

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor
Cllr Helen Simpson
57 Fairview Road
Hungerford
Berkshire
RG17 0BP
Tel: 07920 110380
Cllr.helen.simpson@hungerford-tc.gov.uk



The Town Clerk
Mrs Claire Barnes
The Library
Church Street
Hungerford
Berkshire RG17 0JG
Tel: 01488 686195
townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk
www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk

MINUTES of the **F&GP Meeting** held on Tuesday 15th October 2019 at 7.00pm in the Town Council Office, Church St, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Winsor, Knight, Simpson, Crane and Chicken
Also, RFO and Deputy Town Clerk

1. **Apologies:** Noted from Cllr Gaines.
2. **Declarations of Interests:** Cllr Crane – item 4 (member of Chamber of Commerce).
3. **Minutes – Propose minutes of F&GP meeting on 9th July 2019 and outcome of any actions not on the agenda** – *Cllr Chicken proposed the set of minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*
 - Clerk to upload reports to the Cllrs section of the website. This item has been deferred due to lack of office time.
 - Clerk to add the planting of a rose to the Sept Full Council agenda. This item has been deferred.
4. **Consider allocation of further grants as follows: -**
 - **Grant application from Chamber of Commerce towards the Hungerford Extravaganza**
Cllr Knight proposed a grant of £1,000 to be paid to the Chamber of Commerce, seconded by Cllr Simpson, one abstention (Cllr Crane), rest in favour.
 - **Grant application from Berkshire Maestros towards the cost of providing free classes for children at the Croft Field Centre**
Since receiving the grant application form, Berkshire Maestros have informed the office they will not be using the Croft Field Centre for these sessions but will be using another venue in the town.
Cllr Crane proposed a grant of £250 to be paid to Berkshire Maestros, seconded by Cllr Knight, all in favour.
 - **Grant application from Newbury Weekly News for the Over 80s Parcel Fund**
Cllr Winsor proposed a grant of £250 to be paid to Newbury Weekly News, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.
5. **Consider funding amendments to projects on The Good Exchange for the following organisations:**
 - **Hungerford Youth & Community Centre** – *Cllr Winsor proposed approval of the change of use of the funding granted in August 2018, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*

- **Hungerford Cricket Club** – *Cllr Simpson proposed approval of the change of use of the funding agreed in June 2019, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.*

6. Finance: -

- **Propose acceptance of bank reconciliation** – The RFO advised the Mayor had already checked the reconciliation. *Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the reconciliation of 30th September 2019, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*
- **Consider funding of H1 bus route for longer than one year. Previously had a 4-year agreement in place (subject to agreement with WBC)** – WBC are currently paying for the service up until March 2020. They will not commit to entering into another 4-year agreement. They have advised they will continue to provide the service for one day a week (Wednesday) from April 2020-March 2021 at a cost of £4,530 and it may be the case that HTC will have to pay 100% of the costs. *Cllr Chicken proposed funding of £4,530 for April 2020 to March 2021 for a one day a week service provided by WBC on a Wednesday, subject to WBC confirming in writing the service will be on a Wednesday, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*

The committee would like this matter to be referred to H&T committee to look at further funding options, possibly from other organisations. **Action:** To go on next H&T agenda.

- **Consider report regarding suppliers for Christmas Trees this year** – report was circulated and is attached. *Cllr Winser proposed the purchase of all the trees (apart from the 30ft) from Jadecliffe at a cost of £2,541.75 + VAT, the 30ft tree to be purchased from Yattendon Estates at a cost of £825.00 + VAT, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*
- **Agree cost of £380 + VAT for extra tarmac work at Triangle Field car park** – *Cllr Winser proposed payment of £380 + VAT to Brennans of Wiltshire, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*
- **Review of Financial Regulations** – The RFO advised he is happy with the context of the document published on the HTC website. *Cllr Winser proposed adoption of the Financial Regulations, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.*
- **Consider BT contract (high usage)** – The RFO has been responsible for installing a second phone line in the office. Each member of office staff has a handset and is making outside calls on this phone line which has been set up for free unlimited calls. Thanks to the RFO for his work on this.
- **Review of Internal Auditors** – report was circulated and is attached. This is an annual requirement. The RFO has drawn up a checklist which the committee has reviewed. *Cllr Chicken proposed to accept parts 1 & 2 of the checklist and to confirm that the internal audit meets the Council's requirement and the terms of reference from IAC Internal Audit & Compliance Ltd are acceptable, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*
- **Agree quote from Kennet Radio for Xmas lights switch on event** – Kennet Radio have agreed to attend the event as in previous years. They have quoted the sum of £495 this year which will include one month of on-air advertising for the event. If HTC agree to a 3-year commitment, this price will reduce to £475 which will be fixed for the 3-year period. *Cllr Simpson proposed a 3-year commitment at a cost of £475 + VAT, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.*

Cllr Knight left the meeting at this point.

- **Consider request from HYCC for a 3-year funding programme** – item deferred to next meeting.

7. **Update on Holidays / TOIL** – Cllr Winser updated the committee on the current levels of staff TOIL. The maintenance man has booked some holiday hours. The RFO will update Bright HR with sickness absence.
8. **GDPR**
 - **Consider adoption of Community Engagement Policy** – A draft policy was circulated. *Cllr Winser proposed adoption of the policy, seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in favour.* **Action:** Document to be uploaded to HTC website.
 - **Consider adoption of retention policy** – Item deferred.
9. **Update on Devolution Programme request for Croft Field** – Representatives from WBC met with Cllr Simpson and the RFO at the Croft Field. It is unlikely that the devolution team at WBC will consider a reduction in rent or give HTC the option to purchase the freehold. Cllr Simpson advised she has been informed that S106 money has been secured with an additional sum of money from the Parish Plan. It is hoped this will be used for internal works at the Croft Field Centre to include the improvements requested by the Town Band, and possibly resurfacing of the car park.
10. **Amend Mayor to be Administrator on Barclays On-Line System** – Currently the RFO and Town Clerk are the only signatories. With the continued absence of the Town Clerk, the RFO is requesting the Mayor be upgraded to Administrator so they can be dual signatories. *Cllr Winser proposed Cllr Simpson be upgraded to Administrator, seconded by Cllr Crane, one abstention (Cllr Simpson), rest in favour.*

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.

11. **Consider locum cover for Town Clerk and budget** – A locum Clerk has agreed to work 15 hours per week. This will be 4 hours on 2 mornings a week with the other hours on an ad-hoc basis and to cover evening meetings, hopefully to start on the 21st October. **Action:** Check with NALC whether it is a requirement for the Council to appoint a Proper Officer in the absence of the Town Clerk.
RFO confirmed there is funding available in the Contingency Budget and Ear Marked Reserves.

Meeting closed 8.25pm

REPORTS

Public Report

Report to: F&GP 15th October 2019

Agenda Item No 5: Consider report regarding suppliers for Christmas trees this year

Background In previous years the Xmas trees have been supplied by Jadecliff and Elveden. Jadecliff supplied all the small trees and Elveden supplied the 5 bigger trees (the main tree, the one by the canal and the 3 on the Town Hall). This year Elveden informed us they could not supply the 2 tallest trees (the main tree and the one by the canal). The office therefore contacted other suppliers to obtain quotes for both the small and big trees.

Objective The council's aim is to ensure the annual Christmas lights display continues to be the same and as impressive as in previous years and to remain within the allocated budget.

Reference to Action Plan H&T Action Plan – Aim – Bring Christmas spirit and increase visitor numbers

Options (including quotations)

Tree Size	Quantity Required	Price per item by Supplier (ex VAT)		
		Jadecliffe	Yattendon	Elveden
1.2 metre spruce	157	£8.75 Total £1373.75	£9.00 Total £1413.00	-
1.2 metre spruce blocked	38	£11.00 Total £418.00	£12.00 Total £456.00	-
8ft Norway Spruce	1	£36.00	£46.66	Quoted; see below
10ft Norway Spruce	2	£132.00 Total £264.00	£60.00 Total £120.00	Quoted; see below
22 ft Norway Spruce	1	£300.00	£300.00	N/A
30ft Norway Spruce	1	N/A	£600.00	N/A
Delivery of all ordered trees		£150.00	£225.00	Included in total price
TOTAL		£2,541.75	£2,560.66 Plus £600 for 30ft tree Total £3,160.00	£905.00
Last year's cost		Only supplied small trees - same price this year but additional £150 delivery this year	Not used last year Nordman Fir not Spruce	£2999 for 5 tallest trees

Available budget (£s) including cost centre Budget of £4,500 4307 – Christmas Tree (Main Tree) and £1,000 4312 Christmas Trees (Commercial)

Recommendation(s)

The best option, based on the above information. Suggestion would be to remain with Jadecliff who have been our supplier for a number of years and ask them to supply all the small trees, together with all the bigger trees (apart from the main 30ft tree that they can't supply) at a total cost of £2,541.75.

Ask Yattendon Estates (a local company) to supply and deliver the main 30ft tree at a total cost of £825.00.

Overall total cost would be £3,366.75 ex VAT.

Signed: Deputy Town Clerk 30/09/2019

Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit

Background

There is a requirement under the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils (2017) for Council members to review the effectiveness of the internal audit and ensure that the area's cover by the audit is in line with Council's requirement. This is then confirmed under part 2 of the Governance Statement, which Council confirms by resolution in May each year.

Details of the report.

We for 2015/16 changed our Internal Auditor to IAC Internal Audit & Compliance Ltd, which is effectively run by a Mr K Rose.

The internal Audit covers two days, November/ December & May. During the visits the attached areas are covered, this is normally done by sampling the accounts.

Action Required

Members are required to:-

- Review the attached (Part 1 & 2) and make any amendment required.
- After any amendments confirm acceptance Part 1 & 2 and that the internal audit meets the Council's requirement
- That the attached terms of reference from IAC Internal Audit & Compliance Ltd are acceptable

Jeff Ford
Responsible Financial Officer
2nd October 2019

Hungerford Town Council Internal Audit Review Checklist Part 1 Meeting Standards

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement	Yes/No	Areas for Development
1 Scope of Internal Audit	Terms of reference for internal audit were agreed in July 2016	Yes	
2 Independence	Internal Audit although deals with RFO and Town Clerk, is able contact Mayor if issued need discussion. They reserve the right to attend Council meeting. Reports from Internal Audit are reported in written form and circulated to all Councillors (half yearly). Report agrees/ noted each 6 months after visit.	Yes	
3 Competence	IAC audits many Town & Parish Councils. For us work is currently undertaken by Kevin Rose the Director. They are no evidence of a failure to carry out internal work ethically, with integrity and objectivity.	Yes	
4 Relationship	We are consulted on internal audit plan. They are no other personal or business connection with the employees of IAC Internal & Compliance Ltd. We also employ IAC as Data Protection Officer	Yes	
5 Audit Planning and reporting	We have two visits a year, which is appropriate for the risks facing the council.	Yes	

Part 2 – Characteristics of Effectiveness

Characteristics of 'Effectiveness'	Evidence of Achievement	Yes/No	Area for Development
Internal Audit Work is Planned	Work is planned with regard to terms of reference. However due account is taken of previous finding to ensure these matters have been resolved	Yes	
Understanding the whole organisation its needs and objectives	The Annual audit plan demonstrates how audit work will provide assurance for the council's Annual Governance Statement	Yes	
Be seen as a Catalyst for Change	Internal Audit work supports the Council' work in delivering improved services to the community	Yes	
Add Value and assist the organisation in achieving its objectives	The Council makes positive responses to internal audit's recommendations and follows up with action where required	Yes	
Be forward looking	When setting the annual audit plan national agenda changes are considered as well as legislation changes. Due their specialisation in Town & Parish Councils IAC keep abreast of risks and corporate governance arrangements changes.	Yes	
Be Challenging	Internal Audit focuses on the risks facing the Council. (Legal & Financial)	Yes	
Ensure the right resources are available	Internal Audit is happy that 2 days is enough for size of Council. RFO & TC are always there on the day to assist in any queries raised	Yes	

