

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/10/21 – 05

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, Lydney on Monday 21 October 2013 at 8.35 pm.

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

Two members of the public
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. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr B Berryman – Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee
Cllr D Biddle – Lydney Festival
Cllr B Pearman – Chairman, Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 June 2013 were confirmed as a true record. **Proposed by Cllr Matthews, seconded by Cllr Harris.** Unanimous.

4. **OPEN FORUM**

Mr W Owen, 3 Augustus Way, Lydney – highlighted that Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee (THTMC) had originally been provided with a grant of £20,000 when they originally took over the running of the building and questioned how often LTHTMC would approach the Council for a grant. Mr Owen was advised that it was up to LTHTMC how often it approached the Council for a grant. Furthermore, that Council would be responsible for considering grant requests received.

5. **INTERNAL AUDIT**

It was noted that Wildin & Co would be addressing the half year internal audit in respect to the End of Year Accounts.

6. **GRANTS**

Policy

Members were asked to consider reverting, as of the new financial year, to the Council's prior policy; that being grant applications would be considered by the Finance and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis (each February).

Responding to questions which had been raised by Members, the CEO advised that minutes existed whereby former Cllr Bartle stated that the Council had previously addressed grant applications on an annual basis. It was **proposed by Cllr Osborne, seconded by Cllr**

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Matthews, that the Council would continue to consider grant applications on an on-going basis throughout the year. The motion was put to a vote which was carried.

Cllr Biddle then excused himself from the Chamber.

Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with a copy of the completed grant application form which had been received from the organisation.

Extensive discussion took place on the subject of the completed grant application and it was noted that LTHMTC had been provided with a grant of £20,000 in the 2012-2013 financial year in order to protect the Trust's staffing provision, which had been paid in two tranches. Furthermore, it was noted that LTHMTC had applied for a grant for the sum of £18,200.00 however, the Council did not possess sufficient funding in its budget to consider providing the full grant requested.

Discussion then took place as to whether the Council would be willing to award funding for certain items listed on the grant application form. Members were advised that £15,000 remained in the Council's grants budget and that should Members wish to exhaust said budget the Council would then not possess any buffer from which to offset its Precept demand, should it not receive LST funding from Forest of Dean District Council. It was **proposed by Cllr Osborne, seconded by Cllr Harris** that a grant would be awarded to purchase the following equipment which had been listed to the first line:-

<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Deep Fat Fryer	£500.00
Griddle	£600.00
S.Steel Worktop/Tables	£1,900.00
Microwave	£500.00
Large Double Door Fridge Freezer	£1,200.00
<u>Cookware Equipment</u>	<u>£1,500.00</u>
Total	£6,200.00

The motion was put to a vote which was carried.

Cllr Matthews then spoke on the need to replace two of the fire doors in the building. Members were advised that LTHMTC were responsible for managing the building on a day to day basis. Responding to a question which had been raised by Cllr Matthews, the CEO re-iterated that legally LTHMTC were responsible for ensuring the safety of the public whilst in the building as the Town Council were Custodial Trustee only holding Title Deed and played no part in the day to day administration/fabric of the building for which LTHMTC Trustees were now responsible, however, Cllr Matthews wished it be minuted that she disagreed with the advice of the CEO.

Cllr Osborne proposed that the safety of the fire doors be an agenda item for Full Council. **Seconded by Cllr Matthews.** The CEO was requested to obtain a copy of the Fire Marshal report which had been handed to LTHMTC when they assumed responsibility for the building. Vote carried.

Action by – the CEO



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Forest of Dean Citizens Advice Bureau

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with a copy of the grant application form which had been received from Forest of Dean Citizens Advice Bureau.

After a short discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Berryman, seconded by Cllr Harris**, that the sum of £500.00 would be awarded. Vote carried.

Action by – the CEO

Lydney Festival

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with a copy of the grant application for which had been received in respect of the 2014-2015 financial year. It was **proposed by Cllr Matthews, seconded by Cllr Harris** that in principle £1,500 would be awarded to the Festival for the 2014-2015 financial year. Unanimous. Members noted that the grant would be paid in April 2014 and was dependent upon budget approval by Full Council.

Action by – the CEO

Cllr Berryman excused himself from the chamber at this point and did not return to the meeting. Cllr Biddle returned to the chamber.

7. TRAINING

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with details of the conference on Planning which was being organised by Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC). It was noted that the cost of attendance amounted to £65.00 per delegate.

It was **proposed by Cllr Pearman** that in principle the Council would reserve a place for the CEO plus up to three Members, at the conference. Unanimous. It was agreed that the matter would be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting, in order that Council nominate Councillors to attend the conference. Cllrs Matthews and Thomas expressed an interest in attending the session.

Action by – the CEO

Weed Spraying

The CEO was pleased to inform Members that a member of the Ground Staff had recently completed a Weed Spraying Course at Hartpury College.

Members were also reminded that the CEO and EO would attend the SLCC Regional Conference on 27 November 2013.

8. CONFIDENTIAL WASTE

Members were asked to consider the purchase of an industrial type shredder (at a cost of £1,269.99 plus VAT) to replace the existing machine.

During discussion Councillors were informed that the current machine had been replaced three times and was no longer adequate to address the amount of confidential waste produced. It was noted that £690.00 had been allocated in the current budget for machinery costs; funding would need to be vired from within the Council's budget to facilitate said purchase. It was **proposed by Cllr Matthews, seconded by Cllr Harris**, that a suitable

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machine would be purchased by the Council. Unanimous. It was then **proposed by Cllr Pearman** that Delegated Powers would be granted to the CEO to vire the required funding from the Council's budget. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC & PRESS

Page 09-11 (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

9. STAFFING

Council resolved to:

- To investigate the extension of existing insurance cover in relation to Death in Service cover.
- That all staff and the Youth Council Liaison Representative would be required to submit to a DBS check.
- Extend a part-time member of Ground Staff's temporary contract until 31 March 2014.
- To advertise a full time position for a member of Ground Staff in the New Year, once the Council's budget for 2014-2015 had been approved.
- Extend NDP Assistant's contract by a further six months in order to complete the NDP project and "map" the community action points.

Meeting closed at 9.57 pm

