

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE 11th June 2013

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present : The Right Worshipful the Mayor and Councillors, Tawn (Chairman), Michael, Kenyon, Chappell and Oliver.

Non-Member attending : Councillor Boulter

Officers Attending: Lesley Bruton, Finance Officer; Olena Barrett, Information and Administration Officer

F2013/14.11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Hempton-Smith, Toon and Vaughan-Powell

F2013/14.12 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

None

F2013/14.13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

F2013/14.14 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 16th APRIL 2013

It was then proposed Councillor Kenyon, seconded Councillor Chappell and

Resolved

that the minutes of the meeting of the 16th April 2013 be agreed as an accurate record and signed accordingly by the Chairman.

F2013/14.15 ANNUAL RETURN AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2012/2013

The Annual Return and Statement of the Accounts 2012/2013 were presented and in answer to questions it was explained that:

- a. The Finance Officer confirmed that the use of the Council's budget could be improved in the areas where under spends occur; particularly in the City Plan budget where more projects need to be brought forward and the allocated budget used to fund City Plan objectives.
- b. In answer to a question regarding the level of allocated City Plan budget spent in each Ward, the Finance Officer explained that with the start of the new financial year the balance of each Ward will start afresh. The Chairman added that the issue of the updated balance for each Ward is more within the remit of the Community Development Committee and should be raised there.

- c. In answer to a question whether the City Plan budget could be used to fund projects in conjunction with other sponsors, it was explained that any project can be brought forward for the Council's attention. Councillor Chappell was advised to discuss with the Town Clerk the issue of City Council jointly funding a project.
- d. In answer to Councillor Oliver's question the Finance Officer confirmed that the invoice for benches, which Community Development Committee had agreed to finance, had not been received by the end of last financial year. There was no further information regarding this issue to date.
- e. In answer to Councillor Oliver's question regarding the funding the City Council provided for the Three Choirs festival and the inspection of their accounts, the Finance Officer confirmed that this had not been done; however, it is a valid point and should be considered in the future.
- f. Answering Councillor Oliver's question regarding the increased bank balance, budget under spends and what affect it has on the precept the Finance Officer and Chairman explained that this issue should be raised during the budget setting process. To Councillor Edward's suggestion that discussions about budget should be started in late summer, rather than in September, the Finance Officer explained that, although a budget could be set the Council could not determine what effect it would have on the Council Tax Band D due to the delay in receiving the taxbase from Herefordshire Council.

The Finance Officer added that the internal audit had now been completed and the Annual Return signed by the Internal Auditor.

It was then proposed by Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously

Resolved:

that the Committee approves the 'Annual Return and Statement of Accounts 2012/2013' and congratulate the Finance Officer on the clarity of the report.

F2013/14.16 SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Finance Officer presented a schedule of items paid since the last meeting of the Committee. Councillor Oliver queried the City Council's payment to the CCTV system and whether other sponsors continue to contribute. It was explained that we have not been officially informed yet.

There being no further questions the schedule was noted.

F2013/14.17 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

→ Loans Policy – in the light of recent decision of Community Development Committee to award a loan instead of a grant, and in anticipation of loan requests being more frequent in the future, to consider a loans policy.

→ The committee to consider whether a donation is made to mark the retirement of the Bishop of Hereford.

→ The Finance Officer reported a request from Councillor Vaughan-Powell for the Committee to consider the Council's position on the Red Cross Village Wardens scheme, which is currently being reviewed by Herefordshire Council. The Chairman proposed that this issue is presented to the Town Clerk to decide whether to bring it on the next meeting Agenda.

→ Cllr Oliver proposed that the Council should consider that the City Artefacts be on permanent display for the benefit of the City residents and visitors, as this is done by other historic Cities.

F2013/14.18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16th July 2013 at 6pm, unless meetings' beginning time is altered at the next Council meeting of 25th June 2013.