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**Minutes of meeting**

**MEETING:** Finance and Governance Committee

**DATE & TIME**: Wednesday 24 March 2021 at 7.00pm

**PLACE:** Zoom online meeting

**Present**

**Councillors**

Cllr Gray (C) Cllr Barrow Cllr Harris

Cllr Wheller Cllr Huckle (VC) Cllr Lambert

Cllr Legg Cllr Nickinson Cllr Wakeling

Cllr Taylor Cllr Hamilton Cllr Northam

**Officers**

Jane Biscombe (Town Clerk) Ian Milne (Business & Finance Manager)

Charmaine Denny (Contracts & Facilities Officer) Niki Ayles (Democratic Officer)

Tony Hurley (Operations Manager)

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| F0168 | **Welcome by the Chair**  Cllr Gray welcomed those in attendance. |
| F0169 | **Apologies for Absence**  There were no apologies for absence. |
| F0170  F0171 | **Declarations of Interest**  There were no declarations of interest.  **Minutes of the last meeting**  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Barrow Seconder: Cllr Nickinson  Councillors voted unanimously to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2021 as a correct record. These will be signed at the earliest opportunity. |
| F0172 | **Councillors Questions**  No Councillor questions had been received. |
| F0173 | **Public Comments and Questions**  There were no public questions. |
| F0174 | **Amendments to Standing Orders**  Cllr Wakeling introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Wakeling Seconder: Cllr Harris  Councillors voted unanimously in favour of agreeing the amendments to Standing Orders as detailed in the report for recommendation to Full Council. |
| F0175  F0176  F0177  F0178  F0179  F0180  F0181  F0182 | **Grant Applications**    *Greenhill Bowling Club:*  There were concerns that awarding the grant would set a precedent for all community groups leasing community owned land to apply for grant funding for maintenance work. However, it was acknowledged that this has been an exceptional year in terms of the Covid 19 pandemic. Greenhill Bowling Club has not been able to gain any income from match fees yet has had ongoing costs in terms of maintaining the facilities.  Additionally, it was felt that Greenhill Bowling Club is very highly regarded and people travel from all over the country to play bowls there, often bringing their families with them, thus benefitting other businesses in the town.  It was noted that the grant application form states that the premises belongs to WTC. The Town Clerk explained that the grants policy does not preclude those who lease buildings or land from WTC from applying for improvement grants. WTC has previously approved grants for members clubs and for areas owned by WTC, but leased to other organisations.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Wheller Seconder: Cllr Legg  Members voted by a majority of 11 in favour, with 1 abstention, to award the recommended grant of £1,400.00.  Before moving on to the next item, Cllr Gray made the following proposal regarding Weymouth 450:  To allocate £15,000 from the grant budget underspend (£22,102.80) to a grant pot to support community groups to celebrate Weymouth 450.  A maximum of £1,000 would be available to any one group to meet the costs of community events over the summer and autumn to celebrate our town’s 450th birthday. This can be administered by the Events team, reporting to the Tourism, Events, Arts and Festivals (TEAF) working group and the Finance and Governance Committee (F&G), with decision making delegated to the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Chair of F&G and the Chair of TEAF.  The events team will also be asked to come up with a set of branding resources to include a logo (possibly the WTC logo with 450 branding) for use by local groups. The events team will be asked to put forward a costed proposal for branded merchandise which can be sold from the Council offices (if open) and from the Council’s cafes. This could include tea towels, mugs and badges. The funding to support this would need to be determined in the short term as the merchandise should be self-funding.  WTC would also be able to send some merchandise to colleagues at Weymouth Town Council, USA, in celebration of their 400th anniversary in 2022.  Motion:   1. To allocate £15,000 to a grant fund to support local groups delivering events and activities in celebration of the towns 450th birthday this year. 2. That the Town Clerk, chair of Finance and Governance, and Chair of TEAF are delegated the authority to determine applications. 3. That allocations of grants are report back to each F&G and TEAF meeting. 4. That the events team administer the fund and deliver a logo and merchandising plan to the next appropriate TEAF meeting   It was felt that a lot of applications for funding would be received and therefore it would be important to set some criteria on which funding could be granted. Should the proposal be accepted this evening then a report around the parameters will be submitted to Full Council. A press release will also be published should the proposal be accepted by Full Council, outlining what the celebrations are about.  It was requested that schools and other non-profit organisations be allowed to apply for funding rather than community groups only. This will be taken on board.  It was clarified that the funding will come from an underspend of this financial year’s grants budget. If an organisation has been a grant beneficiary this year but wish to apply for Weymouth 450 funding as well, they should not be excluded. Running alongside will be a new grant pot of £50k for the new financial year.  It was noted that as well as the £15k being set aside for the Weymouth 450 proposal, there will also be a further £8k underspend in the grants budget, and Cllr Taylor asked whether this will be rolled over into next year’s grant budget. Ian Milne responded that underspends don’t always get rolled over for that specific purpose unless it is agreed by this Committee and Full Council, and it can be rolled over for any purpose. Cllr Gray agreed to take this proposal to a specific meeting about all underspends rather than agreeing anything at this meeting.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Gray Seconder: Cllr Taylor  Members voted by a majority of 10 in favour, with 2 abstentions, to:   1. To allocate £15,000 to a grant fund to support local groups delivering events and activities in celebration of the towns 450th birthday this year. 2. That the Town Clerk, chair of Finance and Governance, and Chair of TEAF are delegated the authority to determine applications. 3. That allocations of grants are report back to each F&G and TEAF meeting. 4. That the events team administer the fund and deliver a logo and merchandising plan to the next appropriate TEAF meeting   **Grant Policy and Form for 21/22**  Jane Biscombe introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Wakeling Seconder: Cllr Legg  Members voted unanimously in favour of agreeing the revised policy and form (Appendix B) for recommendation to Full Council.  **Working Group Terms of Reference**  Cllr Harris introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Harris Seconder: Cllr Lambert  Members voted unanimously in favour of agreeing the Working Group Terms of Reference template (Appendix C) for recommendation to Full Council.  The  **Information Items**  **Catering Services Mobilisation**  Charmaine Denny introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation.  Cllr Nickinson felt that quarterly reporting for a business that is new and seasonal was not acceptable and would be asking for figures on a monthly basis, which he felt should be made public.  Cllr Wakeling responded that the Catering Mobilisation Group receives weekly figures, and the long-term aim is for reporting to take place on the same frequency as other WTC services. This Committee will be able to monitor the finances as the overseeing Committee. He added that the Council wants to be transparent but wants to ensure that it does not compromise the ability to tender out on other concessions or divulge information about how much individual staff are paid.  Tony Hurley confirmed that WTC has applied for “Good to Go” accreditation for the prom café and the Beach café when it opens.  Cllr Nickinson was invited to join the Catering Mobilisation Group, which he accepted. Charmaine Denny will send Cllr Nickinson a formal invitation to the next meeting.  Cllr Hope, attending as a member of the public, felt that the public view is changing and that many are in support of the WTC cafés. He has seen a question online asking whether anything is being done to try and improve the appearance of the prom café.  Charmaine Denny responded that Officers are looking at improving signage as the area needs more animation. From 12th April, tables and chairs will be placed outside the café and Officers are working with the Parks and Open Spaces Department with regards to introducing some planting at the front. However, she would be grateful to receive any other ideas via email.  **Full Asset Review Update**  Cllr Nickinson provided a verbal update as detailed in the agenda documentation.  **Income Generation Update**  Cllr Taylor provided a verbal update regarding the Income Generation Working, Group and said that Councillors and staff who have income generation ideas is asked to bring them forward.  The Income Generation Group is currently investigating the use of digital screens for advertising, and meetings will be held with advertisers who use digital screens in the next couple of weeks to discuss how they can be used to maximise income. The group is also exploring sponsorship opportunities and has asked Tara Williams to explore the opportunity of holding weddings in Sandsfoot Gardens. There are also opportunities around memorialisation. There are plenty of opportunities out there but it is about identifying which are likely to be the most beneficial.  Tony Hurley reported that the static advertising drums do not generate enough income and he thinks a lot of people have moved away from static posters. However, in the short-term the advertising drums can be used for alternative messaging for community groups. Officers are currently working with the Nothe Fort and other tourist attractions.  Ian Milne added that the income budget for the year is £25k. However, no income has been received for the advertising drums this year as the organisations who usually use them were not prepared to during the pandemic.  A proposal regarding use of digital screens will come back to Full Council at the appropriate time.  **Actions from last meeting:**  Cllr Gray provided an update regarding his actions from previous meetings.  **Forward Plan**  Cllr Gray requested that the Finance and Governance Sub working group dates being be added to the Forward Plan once proposed.  Cllr Hamilton requested clarification regarding how purdah restrictions apply to Council meetings.  Jane Biscombe responded that Council meetings can still go ahead. Purdah is the pre-election period which limits what Councils can do in the run up to elections. Councils cannot do anything during this period which could be construed as electioneering.  **Bincleaves Coastguard Station**  Charmaine Denny introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation.  Members felt that the meeting should continue in confidential session in order to discuss sensitive financial information as well as the final item on the agenda.  **Exclusion of the Press and Public**  Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Harris Seconder: Cllr Gray  Members voted unanimously in favour of excluding the public and press.  **Bincleaves Coastguard Station:**  Members discussed the item as detailed in the agenda documentation as well as the sensitive financial information.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Barrow Seconder: Cllr Nickinson  Members voted by a majority of 10 in favour, with 2 abstentions, to:  a) approve the issuing of a sub-licence to the Maritime & Coastguard Agency for a twelve-month period for the installation of telecommunications equipment at the Coastguard Station at Bincleaves as set out in Confidential Appendix D;  b) agree that the sub-licence to the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) requires a one-off payment to the Town Council equivalent to 50% of any income received by the MCA for the installation of the telecommunications equipment;  c) delegate authority to the Town Clerk to agree and issue the sub-licence.  **Tenant Support Update**  Ian Milne introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation and confidential appendix.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Northam Seconder: Cllr Wakeling  Members voted unanimously in favour of agreeing the actions contained within the report.  The meeting closed at 8.52 pm |