

LUDGERSHALL TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the March Finance meeting held on 31st March 2021 at 7.00pm, held remotely using Microsoft Teams.

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

Public: No members of the public attended the meeting

AGENDA ITEM

078-20/21: 1. Apologies – none.

079-20/21: 2. Declaration of Interest – there were none.

080-20/21: 3. Minutes of previous meeting – held 24th February 2021 – the minutes had been circulated and were ratified at FTC on 9th March 2021 - there were no observations.

081-20/21: 4. Finance *a) Financial Statement to end month 11* – the accounts had been circulated; the Clerk explained at month 11 expenditure should be at 91.66% LTC have used 69.3%. Some budgets have gone over, and others not used at all, this year has been a difficult year to predict spending. The clerk asked the committee to think ahead for the end of year accounts where any surplus could be earmarked to. *b) Clerk's report on longer term savings* – As of 25th March 2021 LTC's holdings were; Lloyds 30 day business bank instant £42,351.43, Nationwide 90 day deposit £75,236.40 at an interest rate of .4% & PSDF through CCLA £150,016.91 at an interest rate at the moment of .427%. Investments are not running with a good interest rate at this current time therefore, LTC should concentrate on spreading their risk. The Clerk/RFO suggested to leave the Nationwide as it is for the moment. Cllr M Giles proposed, Cllr B Dance seconded, all agreed. *c) Investment Strategy* – the committee discussed and once figures are clearer will update for the coming year.

082-20/21: 5. Year End Dates *a) Accounts b) Internal Audit c) External Audit* – no dates have been booked however all forms and information have been received, the clerk will update further.

083-20/21: 6. Committee Reports – Cllr CA Allan reported that the only monetary item to bring to F&P from Civic Events, is £60 for Easter Eggs, the Easter Hunt is this coming Sunday. The Clerk then stated that although RLE & Allotments had agreed costs for a CCTV project, there has been some misunderstanding and herself and the admin assistant will be relooking at the whole process of obtaining these quotes and the interpretation of them. Cllr J White, then reported regarding RLE committee, that a quote for installation of 3 picnic benches at a total of £360 + VAT had been accepted from AG&G. The RLE committee also agreed to welding work that needed to be done to a split in the metal of the multi-play at Pretoria Road play park at £295 + VAT. Cllr J Langley reported that a quote to improve the Toilet lighting for £859 + VAT has been agreed. The Allotment committee after looking at the revised Parochial Church Burial fees, decided to keep LTC's burial fees the same for the coming year. However, there is a need for additional wording to be added to the Gravedigger Rules and Regulations, the Clerk read out the changes and the Committee were happy with the new wording. Once this is ratified, Admin to send out the Fees and the new Gravedigger

Rules to all Undertakers that LTC converse with, requesting signature. Cllr J Langley, then stated the last item was for a £300 budget agreed by the Allotment Committee for the Town planters and War Memorial garden.

084-20/21: 7. Bills for Payment (Received to date) – the Clerk asked the committee if it would be alright to only report those items that need urgent payment, because the total has been reported again at FTC each month therefore doubling up. The committee agreed that this would be a good idea. There were 3 urgent payments this month with a total of £610.64 inc VAT the committee agreed to these items being paid.

085-20/21: 8. Review of Policies –*a) Addendum to Social Media Policy* – Cllr M Giles requested that an extra line be included in the new Social Media policy as follows ‘If a Cllr wants to engage on Social Media the content must be passed through the office prior to publishing’. This has been inserted at paragraph 1. The committee agreed to the wording, and once ratified at FTC the Clerk will send the addendum and a new signature sheet to all Cllrs and the new Policy put on the LTC website. *b) Equal Opportunities* – as there were no changes to discuss the committee agreed the review. Once ratified the review should be noted on the policy and put on the website.

086-20/21: 9. Peninsula – *regarding email sent to committee dated 16th March* – The Clerk emailed LTC’s account manager at Peninsula on 10th March, a month before the renewal date, as per F & P’s request in December 2020 meeting. Unfortunately, the contract, states, that LTC need to give 6 months’ notice and if not then the contract will automatically renew for the same period of 3 years and with a 7 % increase. After speaking with the Account Manager, the clerk got confirmation that LTC does not have to have a 3-year contract but can reduce to 12 months, so it will finish on 10th April 2022, and the monthly cost will not increase. All elements of the HR contract will remain the same including the insurance cover unless LTC decide to not continue with it. The annual cost of insurance is £66.55, the committee discussed and agreed to continue with the insurance element.

087-20/21: 10. Trees – The Clerk, as requested by F & P last meeting has found lots of information regarding Tree Preservation Orders (TPO’s) how they work how to make a TPO and the different titles of trees, Tree Wardens and what they do, & the Tree Charter. The committee discussed and decided to pass this to the working group looking at the structure of committees as this is a subject for the council as a whole. During the discussion it was remembered that LPC has had a tree warden in the past. The Clerk also stated that if/when LTC decides to use this information LTC will need a Tree Management Policy, of which she has a couple of examples to use. The Clerk will liaise with the new working group.

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

088-20/21: 11. Staffing *a) Salaries* – the clerk confirmed the salaries for March were basic hours and that the hours earned from evening meetings are being emailed to Cllrs M Giles & B Cordery on a weekly basis, to confirm what has been accrued and what has been taken. *b) Training* – Karen & Cllr CA Allan attended a training on How to find new Cllrs and have already utilised it by setting up a page on LTC website and putting out posters all over social media for the impending election. This page is to be added to as this is information for anyone that is thinking about becoming a Cllr in the future. The Clerk then asked the meeting if they could think of a short ‘Mission Statement’ that could be utilised. Cllr M Giles, suggested that LTC use the ‘Nolan Principles’ as the basis. The Clerk will take a look and email out to the committee. The Clerk has completed the training on the Omega Accounts package and confirmed that this months’ presented accounts was completed by her. Training on Improving Communications with residents, information has been passed. She has also had the once-a-year regional training whereby specific topics that were on the agenda, will be introduced into the appropriate meetings.

c) Office- the Clerk reported - Although the guidance is to work from home if you can work from home up until 21st June, the staff will be back in the office from 4th May, ready for the elections and

May meetings. This gives us time to re assess the office, get it cleaned and do a new covid risk assessment. The Clerk has had a short webinar re covid H&S and returning to work and will ensure all paperwork will be up to date. As there are now no available filing spaces in the office the Clerk will look at what is available in the chambers and assess if these cabinets are useable. From the 17th May the office will be open for enquiries from the public, however due to the lack of space for social distancing only one person will be allowed in at a time. Of course, this all depends on the figures and the government assessments, which we will have to follow.

089-20/21: 12. [Agenda points for next meeting](#) – there were none.

Meeting closed at 19.54 hrs, next meeting 28th April 2021.

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