

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 06/11/2023

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Council Chambers, Claremont House, High Street Lydney on Monday 6th November 2023 at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Councillors R Holmes (Chair), S Holmes, C Harris (Vice Chair), P Johns and T Saunders

Also in Attendance: M Greenfield - Town Clerk
L Bendall - Assistant Clerk (Minute Taker)
There were no members of the public present

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received, all councillors were present.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Saunders declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item Number 5(i) Lydney Town Hall Trust

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Following a proposal from Councillor Harris, Seconded by Councillor Saunders, the Committee RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19th June 2023 were a true and correct record– Unanimously Approved

4. **FINANCIAL MATTERS/RFO REPORT**

(i) **To consider the Draft Finance & Scrutiny Budget for the Financial Year 2024/25**

To receive and consider the Draft Financial & Scrutiny Budget for the financial year 2024/25. Committee members were presented with a new spreadsheet showing in-depth details on current and proposed budget for 2024/25.

Comments made and noted:

- Clerk is awaiting further information to ensure corporate costs are accurate
- Councils are to have a minimum of 3 months operating costs within their Earmarked and General Reserves, although good practice is for between 3-6 months operational costs.
- To maintain a realistic budget and to keep up with rising costs the Council would need to increase their precept, proposed budget would be taken to Full Council meeting for further review.

Councillors thanked the Town Clerk on the new budget layout and for the work done in creating it; it was noted that it was an excellent working document which will benefit councillors in understanding all aspects of council budgets.

(ii) **Financial Reports: Bank Statements**

To note Bank Statements for September 2023 and October 2023 – noted.

(iii) **Direct Debit Card Report**

To note the Direct Debit card was not used for October 2023 – noted.

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(iv) **Public Work Loan**

To note the Public Work Loan Statement from July 2019 – the loan is due to expire on 31.03.2024 - noted.

5. **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

To consider and decide on the following grant applications received:

The Committee was requested to consider nine applications for a grant, these had all been circulated along with a copy of the Council's Grants Policy Guidance Sheet.

Cllr Saunders left the meeting at 18.33pm

(i) **Lydney Town Hall Trust**

To provide a contribution towards replacement of electrical wiring and motherboard. Requested £1,000

Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr R Holmes that the grant not be accepted. Agreed majority decision.

Cllr Saunders rejoined the meeting at 18.37pm.

(ii) **Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA)**

To provide a contribution towards kit for half the 2023 land trainees to enable them to work in all weathers. Requested £1,000

Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr R Holmes that the grant not be accepted. Agreed unanimous decision.

(iii) **Victoria Centre**

To provide a contribution towards refurbishment of the toilet facilities within the Centre to bring the toilets in line with all Disability Access and needs.

Requested £1,000

Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr Harris that £500 be awarded, Seconded by Cllr Johns.

Agreed majority decision.

(iv) **The Forest Bee**

To provide a contribution towards replacing website to allow small businesses to connect with a wider audience within the Forest of Dean to allow companies to benefit from wider/more opportunities.

Requested £500

Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr R Holmes that the grant not be accepted. Agreed unanimous decision.

(v) **Bambino Baby Group**

To provide funds to start a baby and toddler group in Lydney that offers both general play but also sensory and messy play.

Requested £1,000

Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr Saunders that the grant not be accepted, Seconded by Cllr Harris.

Agreed unanimous decision.

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- (vi) **Great Western Air Ambulance Charity**
To provide a contribution towards potentially life-saving mission. In 2022 GWAAC attended 14 callouts to Lydney itself and 92 across the Forest of Dean.
Requested £1,000
Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr R Holmes that the grant not be accepted.
Agreed unanimous decision.
- (vii) **Lydney Cricket Club**
To provide a contribution towards developing and expansion of the Junior Cricket Academy for boys and girls to experience the physical and social benefits of playing team sports.
Requested £1,000
Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr Harris that the grant not be accepted,
Seconded by Cllr Saunders.
Agreed unanimous decision.
- (viii) **Lydney Dial a Ride**
To provide a contribution towards recruitment, training and reward strategy for 5 new Trustee volunteers to improve the effectiveness of the Charity.
Requested £1,000
Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr R Holmes that the grant not be accepted.
Agreed unanimous decision.
- (ix) **Viney St. Swithins Football Club**
To provide costs towards a Drag Mat to support the restoration and recovery of playing surface and sand to assist drainage.
Requested £1,000
Decision: Resolved Proposed by Cllr Saunders that the grant not be accepted,
Seconded by Cllr Johns.
Agreed unanimous decision.
6. **COUNCILLORS REPORTS**
Cllr S Holmes reported that following the recent Grant Application's received, councillors would like to review the Grants Policy prior to next tranche of applications in February 2024.
- 19.22pm Cllr S Holmes left the meeting
The Chairman suspended the meeting.
19.24pm Cllr S Holmes rejoined the meeting.
The Chairman resumed the meeting.
7. **CORRESPONDENCE**
Letter from Lydney Community Centre regarding Grant Refusal – noted.
Local Government Pay Award 2023/2024 – noted
8. **FUTURE BUSINESS**
Grant Policy to be added to Council Meeting Agenda in December for update and review.

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9. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Monday 26th February 2024 to be held at the Council Chambers
The meeting closed at 7.29pm

Chair 

Date ...20/2/24.....