

LUDGERSHALL TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the January Finance meeting held on 3rd February 2021 at 7.00pm, held remotely using Microsoft Teams

Present: Cllr M Giles (as Chair), Cllr J White, Cllr C A Allan, Cllr J Langley, Cllr B Dance, Cllr P Burgon

Public: No members of the public attended the meeting

AGENDA ITEM

050-20/21: 1. Apologies – Cllr B Cordery. The Cllrs resolved to accept the apologies and record under the LGA 1972 Section 99 and Sch 12 para 40. Cllr M Giles asked the committee if they were happy with him chairing the meeting, all agreed.

051-20/21: 2. Declaration of Interest – none.

052-20/21: 3. Minutes of previous meeting – held 23rd December 2020 – the minutes had been circulated and were ratified at FTC on 12th January 2021, - the Clerk confirmed that the precept had been requested and there were no further comments.

053-20/21: 4. Finance *a) Financial Statement to end month 9* – the Clerk explained at month 9 expenditure should be at 75% so at 58.5% LTC are well within budget. There were no other comments and no questions.

054-20/21: 5. Committee Reports – Cllr CA Allan reported that general feeling was that if the Tree Lights in the car park were left on it would feel heartening for the Town and after speaking with the Chairman this is now the status. There is a cost of approx. £1.50 per week. The Clerk asked which budget this was to come from and after discussion Cllr J Langley was happy for this to be absorbed by the Public Toilet budget, all agreed. Cllr J White, reported that RLE discussed and agreed on buying 3 new picnic benches but needed a cost for installation this has come in quite high so she will take this back to the next committee meeting. Cllr J Langley reported that Allotment Committee had no request for money and asked if the February meeting could be cancelled due to nothing needing urgent discussions. All agreed and she asked the Clerk to let the committee know.

055-20/21: 6. Bills for Payment (Received to date) – totalled £5,163.30. inclusive of VAT at £499.70, the Clerk stated she had paid 2 regular invoices that were due at the end of February. Full details will be given at the next FTC, after which the remainder of the payments will be made.

056-20/21: 7. Correspondence – *a) Kingfisher Group* –Kingfisher Group, requested the edited info to go into this year's guides. The Clerk told them we did not want to continue with this, however they said we had already agreed as this was for 2020 which we had signed for. Therefore, LTC have had to continue with this year's guide with the same wording as last year, costs will go into 2020/21 budget, but the book will be published for the summer of 2021. *b) Legal Topic Notes* - Guidance from NALC has been received on changes to Legal Topic Notes **13 (Policing Your Area)** and **28 (Basic Charity Law)**. This agenda point is just for notification a copy of these legal topic notes was presented to the committee.

057-20/21: 8. Grounds Maintenance Tender Evaluation – All information had been circulated; 9 companies were considered, 6 have quoted and are part of the tender evaluation. The committee

agreed to discount the 2 high quotes of £16,892 per year and £12,541. Of the four other companies 2 were not known to LTC and 1 was felt to be already stretched but could be looked at in the future. The Committee discussed and felt that as their current Contractor Gavin Jones has high standards and LTC has a good working relationship with them, that although they were not the lowest quote, they do pose the best value for money and should stay with them, at £8235.84 per year. The Committee agreed to put this forward to FTC.

058-20/21: 9. *Review committees and their responsibilities – first stage* – Cllr M Giles addressed the committee, the structure of LTC has been the same for some time, along with numbers of Cllrs. What he would like to suggest is that a couple of Cllrs volunteer to investigate how things run and how perhaps they could be improved. The volunteers would need to look at the committees, their Terms of Reference, and the Councils Scheme of Delegation. The Clerk suggested that they should look at how other councils run their committees and utilize what would work best for LTC. If no changes are needed, then fine. The committee discussed and agreed to put this forward to FTC to ask for 2 volunteers.

059-20/21: 10. *Grants* – none.

060-20/21: 11 *Review of Policies –Equal Opportunities Policy* - no changes since last adopted, the Committee agreed the review.

061-20/21: 12. *New Policy – Compassionate Leave* – The Clerk presented the wording which she had obtained from other councils/NALC, the committee discussed and would like to see the NALC template to follow the legal channels correctly and make the implementation of the policy watertight. The Clerk will come back next month with this.

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the following agenda items will be closed to the public due to its confidential nature.

062-20/21: 13. *Staffing a) Salaries* – the clerk confirmed the salaries for January were basic hours and that the hours earned from evening meetings are now being emailed to Cllr M Giles on a Monday, to confirm what has been accrued and what has been taken. Cllr R Dance stated that the hours should be less whilst working from home as there are no interruptions from the public. The Clerk confirmed that the public are still contacting LTC via phone calls, emails, website and Facebook. Cllr M Giles then confirmed that the trial of increasing the staff hours to 35 each has gone well and that the amount of work that needs to be completed by the office has not abated and that if the committee were happy, he would propose to FTC that the hours stay the same for another 6 months, all agreed. *b) Training* – Ali & Karen attended free training on Elections and the Census, provided by WALC and the Admin Assistant was booked onto a free Instagram Training course on 27/1/2021 run by Visit Wiltshire as Census requests that other forms of media are used. Karen has spoken to both Rialtas & DCK Accounting regarding training on Omega (LTC’s accounting package) and the cost for training is only £10 difference, so she has contacted DCK and after her break, will be discussing a date. DCK also intimated that Karen may need less training so would only charge hourly, rather than a full day. *c)Office-* nothing to report.

049-20/21: 17. *Agenda points for next meeting* – the Clerk will update the committee next month on the status of the New Code of Conduct and pre-warned that Wiltshire Council will be charging election fees to Parish & Town Councils she will update at March FTC. What to do with the old tablets is to be put onto the agenda for FTC.

Meeting closed at 19.50pm, next meeting 24th February 2021.

Signed..... Date.....