



CHEPSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance Policy and Audit Committee** of Chepstow Town Council held on Wednesday 9th February 2022 at 7.00pm

Present:

Chair: Cllr P Hobson

Councillors: H Beach, C Duchet, Y Havard, T Kirton, N Heywood (left 8.30pm), A Horne, A Redhead, D Rooke

In Attendance: Mrs L Allen (Town Clerk)
Mrs A Sandiford (Deputy Town Clerk)

43. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

Cllr H Beach declared an interest in Min 59 as a relative of the Chair of the Palmer Centre.

44. To Suspend Standing Orders

a) Public Open Forum (15 minutes at the discretion of the Chair)

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Cllr Redhead took the chair for the following item as Cllr Hobson was not in possession of a copy of the Minutes.

45. Minutes

Approved the Minutes of the Finance, Policy and Audit Committee Meeting held on 17th November 2021.

46. Matters Arising

Min 38: It was noted that the presentation of a Town Council crest to the retired Parade Marshall will take place on Anzac Day, Monday 25th April 2022.

Cllr Hobson resumed the chair.

47. Review of Committee Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation

Members reviewed and considered amendments to the Committee Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation.

The Clerk advised that from May 2022 the Ordinary Meeting will be held separately to the Annual Meeting, at which specific Council business will be conducted.

RESOLVED:

To amend the Committee Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation as discussed for approval at the Annual Meeting in May 2022.

48. Ground Floor Lease – The Gatehouse

The Committee considered the current terms of the lease to Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

RESOLVED:

To request the intentions and requirements of the CAB going forward.

49. MIND Monmouthshire

The Committee considered the renewal of the Partnership Agreement with MIND Monmouthshire due to expire on 31st March 2022.

RESOLVED:

To recommend that Town Council approves renewal of the Partnering agreement for a 5-year term at £15,000 per year.

50. Investments

The Committee considered the report and recommendation detailing potential investment opportunities for the Town Council's Earmarked Reserves.

RESOLVED:

To split the balance of reserves up and spread the amounts out across alternative providers of up to £85,000 per institution, in order to be covered by The Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

51. 3rd Quarter Budget Monitoring (October – December 2021) Report 2021/22

The Committee considered and approved the budget monitoring report for period ending 31st December 2021.

52. Annual Risk Assessment and review of the Risk Management Strategy

The Committee considered the annual Risk Assessment Report and Risk Management Strategy.

RESOLVED:

- i. To obtain clarification on the CAB lease in relation to the rent review.
- ii. To obtain quotations for 4 additional chairs similar to the existing in the Chamber

53. Standing Orders

Noted the Model Standing Orders are currently being updated by One Voice Wales following the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and should be available in time for the annual meeting in May.

54. Financial Regulations

The Committee reviewed the Council's Financial Regulations and made no changes.

55. Gatehouse Works

The Committee received an update on the works to date and approved the extension of the existing contract to undertake the 2nd year internal works.

RESOLVED:

To approve the extension of the existing contract to undertake the 2nd year internal works.

56. Monmouthshire County Council – Emergency Plan

The Committee received and considered correspondence from Monmouthshire County Council in regards their Emergency Plan.

RESOLVED:

To accept the invitation to meet via Teams with the Emergency Planning Officer to discuss issues raised following the fire in Upper Church Street in September 2020.

57. Social Media & Electronic Communication Policy

The Committee considered the Social Media Policy and Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy to ensure that they are fit for purpose following Council decision to set up individual Ward Facebook pages in May 2022.

RESOLVED:

To recommend that Town Council approves the Social Media Policy and Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy with no amendments.

58. Councillor tablets, emails and phone numbers

The Committee considered the report regarding the provision of tablets, emails and phone numbers for the new Council in May 2022.

RESOLVED:

To recommend that Town Council approves the following:

- i. To continue to provide Samsung Tablets to all Councillors at an additional cost of £800 for 4 additional tablets to accommodate the increase in Councillors.
- ii. To upgrade the current telephone provision in the office with a new Hosted system at a cost of £201 per annum for 3 years plus £90 ongoing monthly cost.
- iii. To provide 20 x 01291 telephone numbers (included in ii above).

59. Community Contributions

The Committee considered in depth the written statement and accounts received from the Palmer Centre to support their request for a Community Contribution in the financial year 2022/23.

RESOLVED:

To contribute £8,000 to the Palmer Centre in the financial year 2022/23.

Cllr Beach declared an interest in this item and took no part in the discussion or vote.

Cllr Duchet declared an interest in this item as Town Council's representative on the Palmer Centre.

60. Community Grant Application

a. The Committee considered the community grants report and applications received from:

- i) Woolpitch Community Orchard - £228

RESOLVED:

To increase the grant to £500 for the planting of additional trees and the installation of a plaque explaining the Woolpitch Community Orchard, how it was funded and how the public can get involved. (*Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006 s.20*)

- ii) 7Q Gallery - £1,500

RESOLVED:

To grant fund 7Q Gallery £1,500 to help promote the gallery to enable it to continue to display the works of local artists. (*LGA 1972 s.145*)

The Chair suspended the meeting for 10 minutes to allow for a comfort break (9pm)

b. The Committee received the Community Contributions and Grants update for 2021/22 and consider the recommendations.

RESOLVED:

To allow the outstanding balances for the following grant applications to be carried forward to 2022/23:

- Chepstow Reading Library - £395.00
- Woolpitch Wood - £60.22
- Walkers are Welcome - £4,000.00
- Friends of the Dell Park - £2,663.00

61. Dog Waste

The Committee considered correspondence received from Merlin Waste.

RESOLVED:

To approve the increase in dog waste collection costs from £6.25 to £6.50 per bin from 4.4.22
(*Litter Act 1983, ss.5.6*)

62. Public Toilet – Welsh Street Car Park

The Committee received an update of public toilet provision at Welsh Street Car Park, noting no works are planned to be carried out on the toilets by Monmouthshire County Council.

63. Drill Hall – Fire Safety Recommendation

The Committee considered the costs associated with the recommendation from Chubb fire & Security that the Optical Detector be replaced.

RESOLVED:

To approve the cost of £970.10 to replace the Optical Detector at the Drill Hall (*LG (Misc Prov 1976, s19)*).

64. Town Award

The Committee reconsidered relaunching the Town Council's Town Award scheme.

RESOLVED:

To relaunch the Town Council's Town Award scheme.

65. Items for Next Meeting

None

66. Date of Next Meeting

Noted the next ordinary meeting of the Finance, Policy and Audit Committee will take place at 7.00pm at a date to be confirmed in June 2022.

CLOSE: This completed the business of the meeting at 21:30.

SIGNED CHAIR PERSON: _____ **DATE:** _____