

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/06/17 – 01

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, Lydney on Monday 17 June 2013 at 8.27 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs B Pearman (Chairman), D Biddle, C Harris, C Matthews, W J Osborne and B Thomas

Mrs J Smailes – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/RFO
Miss C Wheeler – Executive Officer (EO)

Cllr Pearman informed all present that no practice fire evacuation had been scheduled for the duration of the meeting. All attendees were then informed of the locations of the nearest fire exits.

1. **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**

It was **proposed by Cllr W Osborne** that the Committee would “stand on” with its Chairman. **Seconded by Cllr Harris.** Unanimous.

Cllr Pearman was duly appointed as Chairman

1. b) **TO CONFIRM MEMBERSHIP DETAILS re. THE PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

Members noted that the Personnel Sub-Committee would consist of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, the Mayor and one elected representative from the Finance and Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Biddle proposed Cllr W Osborne as the elected representative. **Seconded by Cllr Matthews. Cllr Thomas proposed** Cllr Harris as the elective representative. **Seconded by Cllr Berryman.** The nominations were then put to a vote and Cllr Harris was duly appointed as the elected representative to the Personnel Sub-Committee.

2. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr W Osborne – Grant request from Lydney War Memorial Trust
Cllr C Matthews – Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust

Cllr Biddle questioned why the two Trusts for which the Town Council held Sole/Managing Trusteeship were now required to submit grant application requests. Cllr Pearman felt that each Trust may wish to request a donation, rather than a grant, the amount of which could be included in the Council’s Five Year Plan for budgetary purposes. After a short discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Pearman** that the matter would be an agenda item for the next meeting, in order that the Committee may decide if it wished to provide a donation, rather than an annual grant, to the Trusts for which it held Sole/Managing Trusteeship. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 April 2013 and the Extra Ordinary meeting on 13 May 2013 were confirmed as a true record. **Proposed by Cllr W Osborne, seconded by Cllr Matthews.** Unanimous.



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5. **OPEN FORUM**

No members of the public were present.

6. **FINANCE**

Performance of Budget against actual

Members were reminded that all Councillors had been provided with a copy of the performance against budget at the June Full Council meeting. Cllr Matthews requested that the CEO lighten the colour of the background to a more neutral shade in order that it did not distort when photocopied. It was noted that the budget statement would remain on an orange background (albeit a lighter shade). Attention was also drawn to the fact that the Environment Agency had made an electronic payment in to the Town Council's current account, rather than its deposit account. Accordingly, the CEO advised that it would be necessary for two cheque signatories (in addition to herself) to arrange for the transfer of the funds into the correct account.

7. **GRANTS**

During discussion Members were reminded that the grants budget was not a "licence to spend" and that the total budget included provision for a grant which Council may choose to provide to Community organisations which may include the Lydney Town Hall Trust. It was noted that no such grant application had yet to be received from Lydney Town Hall Management Committee. Cllr Berryman noted that the Management Committee were now operating the bar facility in-house, which had proved to be a profitable decision.

Members then considered the following grant requests which had been received:

Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust

Cllr Matthews excused herself from the meeting at this point.

It was **proposed by Cllr Berryman, seconded by Cllr Harris**, that that a grant of £36,500 be awarded. Unanimous.

Responding to a question which had been raised by Cllr Biddle, the CEO advised that the work undertaken in the Park by Town Council Ground staff was gifted "in kind" and that the grant provided to the Trust covered purely its running costs. Cllr Pearman then proceeded to give an overview of the history of the donation of the park; the rising costs due to expectations and improvements; the need to publicise the true cost of running (actual and the staffing element gifted in kind) the park and the requirement of the Chairman to justify said expenditure to the community at the Annual Town Meeting. It was also noted that if the Town Council were to charge the Trust for the work undertaken by its employees in the Park it would also be necessary for the Council to charge the Trust VAT which could not then be reclaimable.

Cllr Matthews returned to the meeting at this point and Cllr W Osborne excused himself from the meeting.

Lydney War Memorial Trust

The CEO advised Members that, as a result of the Trust Deed which had been provided as part of the grant application process, it was noted that the Council was required to appoint four Trustees to the "body" of the Trust at a Council meeting; that Trustees need not be a member of the Council and that each Trustee would serve a four year term. Whilst

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Council had previously been unaware of this process, it was noted that said appointment would appear as an agenda item for the September Full Council meeting, in order that Council would observe the requirement.

Attention was then turned to the grant application which had been submitted and it was noted that the costs provided by the applicant had been estimated. Furthermore, it was felt that due to the level of "Cash at Bank" the Trust stood in a robust position. Cllr W Osborne was requested to return to the Chamber to clarify the Trust's accounts. During discussion it was believed that the Trust was facing its Quinquennial survey this year after it was anticipated that the Trust would need to undertake an amount of work. It was noted that the current work was in addition to that required due the Quinquennial survey. Cllr W Osborne then excused himself from the meeting.

After a short discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Berryman, seconded by Cllr Harris** that the Council would reconsider the grant request after the Quinquennial survey had taken place. Furthermore, the Trust would be asked to submit confirmed costings. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

Cllr W Osborne returned to the meeting at this point and was requested that the Trust was required to resubmit their application with confirmed costings.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC & PRESS

Page 04 (Inclusive) - CLOSED SESSION

Standing orders suspended in order that the Council may continue in "closed session" under the provisions of The Public (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) as the business to be discussed is considered to be of a confidential nature

8. COUNCIL ASSETS

- That the Council's Policy is that the Amenities Committee would look to secure allotment ground in order to meet Statutory demand (as deemed appropriate).

9. STAFFING

9.1 To adopt both versions (employee and CEO) of the Long Term Sickness Absence Policy which details the process to be followed in the event of Long Term Sickness.

9.2 Staffing (confidential)

Policy

The CEO advised that in line with "Good Practice" only resolutions would be recorded. Personnel issues however, would remain Confidential and would not form part of the Public Minutes.

Meeting closed at 9.43 pm

Chairman 

Date 