

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** held on Tuesday 10th March 2015 at 7.00pm in the Town Council Office, Church St, High St, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Bumbieris, Wilson, Small, Crane, Benneyworth (entered late) and Hudson (entered later)
Also present Claire Barnes, Town Clerk and RFO

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Brookman
2. **Declarations of interest** – Cllr Small declared interest in CHAIN, Cllr Small and Cllr Wilson declared interest in item10
3. **Minutes – Propose minutes of the extraordinary meeting of 17th February 2015** – Cllr Bumbieris proposed accepting the minutes, seconded by Cllr Small, 2 abstentions, rest in favour. Cllr Benneyworth entered.
4. **Propose acceptance of Risk Assessments for 2015** – Auditors require the document to be reviewed. It acts as a checklist. The safety of documents was discussed in light of the Oxfordshire Council fire. All emails and documents are backed up to the cloud. If there was a fire we would inevitably lose papers records however the important documents are kept in a fire resistant safe. The safety of staff was discussed. A lone worker policy should be put in place. **Action:** Clerk to contact a security consultant to obtain advice in protecting staff when working alone. Cllr Bumbieris proposed acceptance of the Risk Assessment for 2015, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour.
5. **Formally adopt Media Policy** – The terms of the policy were discussed. Cllr Bumbieris recommended the policy is agreed by Full Council, seconded by Cllr Small, all in favour. **Action:** Clerk to add to agenda.
6. **Finance**
 - a. **Propose amendment of income budgets for flowers** – This year the income was £860. The budget is set too high at £1500. It was agreed not to change next year's budget as another adjustment would need to be made elsewhere to balance it. However the Council is to note that £1500 is unlikely to be achievable.
 - b. **Consider budget for new flags** – HTC wish to continue the Fly a Flag Day annually. More advertising including radio and posters is needed. Cllr Bumbieris proposed that underspend of £1,000 from code 4010 and £1457 from code 4060 will be transferred to civic expenses to purchase 90 new flags, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour. An estimated cost for good quality flags is £1912.50 plus vat. **Action:** Clerk to obtain another quote. A future budget is needed.
 - c. **Consider additional grant request from CHAIN** – The details of the grant request are on the Find Me A Grant Website. Cllr Bumbieris proposed the remainder of our grant budget for this financial year £597, be allocated to CHAIN via Find me a Grant, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, one abstention, rest in favour. **Action:** Submit grant.
 - d. **Consider alternative quote for Internal Audit** – An alternative quotation has been received which would provide an annual saving of £130. The auditors provide 2 visits a

year. Our final audit for this year with our existing auditor will be carried out by S Pollard. The RFO has no wish to change auditors however would suggest we request a reduction in price from our existing auditor. This was proposed by Cllr Bumbieris and seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour of this action. **Action:** RFO to approach existing auditor.

7. **Agree the consultation response to the West Berkshire Strategy Document** – A draft has been drawn up and 2 key issues have been added; taking a close look at traffic management and sharing resources. The rail station and Town Plan need to be mentioned and that Town Councils are best to advise on what is needed locally. Paul Hewer was asked what the purpose of the document is. He advised it is not to state everything and not to provide great detail. It is ok to mention what we want for Hungerford. Comments have been circulated to all councillors. Cllr Bumbieris proposed the consultation response is submitted including the last amendments made by Cllr Hudson, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour. **Action:** Clerk to submit response.
8. **Review Ear Marked Reserves - Croft Field and Triangle Field** – Cllr Small has come to a final agreement with WBC regarding the Croft Field Lease and WBC have also agreed to a 5 page transfer document for the Triangle Field rather than a long lease. At present £18,279 is earmarked for the Croft Field. Since, WBC has agreed to pay for half the initial expenditure and a members bid has been successful to pay for the balance. £18,983 of HTC general reserves money has been spent on the Triangle Field and a further invoice of £2.5k is expected. However money went into general reserves the year before from Leadbitter for the access. The bench contractor has advised that the benches are in good condition and none are needed to be replaced at present. The amount earmarked for benches is not required. Cllr Bumbieris proposed reallocation of the benches money of £15,640 to an expenses code for purchase of the Triangle Field, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour. **Action:** RFO to reallocate money. Can we reallocate money for the Triangle Field car park? There is already a £5,000 budget from April. A spec and 3 quotes are required first. The hedging also needs work. Maggie will continue to work for another month on the cemetery records.

Confidential **PART 2**

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.

9. **Preparation for Hearing** – R Megson and a councillor, will attend the hearing or in his absence R Croft. **Action:** Clerk to request for an early hearing in May.
10. **Memorial Application** – Cllr Benneyworth proposed expenditure of £415 for plinth to allow space for a memorial, seconded by Cllr Thompson, 2 abstentions, rest in favour. **Action:** Instruct stonemason

Meeting closed 9.05pm