

TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 25th APRIL 2016 AT 6.00pm IN THE TOWN HALL

PRESENT

Councillors J. Badham (Chairman), Miss K. Brennan, P. Aldridge, Mrs C. Danter, M. Sztymiak, P. Clatworthy and M. Poxon

Councillors H. Burns, R. Mills and S. Raywood were sitting as members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor P Workman

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor	Interest
M. Sztymiak	Borough & County Councillor

3. DISPENSATION REQUESTS RECEIVED

None

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29th February 2016

RESOLVED: - that the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 29th February 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Councillors requested that Standing Orders, the Code of Conduct and Complaints Procedure be reviewed and up dated. Clerk to arrange a Working Group meeting to include the Councillors who opted into this process at the last main Council meeting.

The Community Service Awards to be discussed after the Exclusion of the Press and Public.

Committee to put the new hire charges for the Watson Hall and Town Hall before the full Council at the upcoming adjourned meeting for their approval.

'Councillor Auditors' were to meet with the internal Auditor to formalise their roles. A meeting took place but no resolution was made. Committee members suggested that a Councillor Auditor's role should involve attending the office once or twice a year to follow a paper trail and check procedures, for example an invoice 'spot check'. This item to be added to the Agenda of a full Council meeting for formalisation.

6. STRATEGIC RISKS

Councillors discussed the electronic archiving of documents, Clerk to contact Quintech with reference to providing this support. Councillors were keen to keep paper copies as well.

7. AUDIT ACTION PLAN

Councillor Sztymiak requested that an Extraordinary Finance Committee meeting be called to discuss the Audit Improvement Plan and this was seconded by Councillor Brennan. Clerk to arrange a meeting date.

8. BUDGET POSITION

The Town Clerk provided the budget position at the close of the last financial year with details of receipts and payments and gave members of the committee the new budget layout for 2016/17 financial year. Councillors also discussed the Clerk's role in respect of the Riverside Partnership and this will be clarified by committee members who will attend their meeting on 29th April 2016.

9. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS & DELEGATION

A discussion took place on merging committees, for example Staffing and Finance and it was agreed to reduce the number of meetings. A working group is to be set up to agree the Terms of Reference of these newly merged committees and report back to full committee with their findings. Clerk to co-ordinate the membership of the working group and arrange a date for the meeting. In the meantime the Clerk has prepared a reduced schedule of meetings to be included within these discussions.

10. OUTGOING COMMUNICATIONS AND ONLINE PUBLICITY

The Clerk presented information to the Committee gathered at a presentation by Vision ICT, creators of websites for Town Councils with precepts over £200,000 who are legally required to operate under the new Transparency Code. The cost varies between £500 and £1,800 dependent on the style required and the Clerk requested that funds be used from the £500 newsletter budget to start this important process. Some Councillors suggested that the current website did not need to be changed. Councillors then discussed terminating the existing website on the 3rd June 2016 as it is currently owned by Councillor Poxon. They suggested the Clerk gain two more quotations from website companies working to the transparency code framework. In the meantime, the Clerk to pay for the transfer of ownership of the current website to the Town Council by applying for a Town Council debit card. It was agreed that Councillor Poxon would be compensated for his expenditure when setting up the current website. This to be taken from the Councillor Expenses Cost Centre.

11. 'GRANTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES SHOULD BE APPROVED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE'

This agenda item was brought by Councillor Poxon with reference to the recipients of these grants, specifically the Museum. Councillors discussed that granting money to the Museum showed a commitment to support the Museum. Councillor Poxon pointed out that the internal auditor had previously isolated this payment and requested details on how the grant had been spent. Councillors agreed to request this information from the Steve Goodchild at the Museum.

12. KNIGHT KAVANAGH SURVEY BY TBC

This item has come to Finance committee due to a delay in reaching the Environment and Amenities committee and needs a quick response. Councillor Sztymiak suggested it may relate to Section 106 money for the development of leisure. Clerk to complete the facts on the survey form and then prepare a list of opinions required from Councillors at the next full Council meeting, before returning it to Knight Kavanagh.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

13. GRANT APPLICATION FROM THE TEWKESBURY BATTLEFIELD SOCIETY

Councillor Raywood who was sitting as a member of the public, requested to speak on the matter and Councillors agreed to allow it. He explained that this grant was requested in support of other grants, for example from TBC. However, since the application had been made, the land the group wished to buy is no longer available currently, making this now a speculative request. A motion was proposed by Councillor Sztymiak that Councillors were sympathetic to this historically and educationally beneficial project but that they request clarification on the situation regarding the purchase of the land before the application could be progressed further. The motion was seconded by Councillor Brennan.

14. SAFFRON ROAD PROPOSAL FROM TEWKESBURY TOWN BAND

The Chairman informed the Finance committee that the Building's committee had strongly recommended that this proposal be accepted. Councillors read a report prepared by the Town Band. They were concerned by the 5 year period laid out in it, however they agreed in principal with it as a whole. They requested that the Clerk contact the Borough Council to investigate a change of use at the Watson Hall and to seek legal advice with reference to a Lease/Sale document.

15. PROPOSAL FOR FUTURE MAINTENANCE AND CLEANING CONTRACT

Councillors discussed the proposal by the Buildings Committee that the maintenance role be brought back in house. The Clerk said that she was very happy with the current person supplied by Cleanspace. The committee therefore asked the Clerk to

investigate the following:

1. Look at the current maintenance person's contract. Can he move from Cleanspace direct to the Council or would there be a penalty payment?
2. What is the cost of bringing the role in-house, salary, pension etc?

The Council anticipated problems with this idea in the form of sickness cover, and the extra pressure on the Clerk in the case of problematic staff members which had been managed previously by the current contracted supplier.

They also discussed whether breaking down the £45,000 maintenance and cleaning budget into a maintenance contract valued at £30,000 paid by the E&A Committee and a £10,000 cleaning contract paid by the Buildings Committee with £5,000 for administration costs would still require a tendering process or would three quotes be acceptable? Clerk to research Financial Regulations.

16. FLOATING GLOBE PROPOSAL REFERRED FROM THE BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

In principal the committee was happy with the idea. They felt that as the Floating Globe had approached the Council with their business plan no more quotes for this service would be required. They requested that Councillor Workman from the working group provide more information on the £30,000 breakdown he had given for the losses at the Watson Hall. They also requested that Councillor Clatworthy and Councillor Workman inform the Floating Globe as to the progress of their application.

17. GRANT APPLICATIONS

Councillors requested that the Clerk send out cheques for the grants agreed at the last full Council meeting.

18. COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Councillor Sztymiak left the meeting due to a personal connection with one of the nominees.

Councillors discussed 3 senior nominees and 2 junior nominees. They subsequently voted by majority show of hands for Andrew Turner to receive the senior Community Award and for Samantha Bailey to receive the Junior Community Award. The other nominees for the junior Award were recommended as Ushers at the upcoming Mayor Making Ceremony in recognition of their commitment to the community.

The meeting closed at 9:10 pm