

## SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

### Finance & General Purpose Committee Held at Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury At 6.00pm on Monday 15 July 2019

#### PRESENT

Councillors A Mosley (Chairman), P Adams, H Fraser, I Jones, Mrs P Moseley, A Phillips & D Vasmer.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Operations Manager), Andy Watkin (Responsible Financial Officer) and Carol Pullen (Acting Committee Clerk, 3 members of the public.

#### APOLOGIES

None

#### 15/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Twin-Hatters	All twin-hatted Councillors declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Shropshire Council.
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#### 16/19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 3 June 2019 were submitted and circulated as read.

#### RESOLVED:

**That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 3 June 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.**

#### 17/19 MATTERS ARISING

##### 3.19 Ref: Min: 3.1 Future of High Street Fund

Councillor Mosley reported that Shrewsbury had been unsuccessful in its bid to the Future High Street Fund.

##### 10.19 Quarry Pool

The Operations Manager had attended a recent meeting with Shropshire Council and Energize and had been introduced to Katie Foster from Team Leisure who will

be undertaking a feasibility study to develop outputs in relation to the Quarry Pool complex.

A meeting was planned with other stakeholders to ascertain initiatives and aspirations towards the development of a leisure quarter with a view to developing a plan by September to be put forward to Sport England. The feasibility study is a requirement before any external funding can be considered.

The Town Clerk had met with Team Leisure earlier in the day to set out the Town Council's position in the process.

## **18/19 PAYMENTS**

Prior to the meeting, the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) circulated the Schedule of Payments for the period 1 June 2019 – 30 June 2019. No comments or concerns were raised.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

**That the schedule of payments passed for payment for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 May 2019 be approved.**

## **19/19 QUARTER 1 ACCOUNTS**

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) presented the statement of accounts for the first quarter of the 2019/20 financial year and the year to date position.

When comparing the income and expenditure to the budget, there was an overall positive variance of £366,913. Expenditure was a negative variance of £58,370. There were small positive and negative variances due to timing issues of spending budgets, the overspend was due to play equipment, LED lighting and machinery, all of which is covered by earmarked or S106 reserves. There was also a negative rates variance of £4,735 due to budgeting reduced rates for the Markets but subsequently not being available to local authorities. There was a positive wage variance due to the crematorium contract not being renewed but offset against income not being received, on the income side.

Income was a positive of £428,283 due to Neighbourhood Fund, S106 and a Youth grant but reduced due to the loss of the Crematorium Contract.

When comparing the first quarter to the same period in 2018/19 there was an overall positive variance of £61,440.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

**That the Statement of Accounts for period ending 30 June 2019 be noted and accepted.**

## **20/19 INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The Internal Auditor's report had been completed and presented to Full Council on 24 June. There were no areas of concern.

**RESOLVED: That the RFO's update be noted.**

## **21/19 GRANT APPLICATIONS**

### **(i) Community Grant Fund**

#### **a) Community Grant Fund**

The Responsible Finance Officer circulated a report tabling Community Grants awarded in the financial years from 2014/15 to date.

#### **b) Councillor Grant Fund**

The Responsible Finance Officer circulated a report tabling Councillor Grants awarded in the financial years from 2014/15 to date.

It was noted that any unspent grant was only rolled over for one financial year; after which it reverted to the Community Grant Fund.

Councillor Jones asked if members could be provided with a table showing how much was left in each Councillor pot and how much had been carried over.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Community Grant Fund & Councillor Grant Fund Reports be noted.**
- (ii) That Members be provided with details of how much they had spent and how much had been carried over.**

### **(ii) Community Grant Applications – Inspire Support CIC**

There was one grant application to be considered from Inspire Support CIC.

The meeting was attended by Christie Martin and her Business Advisor. Inspire Support CIC is a new community enterprise, which will offer support for people with mental health and wellbeing issues, offering holistic and art therapies as an alternative to medication.

Inspire Support CIC were seeking a grant of £1,800 towards running workshops for people with mental health issues to consult about the support that would benefit them and towards developing a programme of workshops to be delivered by professionals to meet those identified needs.

It was intended to seek other funding through donations, crowdfunding, sponsorship to make up any shortfall.

Members recognised that this could be a valuable service but had some concerns about sustainability. They recommended a business model be developed and progress be evidenced. Therefore they would be happy to give a £500 contribution to enable the venture to get up and running and in the future once a business plan and a client base had been established, the applicant could re-apply if she so wished.

**RESOLVED:**

**That £500 be awarded to Inspire Support CIC**

*The grant applicant, her Business Advisor & one member of the public left the meeting whilst the application was considered and returned to hear the Committee's decision. The grant applicant and her Business Advisor then left the meeting.*

**22/19 REVISION OF FEES & CHARGES**

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the fees and charges in relation to specialist fishing at Oxon & Emstrey. Within the fees and charges the Town fisheries fee was set at £55 per year but Oxon is a specialist pool being developed as a Carp Fishery and has an annual fee of £125 per year plus a peg rate per day charge of £20. Emstrey is a much more rural environment and attracts a different type of angler for a flat fee of £40 per year.

The income from both Oxon & Emstrey will be accounted for in the Town Fisheries account but kept separately for ease of reporting back to Shropshire Council.

Councillor Mrs Moseley requested that a presentation on fishing be requested to a future Recreation & Leisure meeting to learn more about the different aspects of fishing in Shrewsbury.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (i) That the update be noted**
- (ii) That fees be set at £125 per annum with a £20 day rate for Oxon and £40 per annum set fee for Emstrey.**
- (iii) That a presentation be made to a future meeting of Recreation & Leisure Committee to present on Fisheries.**

**23/19 JEUX SANS FRONTIER CHARITY & ACCOUNT**

The Responsible Finance Officer gave members the background in the Jeux Sans Frontier Charity. The Jeux Sans Frontieres Trust was set up in 1973 following the success of Shrewsbury in 'It's a Knock-out'. The prize money was put in trust and held by the corporation of Shrewsbury to pay each year all reasonable and necessary expenses of one boy and one girl in attending either a course at the outward bound school at Aberdovey or such other places as such a school may be established or a voyage on one of the schooners of the sail training association.

The area of benefit was Shrewsbury and Atcham and the sum of £2,000 pounds invested with bonds yielding 8.5% in the first year generating £118.67 enabling £90.05 to be spent at the Outward Bound Sea School Ltd.

Over the years, inflation in the course costs and a decreased rate of return meant the last beneficiary was in 2012 where the cost for a tall ships trip was £480.50.

The current balances of Capital and accumulated revenue are £2,756.98.

The trust is administered by Shrewsbury Town Council, which also provides trustees, (current trustees are Councillor Nutting and the Town Clerk) and the treasurer roles but since the passing of Stuart Lister, there are no other trustees.

There appears to be no trust document, a letter from Stuart Lister dated 10th November 1972 states:

‘The object of the trust out of the income of the trust fund with power if necessary to resort to capital to send a boy and girl each year on an outward bound Course or on the sailing ships The Winston Churchill or Malcolm Miller’.

This statement allows the capital to be spent and not be treated as a permanent endowment, which would have limited the options available and meant finding a similar charity to transfer the permanent endowment difficult.

The process of closing a charity is straightforward but the remaining assets in the bank need to be distributed, either by using all its remaining assets on its purposes, or giving its remaining assets to another charity with similar purposes.

Members discussed the possible options and were in favour of tying in with Young Shrewsbury to enable several youngsters to attend an appropriate Outward Bound Course or similar.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Responsible Finance Officer’s report be noted.**
- (ii) That the Charity be wound up.**
- (iii) That Young Shrewsbury identify any suitable activities to use the proceeds in accordance with the existing aims of the charity.**

## **24/19 SHREWSBURY TWINNING COMMITTEE ACCOUNTS**

Following the decision by Zutphen Council to end their twinning with Shrewsbury, the Town Clerk reported to members that just under £2000 remains in the account, which had been kept for twinning activities. She now sought members agreement to wind up the account and transfer the funds into the Town Council accounts. It was agreed that this money should be placed in the budget for Community Grants.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the twinning account be closed and the remaining twinning fund be transferred into the Community Grants budget.**

**25/19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

**(i) Carbon Footprint**

The Town Clerk updated members on the progress to date in working towards carbon neutrality by 2030. The Council was currently working with G Fleet, a specialist transport company and had provided them with fuel and mileage figures for the last three years.

To offset 300,000 kilos of carbon would require the planting of 15,000 trees, building a 500 kw turbine or enough pv to go on 350 houses.

It is proposed to look at each of the Town Council's assets individually to establish what level of carbon reduction could be achieved.

Reduction in tree mileage – tree whips, block planting.

It had been established that the Town Council on average generates 300,000 kgs of carbon a year; this equated to 37.5 domestic properties generating on average 8,000 kg of carbon a year.

It was reported that whilst some areas of Council work had seen reductions in energy usage, others had increased. One notable increase was the Splash Park; the nicer the weather the greater the use.

Discussions took place regarding improvements to vehicles. This was being investigated further but some types of vehicles hadn't yet a competitive option on the market.

Extinction Rebellion had now planted the former World War 1 bed in the Dingle, including the installation of a bottle greenhouse.

**(ii) Paperless Meetings**

Members again discussed progressing towards paperless meetings. They felt that there were occasions when printed documents were necessary, such as large tables or documents containing figures, but were happy for text based documents to be available online with an option for a paper copy to be provided if they so requested. They would leave to Officers discretion which documents be printed.

**RESOLVED:**

**(i) That Climate Emergency progress be noted**

- (ii) **That the Council progress towards paperless meetings at the discretion of Officers.**

## **26/19 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Capital Programme Report had been circulated prior to the meeting and the Town Clerk gave an update on current projects.

**Street Lights** – LED replacement was progressing well and to date only three complaints had been received, mainly about the brightness. This could be alleviated by putting a cover over to reduce glare.

**Radbrook Recreation Ground** – work had commenced to level the surface and improve drainage.

**Dana Footpath** – a mobilisation meeting was scheduled for the following week and the Operations Manager would report back to the next Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting on progress.

**Monkmoor Recreation Ground** – awaiting outcome of planning permission for the installation of a new all-weather pitch, fencing and lighting.

**Castle Walk** – no further progress.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the progress of the Capital Programme be noted.**

## **27/19 DITHERINGTON COMMUNITY CENTRE**

The Responsible Finance Officer presented the accounts for Ditherington Community Centre to 31 March 2019.

Ditherington Community Centre have had no management committee for the last eight years so the Town Council have been managing the accounts, with the Responsible Finance Officer and Town Clerk as signatories. Council may need to consider the future of the Community Centre.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the Statement of Accounts Ditherington Community Centre for year ending 30 March 2019 be noted and accepted.**

## **28/19 TOURISM**

- (i) **Town Ambassadors**

The Town Clerk updated members on the Shrewsbury Ambassadors. The Original Shrewsbury Ambassadors will provide visitors to Shrewsbury with a wide range of information, supplying their invaluable local knowledge to help enhance visitors' time in the town.

Shrewsbury BID were seeking £3,000 in funding to help cover the provision of uniforms, training, lunches, advertisement and Lead Ambassador salary costs; this would be jointly funded between the Shrewsbury BID, Shrewsbury Tourism Association and the Town Council.

This is initially an eight-week trial and Members considered £3,000 to be a substantial amount given the limited time of the trial. However, should it continue they would be happy to support.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Council contribute £3,000 from the Community Grant Fund towards the Shrewsbury Ambassadors providing it continues as a long term proposition.**

**(ii) Town Crier**

Members were asked to consider progressing with replacement robes for the Town Crier whose current robes are ten years old. Robes had been sought from Michaels Civic Robes at a cost of £3,000. The University and the Rotary Club had each agreed a contribution of £500 whilst the Tourism Association had pledged £750. It was hoped that the BID would contribute £750 also and the Town Council the remaining £750.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Clerk proceed with the purchase of replacement robes for the Town Crier from Michaels Civic Robes.**

## **29/19 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

**That Press & Public be excluded on the grounds that the consideration of the following items may involve the likely disclosure of confidential information (s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960).**

*One member of the public left the meeting*

## **30/19 CCTV**

The Town Clerk gave an update on the proposed budget cuts to CCTV provision. Partners are being sought to contribute to funding for the remainder of the current financial year. Shrewsbury Town Council have six cameras and members were asked to consider making a contribution.



**RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Council make a contribution of £16,000 for the period to end of March 2020.**