petty cash vouchers and checks remaining cash in the tin to agree back to the £200 limit. New number 2 Current Account opened for named Councillor to collect cash from post office by use of debit card. RFO checks number 2 a/c monthly and transfer funds back to £200.	Petty cash is replenished approximately every 6 weeks.	Clerks assistant, RFO, and review by two members when signing withdrawal authority retrospectively on the cheque run.
Payment of Invoices – Risk of fraudulent payments	Invoices received by RFO. Reference is made to Order Book to confirm order placed. Invoices are checked for accuracy and input on to Omega. Cheque/ BACS run produced and reviewed by Town Clerk and Circulated to all Members in advance of the Monthly Town Council Meeting. Invoices and cheques	Monthly Cheque Run	RFO / Town Clerk/ Members

	<p>are approved and authorised/ signed by two Members.</p> <p>Occasionally urgent cheques/ BACS payments are required, and these are reviewed by two Members and reported to Council the following month.</p>		
<p>Failure to bank funds paid to Council</p>	<p>RFO now issues invoices mainly on Croft Field. Admin Assistant Pays in funds to bank. RFO checks paying in book, inputs into Omega System. Payments received are reported to Council Monthly. Customers are encouraged to pay us via BACS.</p>	<p>Weekly</p>	<p>Clerks assistant/ RFO</p>
<p><i>Access to Bank Account</i></p>	<p><i>The banks accounts all require two members to sign. RFO/Town Clerk have authority to view the Barclays Bank Account and originate payment however it requires two members to authorise any payment.</i></p> <p><i>Any change to mandate must approved at Full Council.</i></p> <p><i>Number 2 account has Debit card in name of Councillor.</i></p>	<p><i>Daily</i></p>	<p><i>RFO/Town Clerk/ Members</i></p>
<p><i>Control of Plastic Cards / Cheque Book</i></p>	<p><i>Cards & Cheque book will be held in safe when not in use.</i></p> <p><i>Company Credit card held (£2,000 limit) by</i></p>	<p><i>Daily</i></p>	<p><i>RFO</i></p>

	<i>Town Clerk. RFO reconcile statement monthly to order book. Credit card automatically debited to bank account by Direct Debit.</i>		
Bank Accounts	RFO monthly reconciles all bank accounts. Produces a reconciliation report with supporting documentation. Hands it to Town clerk / Chairman of Finance for review. Appears on the Bi-monthly Finance & General Purpose agenda	Monthly	RFO/ Town Clerk/Chairman of Finance
Invoicing from Bookings at Croft Field	Admin Assistant at present controls bookings. Request for invoicing passed to RFO to undertake and issue. RFO undertakes to chase outstanding debts. Booking invoices are often issued in arrears.	Weekly	RFO/Town Clerk
<i>Management of Fixed Term & Deposit Accounts</i>	<i>Fixed term Deposits are diarised and now follow Investment Policy guidelines with RFO reporting to F & G P meeting. Newbury Building Society no notice account will be reviewed at the same time.</i>	<i>Usually Annually</i>	<i>RFO</i>
BACS Payments	Barclays System when originating payments now warns of any new bank sorting code / bank accounts not paid before. RFO to check		RFO

	these payments to invoices and if necessary, with suppliers before remitting funds.		
Back up of Omega computer accounts	RFO backs up Omega accounts once a week and forwards a copy to Dep Town Clerk. Dep Town Clerk's email account is held both on her PC and also at Eclipse so that accounts could be recovered in event of loss of PC/ fire in office	Weekly	RFO/Dep Town Clerk