

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor
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MINUTES of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** held on Tuesday 13th September 2016 at 7.00pm in the Town Council Office, The Library, Church Street, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Bumbieris, Farrell, Brookman and Small
Also present: Town Clerk and RFO

1. **Apologies for absence.** Cllrs Crane, Knight and Benneyworth
2. **Declarations of interest.** Cllr Small – item 4(h), member of Chamber of Commerce
3. **Minutes – Propose minutes of F&GP meeting on 12th July 2016 and outcome of any actions.**
Cllr Bumbieris proposed the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Small, one abstention, rest in favour.
4. **Finance**
 - a. **General Reserve Balance – contingency budget** – In order not to increase our surplus and to keep it at a suggested £50K, the RFO recommended that the surplus should be taken off the Precept request. In addition, to assist, a suggested contingency budget of between £5K to £7.5K, should be put aside for unforeseen expenses. Cllr Small proposed F&GP recommend to Full Council that the general reserve budget be maintained at £50K and the general principle of a contingency fund be confirmed, (amount tbc at later date), all in favour. **Action:** Put on Full Council agenda
 - b. **Financial services compensation scheme reduced from £85K to £75K** – This was noted. HTC has savings at the higher level.
 - c. **Bank charges** – Barclays are to charge HTC from 1st Oct for transaction charges. Some local town councils bank with Nat West but don't use BACS. Unity bank is another option. They don't have branches but operate through Post Offices. A comparison between Unity and Barclays was carried out. Although Barclays have higher charges the interest they provide on savings outweighs this. **Action:** RFO will consider comparisons with TSB and NatWest who have branches in Hungerford.
 - d. **Noting of bank reconciliation report** – Cllr Bumbieris signed and approved the bank reconciliations for June, July and August.
 - e. **Interest rate reduction notice from Newbury Building Society** – It was noted that NBS will reduce their interest rates from 19th October to 1%.
 - f. **Approval of the use of BACS** – Payment by BACS has worked well and reduced the bank charges that we would otherwise receive for issuing cheques. Cllr Bumbieris proposed continuing the use of BACS for payments, all in favour.
 - g. **Consider grant application for Wessex Rangers** – Cllr Bumbieris proposed a grant of £600, with a strong suggestion that the Good Exchange is used in order to match fund. Cllrs would like to invite WR to a full council meeting where the grant can be presented.
 - h. **Consider grant application for Chamber of Commerce Victorian Extravaganza** – Cllr Bumbieris proposed a £1000 grant is made via the Good Exchange website, seconded by Cllr Brookman, one abstention, rest in favour.

- i. **Consider grant application for Hungerford's 5th Literacy festival** – Cllr Bumbieris proposed a £500 grant is made via the Good Exchange website, seconded by Cllr Small, all in favour.
Action: Process the 3 grants.

(Note, no item 5)

6. **Death of a national figure protocol** – It was agreed it would be useful to have an adopted protocol.
Action: Add to next full council agenda
7. **Review of the effectiveness of safe-guarding public money** – A section on 'fixed term deposits' has been added to the document. Cllr Bumbieris proposed the risk review meets with HTC's requirements, all in favour.
8. **Review of Standing Orders** – Cllr Bumbieris had identified some alterations needed. The contracts limit recently amended in the FR needs to be included in Section 20a and c (page 188) of the SO. Also page 191, section 22 needs a bracket completing.
Action: Cllr Bumbieris is happy to chair a working party to review the standing orders and bring to the next Full Council.

PART 2

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.

9. **Staff – Review of job descriptions for maintenance staff** – Deferred until medical report complete.
10. **Staff – Agree to cost of medical report** – After discussion Cllr Small proposed cost of doctors' appointment and report at £171 plus vat. All agreed.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm