

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** held on Tuesday 11th March 2014 at 7.00pm in the Town Council Offices, Church St, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs C Bumbieris, M Crane, D Benneyworth, M Wilson and Roger Thompson
Also RFO, Clerk and Geoff Adams

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Cllr Hudson
- 2. Declarations of interest:** None
- 3. Agreement as true record the minutes of F&GP meeting held on 14th January 2014** – Cllr Colin Bumbieris proposed minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Crane, 2 abstentions rest in favour.
- 4. Finance - Propose Investment** of £65K – The £85K investment with Barclays matured and Barclays could only offer a low interest rate. The alternative is to invest with Newbury Building Society by opening a treasurers plus account on a non-fixed rate with 1.25% gross interest and 7 day access apart from the last £10K which would require 90 days' notice. The interest rate for an amount under £50K would drop to 1%. With the instant access HTC are able to reinvest the full£85k.
Cllr Thompson proposed the opening of a Treasurers Plus account with £85K, with Newbury Building Society, with 2 of 4 named councillors (Cllrs Crane, Thompson, Wilson and Benneyworth) required to sign, seconded by Cllr Wilson,
Confirmation of list of DDMs – A list of the current DDMs authorised by the council was circulated and noted by all. **Update on use of BACS system for payment of salaries** – This would be set up by the RFO /Clerk and 2 councillors would need to authorise payments before release. There is an approximate fee of £250 annually for the use of BACS. Consideration was given to reviewing our current banking. HTC currently receive free banking and a fee would be likely for BACS through any bank. HTC would need to purchase card readers. Legislation will be changing shortly to allow one signatory. The current accounts system is capable of uploading a BACS file to the bank. Transactions cost 35p each. Cllr Bumbieris proposed proceeding with the BACS system with Barclays with 2 signatories, seconded by Cllr Wilson, all in favour.
Earmarking of £9.2k WBC additional contribution – Cllr Thompson suggested the £9.2K should be ear marked predominantly for expenditure on the Public Toilets, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour. **Earmarking of S106** – The shortfall required for the Triangle Field project will come out of S106 as agreed at the January Full Council unless further grant money is received. **Action:** The RFO will earmark £12,844 for this purpose. Put this item on next agenda to look at earmarking further funds to various projects. **Consider budget for centenary commemorations** – The cost of the poppy troughs is £570 and there will be further costs including poppy seeds. Cllr Bumbieris proposed adding a further £1k budget to Hungerford in Bloom from the £9.2k contribution, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour. It was thought the REME affiliation should become self-funding. **Action:** RFO to earmark £1K and to send general reserves figures to Cllr Bumbieris.
- 5. Internal Auditor - Signing and proposing of Risk Assessments as required by IA** – All the risk assessments have been checked through by the relevant Chairmen and by the clerk. Updates have been

added and these will be used as a future guide. Cllr Bumbieris proposed acceptance of the Risk Assessments for 2014, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour. **Internal Audit review** – This has been circulated. Cllr Thompson proposed acceptance, as Part 1 and Part 2 have been reviewed and meet with satisfaction, but they need to be reviewed earlier in the year next time, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour. **Action:** Put on the next agenda.

6. **Propose inclusion of detail to new NALC Standing Orders and adoption of** – The clerk read through a summary of further proposed amendments. **Action:** Clerk to circulate tracked changes and put on next agenda for agreement.
7. **Progress with T&M Leases** – Cllr Crane proposed Cllr Small continues with the drafting of the lease and that M Davenport checks and signs it off, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour.
8. **Community Centre and tennis courts – update and report from Denise Gaines** – Greenham Common Trust provide funding. This year it should have been applied for in October. DG met with Stuart Tagg (GCT) with A Buckwell at Christmas and this has speeded up the funding. A 3 year lease will soon be signed. The Community Centre will never be self-funding. WBC used to spend up to £100k a year on it. There are 240 youths on the books and Berkshire Youth have confirmed that Hungerford has the largest youth club in Berkshire. It is very inclusive and informal. There are 2 groups the older group (52 members at last meet) meets on a Wednesday and the younger (20 plus members) on a Thursday. Wired Rock group is recruiting as only has around 8 members at present. The premises are also used by Ladybugs and the Theatre Company. The premises have been decorated and new chairs and computer equipment is needed for upstairs. £2K was received from the Gerald Ward Trust for the courts plus a further £3k. Cllr Thomson met with the committee and has answers to the lease queries. **Action:** A meeting will take place in the office to finalise these before responding to WBC. **Action:** Chase WBC for a date for the cutting of the trees. The 14-21 youth counselling group may be attending the Community Centre. DG is considering the funding for future years and has received positive news on funding options from GCT. Lack of parking is a problem and a meeting will take place with all parties concerned to address this. The bike sheds are due to be demolished in May but the trees need cutting earlier.
9. **Update on website improvements** - B Davis doesn't have time to update the web page. I3 web are looking at cheaper options for us. There is a need to use social media more. D Piper has offered space for REME on his website. New council members may wish to be involved.
10. **Town meeting – Final arrangements** – Some reports are still outstanding and Chairmen need to forward these to Rod.

Meeting closed 9.10pm