



**Minutes of a Town Business Committee
held on Monday 21st October 2019 at 7.00pm
in the Town Hall, High Street, Stonehouse**

Present: Councillors: Neil Gibbs Chairman, Leigh Binns, Mike Davis, John Parker, Sally Pickering, Theresa Watt

In Attendance: Cllr. Carol Kambites, two residents (part of meeting), Michael Lamerton (part), Richard Lacey, Project Manager (Relocation), Rachel Russell, Deputy Clerk.

Presentation

Michael Lamerton of IDEEA gave a brief presentation on the Solar Streets Project, including information on how IDEEA's work is organised and guaranteed and the economies of scale achieved by using a delivery model developed with Frome Town Council.

B/44 To receive apologies

Apologies were accepted from Cllr. Swain

B/45 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest

B/49 To consider the following grant applications:

The Chair moved the item forward in consideration of residents who were in attendance.
In relation to 2019/20

a) SHIPS - £499

A member of SHIPs advised that they had commissioned a Red Book valuation of the Ship Inn site based on restricted use and were seeking a contribution towards the cost.

A decision on the application was deferred as Stonehouse Town Council is likely to be commissioning a valuation on the same site.

Two residents left the meeting.

b) The Shrubberies School - £300

Deputy Clerk advised that the Shrubberies School PTA had sent a letter but had been asked to return a grant application. Councillors requested that the PTA be sent information regarding Stonehouse School Trustees.

c) Neighbourhood Warden Service (Stroud District Council) -£250

It was agreed to pay the contribution of £250 for 2019/20. Councillors requested that further information is sought on the service provided in Stonehouse as they would like to consider providing further support for this service.

For inclusion in 2020/21 budget:

d) St Cyr's Church- £2,000

The Deputy Clerk advised that the application was for a contribution to churchyard maintenance from the PCC. Councillors asked that before a decision is made on the application, representatives of the PCC are invited to provide information about the annual programme of churchyard maintenance work and consideration is given to the Town Council offering help in kind, subject to consultation with the Maintenance Manager.

B/52 To note progress regarding lease of temporary High Street premises due to co-location of Town Council and GCC Libraries at Town Hall.

The Chair moved the item forward in consideration of the Project Manager who was in attendance.

Richard Lacey, Project Manager, reported that a different solicitor from Taynton's was now advising on the lease with GCC Libraries and had raised significant issues with some clauses. A revised lease was being prepared. The lease of temporary premises was set to start on 1st November to allow for preparation of the office; the terms of the temporary lease are acceptable. Both leases will be considered at an Extraordinary meeting of the Town Council on 29 October 2019. The Project Manager was thanked for his hard work.

The Project Manager left the meeting.

B/46 To approve the minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 16th September 2019

Cllr. Davis advised that he had been present at the Town Business Committee meeting of 16th September 2019. Subject to this amendment, the minutes were unanimously **agreed as a true record of the meeting.**

B/47 To note Conclusion of External Audit and late publication of notice of conclusion of audit

It was noted that The Conclusion of External Audit Report and Certificate for 2018/19 had been received and there were no matters to give cause for concern. The Deputy Clerk advised that due to the notice being sent to a temporary e-mail address and staff changes, it had been published by the Town Council on 14th October, after the statutory deadline.

The Committee joined the Deputy Clerk in thanking our former locum RFO for her work on the end of year accounts and annual return. The Committee thanked the Communications and Customer Services Office and Deputy Clerk for assisting the Locum RFO.

Cllr. Parker left the meeting.

B/48 To receive a report on review of the bank mandate and the Locum RFO's Completion report and consider recommendations regarding: revision to Financial Regulations, setting up three user Payment Controls for on line banking, payments list, approval of payments, RFO reports and use of an Action Plan.

The report on review of the bank mandate and the Locum RFO's Completion report was received. The following recommendations were **unanimously recommended for Resolution by the Council.**

That the revision of Financial Regulations in line with recent NALC guidelines includes the removal of the requirement for a countersignature from the Clerk or other officer on cheques.

That the Town Business Committee recommend to full Town Council to set up three user Payment Controls for on line banking as follows:

One User who is a Full Access Delegate User, the RFO or Deputy Clerk, creates a payment instruction. They are designated a “Creator” who can only create payment instructions.

Two Full Access Account Signatory Users who are Council Members must also authorise the same payment instruction.

Recommendations from Locum RFO:

a) that a list of all regular payments is compiled and presented to the next meeting of the Town Business Committee.

b) That all payments are ‘Approved’ at the Full Town Council meeting; list to comprise payments ready to be made for approval and a list of payments that have been paid since the last meeting for ratification.

c) That the monthly RFO reports are published on the website.

d) That an Action Plan is established to assist with planning and monitoring the Council’s work and budget setting; Action Plan to include reference to meeting requirements of Town Council’s Climate Change objectives.

B/50 To consider items for inclusion in Town Business Committee budget for 2020/21

Councillors suggested that there be more flexibility in the budget, that the grants budget is increased and that a heading for Climate Action grants is added.

Cllr. Pickering advised that the Climate Action Plan should be referred to when setting the budget.

B/51 To consider proposal to spend Mayor’s budget on branded clothing, a flag and tablecloths for Stonehouse in Bloom 2020.

All agreed that the proposal was acceptable. Cllr. Gibbs advised that the idea came from seeing the Nailsworth in Bloom team in branded uniform.

B/53 To note that planning application for Oldends Lane Pavilion extension and housing development due to be determined by 31 October 2019.

The information was noted. The Deputy Clerk advised that the Town Clerk was meeting with the architect on 25 October 2019.

B/54 To consider further proposals for PROW diversion at Oldends Lane from R Hitchins

The proposal from R Hitchins to divert the footpath behind the hedge in front of Magpies and then on to the verge was not accepted as it would not be compatible with the current planning application for the Pavilion and housing and directed walkers on to the edge of the road. It was agreed unanimously to ask Robert Hitchins for a site meeting to discuss options for avoiding crossing the road twice during the footpath diversion.

B/55 To consider feasibility of the repair of the three open play shelters located in Meadow Park playing field

A report on this matter from the Town Clerk was noted and the recommendation to remove the play equipment at a cost of £300 plus vat was accepted, with all in favour.

B/56 To receive reports from Working Groups: Youth 4 October 2019, Events 7 October 2019, Climate Action Group, progress on Action Plan at 10 October 2019

The above reports were received. Cllr Pickering requested that a proposal to proceed with a Solar Streets project delivered by IDEEA is considered at the next Town Council meeting and advised that quotes for energy supply from suppliers using renewable energy

quotes need to be sought now, as the first of electricity contract ends on Dec 31st so notice must be given by Nov 30th.

B/57 Date of next meeting: 18th November 2019

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.