

# **HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Minutes of a Meeting of the above-named Committee held at the Town Council Offices,  
Albert Road, Horley on Tuesday 26 November 2019, at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Cllrs J Baird  
M George  
H Kitajewski – Chairman  
Samantha Marshall  
Simon Marshall  
M Saunders

**In attendance:** J Walsh – Town Clerk  
J Morgan – RFO  
A Jones - Consultant

### **F 4486 Apologies and Reasons for Absence**

***RESOLVED: that the apologies of Cllrs Kitajewski, Kumar, Marr, Philips and Powell be accepted, for reasons as specified in the Attendance Register.***

### **F 4487 Approval of Minutes**

**Finance & General Purposes Committee, 1 October 2019**

***RESOLVED: that the minutes of the above meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, including all confidential items, be approved.***

### **Finance Updates**

### **F 4488 F 4463 - Defibrillator Donation**

The Town Clerk reported that following agreement with the donator's representative, contact had been made with the landlord of 'The Bull' Public House who had responded favourably to enquiries about whether the proprietor would be amenable to having the defibrillator placed on an external wall of this establishment and providing an electrical supply. The Council was seeking advice about getting an appropriate legal agreement in place. The Council would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the device. A further update would be provided at the next Committee meeting.

***RESOLVED: noted.***

### **F 4489 F 4478 - RBBC Local Fund Survey; Outcomes for Horley**

The Clerk advised that there had been a relatively low response from Horley residents to the survey asking for views for improving local facilities through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The suggestions provided had been ranked from high to low in a bar chart (displayed to Members), in the following priority order:

- Medical and GP centre expansion and improvement
- Outdoor activity equipment in parks and sports facilities
- Green Space improvements
- Community Buildings
- Cycle and Pedestrian Routes
- F 4489) ➤ Road Safety Measures, traffic calming, dropped kerbs, safety signs**
- Street Furniture and Public Realm Improvements
- Flood prevention or reduction measures

- Public and Community Transport
- Affordable and Social Housing

The Town Clerk added that the agreed use of the Town Council's current CIL fund would be to refurbish the Tennis Courts at Horley Recreation Ground, which was in line with the second highest priority identified in the survey.

**RESOLVED: Noted.**

**F 4490      Audit Matters**

**RESOLVED: that the Councillors' Audit Certificates for September and October 2019 and responses for the Clerk/RFO, where applicable, be noted. (A copy is appended).**

**F 4491      Internal Audit 2019/20 – First Interim Report**

**RESOLVED: that the first Interim Report and responses from the Clerk/RFO, where applicable, be noted. (A copy is appended).**

**F 4492      RESOLVED: that in line with Paul Hartley's final year as the Town Council's internal auditor, the requirement to source a replacement through the Surrey ALC recommended list of auditors, be actioned by the Clerk.**

**Financial Matters**

**F 4493      Financial Reports for September 2019**

**RESOLVED: that the following reports, as appended to these minutes, be approved:**

- i) Bank Reconciliations**
- ii) Receipts List totalling £214,780.75 plus VAT (£214,924.75) – includes receipt of the second half of the precept and S106 agreement payments totalling £205,233.**
- iii) Payments List totalling £68,932.46 plus VAT (£70,745.02<sup>1</sup>)- includes a payment of £44,196.00 including VAT to Newlyn towards the Café Pavilion Building Works.**

**F 4494      Financial Reports for October 2019**

**RESOLVED: that the following reports, as appended to these minutes, be approved:**

- i) Bank Reconciliations**
- ii) Receipts List totalling £2,815.66 plus VAT (3048.66)**
- iii) Payments List totalling £99,012.32 plus VAT (£100,649.40<sup>1</sup>) – includes payment of £74,823.50 including VAT to Newlyn towards the Café Pavilion Building Works.**
- iv) Summary of Receipts and Payments compared with Estimates.**

**F 4495      Communications**

The Finance Chairman updated members on the meeting of the Communications Sub-Committee, which was held earlier in the evening. (The minutes of the Communications Sub-Committee meeting are appended.)

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<sup>1</sup> VAT on the Café build is not included as the majority may not be reclaimed and this will be subject to an adjustment at the end of the financial year.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**F 4496 Surrey Association of Local Councils (Surrey ALC), Sussex & Surrey Associations of Local Councils (SSALC) & National Association of Local Councils (NALC)**

**Surrey ALC AGM, 15 October 2019**

The AGM was attended by Cllrs George and Baird. Cllr George gave an overview of the various presentations and key points from the AGM. Topics covered included; Surrey Police Update, Surrey Hills review on decluttering road signage, a presentation encouraging Councils to become dementia friendly (by SSALC Vice-President, Richard Olliver), a briefing on support for military veterans and an update from Surrey County Council regarding recycling and trees. He added that attendance at the AGM was a valuable experience which was helpful in keeping Members up to date with new best practice.

**RESOLVED: noted**

**F 4497 RESOLVED: noted that the Town Council's next annual SSALC subscription will be £1750 and the next annual NALC subscription will be £1371.02.**

**F 4498 Notice of Vacancy - Office of Town Councillor**

**RESOLVED: noted that a Notice of Poll has been published for the Town Councillor vacancy in the Horley West Ward, the poll to be held on the same day as the General Election (Thursday, 12 December); and that two nominations have been received.**

**F 4499 Café Construction and External Works, Horley Recreation Ground**

The Clerk provided the following update on the Café project:

- The framework was complete, the plastering was underway and the windows/doors were about to be installed.
- There were some delays arising from recent heavy rainfall and utility issues (since resolved) but it was anticipated that the Council would take vacant possession in January 2020.
- The insurance arrangements for the development were in hand and the Heads of Terms were being considered for the Café Operator Lease.
- The new name and address for the building had been confirmed as: 'Cafe In The Park', 65 Brighton Road, Horley. The post code would be confirmed by Royal Mail shortly.
- Subject to planning approval, it had been supported by the Café Working Group to reposition the car park with a minor revision which was thought to be more beneficial. There would be 11 extra spaces including 2 disabled spaces. Although this would result in 2 less extra spaces than the previous proposal, it would provide better access and would have less impact on the park. Members queried whether there might be a loss of spaces in the original car park to provide emergency access and this would be followed up with the surveyor for clarification.

**F 4499) Consultant Alan Jones added that there was currently a surplus of £20,000 in the Café project budget but there may be additional works required by the Council, before final completion was reached.**

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**F 4500 RESOLVED: that the expenditure for the electrical infrastructure required for**

*the integral Café area, in the approximate sum of £1,000 plus VAT, be ratified.*

**F 4501**      ***RESOLVED: that the expenditure for the ventilation system required for the integral Café area, in the approximate sum of £10,532 (inclusive of VAT,) be approved.***

**F 4502**      Consultant Alan Jones added that recommendations about the VAT position on the Café build had now been received from the VAT specialist. Some elements, provided for use of the Recreation Ground, such as the footpath and car park extension, were likely to allow for a partial reclaim and would be invoiced separately by the building contractor to allow for clarity and transparency in the accounts. The building and anything internal to the Café building was unlikely to be recoverable as there is an annual limit on the amount the Council may claim back in this way and the Council already uses much of this limit.

***RESOLVED: that receipt of a preliminary Evaluation Report and professional advice from the appointed VAT Specialist for a partial VAT Reclaim on the construction, be noted.***

**F 4503**      **RBL Remembrance Services Programme 2019**

The Town Clerk reported that there had been another impressive turnout to the Remembrance Sunday Parade & Service. The weather was dry and sunny. The PA system, sourced from an external company, provided a noticeable improvement to the audible output during the service, than in previous years. The Rededication of the Garden of Remembrance and the National Two-Minute Silence in the High Street Precinct had also been well attended. The RBL Branch Secretary, Tony Keay, and Peter Moxley of Horley Lions had expressed their gratitude to the Town Council and other volunteers who had helped and marshalled at the events. A Press Release, reporting on the annual programme for Horley, had been issued on the [HTC website](#) and eNewsletter.

***RESOLVED: noted.***

**F 4504**      **Horley Edmonds Fund**

The Town Clerk informed Members that the deadline for the next round of applications for consideration by the Community Foundation of Surrey (CFS) is 17 January 2019 and any interested organisation would need to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) by 31 December 2019. Details were available to view on the HTC website and Newsletter.

***RESOLVED: noted.***

**F 4505**      ***RESOLVED: that the receipt of Horley Edmonds Fund Quarterly Statement, for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019, be noted.***

**F 4506**      **Proposal to change Accounting Software Package Provider**

The RFO gave an overview of the proposal. Key points were that:

- the package is more suited to a Council of this size
- the accounts are integrated with the sales invoices which is more efficient
- the reports would be equally clear
- access to the historic SCRIBE accounts would be maintained
- RBS recommend changing over in June.
- first year costs have been quoted at £1616 and £873 for the accounting

and invoicing packages, £399 per day for the training (two days recommended) and the cost of running the current SCRIBE package alongside; the ongoing cost of the packages including Making Tax Digital would be £869 for five licences which is approximately the same as the cost of the current software.

***RESOLVED: agreed that the accounts be migrated from the SCRIBE package to the RBS package in June 2020.***

**F 4507                      Opportunity to Advertise at Horley Station**

The Clerk explained that Southern Railway had approached the Town Council with an advertising opportunity whereby an A4 sheet, promoting its business activities, could be placed on the notice board at Horley Station. The promotional cost for one year would be £650 + VAT. The matter had been considered by the Communications Sub-Committee, at its earlier meeting. It was thought that it would not be in the Council's best interests to pursue and that other more cost-saving avenues (through online and social media channels, including the eNewsletter) should be considered in the first instance. The Finance Committee supported the recommendation to decline the advertising offer and the Southern Railway representative would be notified accordingly.

***RESOLVED: that the Southern Railway representative be informed of the Town Council's decision to decline the promotional advertising offer, in the sum of £650 plus VAT, at Horley Railway Station.***

**F 4508                      Utility Contracts Renewal**

The RFO reported that three contracts had been renewed for gas and electricity at Innes Pavilion and gas at the HTC Offices. In seeking best value, the RFO consulted brokers plus several price comparison sites and the offer from the current provider (British Gas). The contracts had been renewed with British Gas based on a three-year fixed price contract at the best value available. The previous contracts had been at a fixed price for five years and, during this time, energy prices had increased. The new contracts were therefore significantly more expensive. These contracts were on the standard British Gas mix which, for electricity, comprises 43% from renewable sources.

***RESOLVED: noted.***

**F 4509                      Damaged Gate Pillar – Horley Recreation Ground**

The Town Clerk gave an update on repairs to the damaged gate pillar at Horley Recreation Ground and the insurance claim. Under the Council's Financial Regulations, three quotes had been received and the insurance claim had been submitted to the insurers, Royal & Sun Alliance. A further update would be provided at the next Committee meeting.

**F 4509)**

***RESOLVED: noted.***

**F 4510                      Health & Safety Audit - Innes Pavilion, Court Lodge**

***RESOLVED: that the expenditure for a replacement Fire Panel at the Innes Pavilion building and a 1-Year Fire Alarm Monitoring service, in the sum of £1043.40, be approved.***

**F 4511                      Maintenance and Refurbishment Works – HTC Offices, Albert Rooms**

**RESOLVED: that the following expenditure (in the total sum of £1627.52), be ratified:**

- **Work to the front gable end of the Council offices, in the sum of £605.85 plus VAT**
- **Replacement of the fire exit door at side of building as emergency evacuation route in the sum of £711.67 +VAT and**
- **The fitting of a new valve in toilets, in the sum of £310.00 plus VAT.**

**F 4512 Town Council Estimates & Precept 2020/2021**

Members considered draft Estimates & Precept for 2020/21, for recommendation to Full Council on 10 December 2019.

A brief overview of the figures was given by the RFO and the key points included:

- the number of households had increased by 349,
- CIL could not be treated as income,
- Double taxation grant of around £40,000 expires 31.3.24,
- Members Allowances have been added to the budget,
- A new earmarked fund for Edmonds Hall be opened with £5,000,
- A new earmarked fund for Grounds be opened with £10,000,
- An additional £10,000 to be added to the earmarked fund for Playgrounds,
- £25,000 had been used from General Reserves to bring the percentage increase down,
- The increase per Band D household amounted to £1.85 per year.

It was noted that all of the Town Council's assets needed to be protected which would require considerable ongoing maintenance. This would include the Council Offices, given the fact that the Edmonds Hall was built in 1903.

**RECOMMEND:**

- i) that the earmarked funds for Grounds, Playgrounds and Michael Crescent be amalgamated into one fund, named 'Parks and Playgrounds', with a total earmarked reserve of £48,360***
- ii) that, subject to any further updates being necessary, a Precept of £404,676 be set for the Financial Year 2020/2021, representing £39.71 per Band D Household, an increase of £1.85 per year (4.85% increase), be considered for approval at the Full Council Meeting, to be held on 10 December 2019.***

**F 4513 Diary Dates**

**RESOLVED: that upcoming events including the Town Centre Carol Service & Councillors' Hospitality on 14 December and the Christmas Office Closure from lunchtime on Monday 23 December 2019 until the morning of Thursday 2 January 2020, be noted.**

**F 4514 Items for Future Consideration**

No matters were raised.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

Meeting closed at 8.55 pm

**Date of Next Meeting – 28 January 2020**