

TEIGNMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 9th FEBRUARY 2022 AT 15:00 AT BITTON HOUSE

Present: Cllr J Atkins (JA) – Chair
Cllr R Ash (RA)
Cllr I Palmer (IP)

In attendance: Mr I Wedlake – (IW) Projects and Facilities Manager
Mr T Sullivan – (TS) Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)
Mrs T Rowe – (TR) Town Clerk
One member of the public

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs P Williams, C Williams and J Orme.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Code of Conduct (section 13, Appendices A and B), Members are invited to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in items to be considered at this meeting. Members are also reminded that the timescale to alter their stated interests with the District Council's Monitoring Officer is 28 days.

There were none.

3. DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensation requests.

4. MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28TH OCTOBER 2021.

The minutes of the Finance Committee held on 28th October 2021 were proposed by Cllr I Palmer and seconded by Cllr R Ash and agreed by the meeting.

The meeting noted, **re the Action Point from the previous meeting**, that the Clerk had contacted Barclays Bank concerning whether credit checks were carried out when individuals were added to the Town Council's mandate as signatories and Barclays had confirmed that they did not carry out any credit checks on the officers and Councillors to whom a card was issued, as the product was a Debit Card (not Credit).

5. REPORT ON EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET FOR THE 9 MONTHS TO 31st DECEMBER 2021.

A report on the expenditure against budget for the 9 months to 31st December 2021 had been circulated to members and an up to the minute month 11 (to date) version was distributed to the meeting by the RFO; this to facilitate budget discussions.

Noted that the coding issues were still causing difficulties.

6. BUDGET SETTING FOR 2022/23.

The meeting discussed the options for the budget for 2022/23 and what projects (if any) could be carried over into 2023/24. **The Clerk tabled her updated version of the draft budget figures (with the revised budget code list) which implied the balance was close but, in order to achieve that, she had just taken out the Den Toilet project, which had been mentioned but not agreed at the Councillors' internal budget meeting. The Chair asked the Projects and Facilities Manager what reprogramming, other than removing this one item, might be possible.**

The Projects and Facilities Manager reported that the CCTV replacement was dependent on the replacement of the lampposts on the sea front by Devon County Council. The works at Bitton Park, to reconfigure the car park and add disabled spaces, electric vehicle charging points and bicycle racks **were** dependent on the planning application which was still awaiting a report from the Teignbridge Conservation Officer; these works could be rolled back until April 2023.

The Projects and Facilities Manager would look at the budget in the week beginning 21st February and then the Chair of Finance would meet with **him and** the Mayor in the week beginning 28th February 2022 for further discussions. This with the intention to hold an **other internal** meeting of all Councillors **to agree a revised budget** on Thursday 10th March 2022 at 6.30pm (the Planning Committee meeting would be held at 6.00pm that day not Wednesday 9th February as previously scheduled).

ACTION; TR/AW to arrange

7. PAVEMENT CAFÉ LICENCE REVIEW

Following discussions at the 28th July 2021 Finance Committee meeting, the Projects and Facilities Manager told the meeting that he had been in discussions with Devon County Council concerning whether a charge for pavement café licences based on the square meterage used per property or on a cover charge, for 2022/23 could be made. DCC were unsure that this would meet current legislation.

The meeting discussed the benefits to the Town of the Town Council issuing Pavement Café licences and it was agreed that this would be better carried out by Devon County Council who had the enforcement powers.

The Projects and Facilities Manager would write a report on the issuing of Pavement Café licences by Devon County Council to take to Full Council on 1st March 2022.

ACTION: IW

8. TO REVIEW THE TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS POLICY

The Chair told the meeting that revisions to the grants policy were required, in addition the budget review of the total grants fund had highlighted the necessity to cut back on grants issued. The Chair suggested a maximum limit to grants of £1,500.

The meeting agreed that grants should be submitted online through the Town Council website and a **feedback** form should be completed in the same way to show how monies granted had been spent.

The Chair would draft a policy to bring back to the next meeting, this to contain eligibility criteria including the climate emergency and an indication of the groups of residents who would benefit **in the feedback form**.

ACTION: JA

9. RBS/SHAREPOINT INTEGRATION

The Projects and Facilities Manager reported that RBS/SharePoint integration was now available and would assist the Town Council in working towards going fully paperless. In order to target implementation by 01/04/2022 latest it was necessary to decide if the Town Council should pay a one-off fee of £200 or sign up for a 3-year contract which would be free.

Proposed: Cllr I Palmer

Seconded: Cllr R Ash

Resolved: That the Town Council sign up to RBS/SharePoint integration for one year at a cost of £200.00.

10. IMPLEMENTATION OF A PURCHASE CARD SYSTEM

The Projects and Facilities Manager told the meeting that purchase cards which could be cleared off each month would be beneficial for certain members of staff, with a proposed spend limit of £250.

The RFO would contact Barclays Bank to see if this was a service they could provide and would bring a report back to the next meeting of the Committee.

ACTION: TS

11. PURCHASE OF A CARD PAYMENT SYSTEM

It was noted that the Town Council policy on room bookings required a deposit to be taken which was not being carried out at present.

Members agreed that full payment should be taken when a booking was made; this to include a non-refundable deposit. This would be facilitated by the purchase of a card payment system which would enable deposits being taken, either face to face or over the phone.

The RFO would investigate the costs for a card payment system both with Barclays and other providers and bring a report back to the next quarterly meeting of the Finance Committee.

ACTION: TS

12. TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S INTERIM REPORT

Members noted the Internal Auditor's Report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. This would be presented to Full Council on 1st March 2022.

ACTION: JA

13. TOWN COUNCIL INVESTMENT POLICY

The Town Clerk had drafted an investment policy, and this had been circulated to members.

The Chair requested amendments be made in line with the NALC statutory guidance on investments, particularly in relation to the yield on Town Council assets, and links with the Financial Regulations be made.

ACTION: TR

14. THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Deems that all information held by this Council should be freely available to the public unless it falls under one of 23 exemptions.

15. DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018

Precludes this authority from publishing the names, addresses or other private information of individuals unless written permission is given by the individual for such details to be made public.

Therefore, where necessary, personal details have been removed from the papers attached to ensure that information held is available, but individuals are protected.

The meeting closed at 16.55

Date of next meeting – 21st April 2022.

.....
COUNCILLOR J ATKINS
CHAIRMAN

Bitton House, Teignmouth
22nd February 2022

(Amendments made in brown by Cllr J Atkins, the Chair, and agreed as the final version of the meeting)