



CHIRK TOWN COUNCIL CYNGOR TREF Y WAUN

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER 2020 held virtually on-line over video /telephone conferencing

Present

Cllrs. Mr Brian Colley (BC) - Chairman,
Mr Terry Evans (TE),

Mr Gareth Baines (GB),
Mr Chris Burgoyne (CB),

Mrs Sarah Williams (SW),
Mr Frank Hemmings (FH),

Also in attendance:

Mrs Karen Brown (KB) - Clerk to the Council,
Mrs Rebecca Ap Gwyn (RAG) – Administration Officer

1. To Accept Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Mr Mark Roberts
Due to technical issues with Zoom, Cllrs Jackie Allen and Mark Holmes were unable to join.

2. To make Declarations of Interest on items on the agenda

None.

3. 2020/21 Quarter 1 & Quarter 2 Budget Reports and Reconciliation

The Clerk took members through the new Financial Reports and the Members agreed to note the Quarter 1 report but go through the detail of the Q2 summary of receipts and payments report.

• **Cemetery**

- Cemetery fees low for Q2, but should be better in Q3.
- Grass maintenance coding split between recreational grounds needs to be actioned.

• **Clerk**

- Salary underspend as this budget line includes the Admin Officer post which was vacant for first 6 months.
- Training/Professional Development – Members questioned if the current training budget was enough to meet the needs of the Clerk and Admin Officer. The Clerk confirmed it was satisfactory for this year.

• **Community Agent**

- The Clerk explained the annual adjustment needed as the Community Agent Grant is received in March for the following financial year.
- The Community Agent wages have exceed income due to additional hours being agreed by Council. The Members asked for a breakdown between contracted hours and additional hours and any reserves brought forward. The Clerk agreed to procedure a separate spreadsheet for the Community Agent Grant as a financial return is required by Wrexham Council and can adapt this. **Action:** Clerk to procedure separate Community Agent financial data for next meeting.

• **Council Administration**

- Bank interest income reduced due to falling rates. Members asked how often the interest rates are reviewed. The Clerk confirmed this is reviewed annually. **Action:** Clerk to undertake review.

- VAT in Scribe is recorded in a separate way and therefore is not shown as an expense as per our agreed budget.
- **Environment**
 - The Lengthsman post is currently vacant and therefore is an underspend. Members discussed the role and felt we had to be careful not to duplicate Wrexham Council duties. If any similar job descriptions are around to forward to the Clerk. Members considered offering some ours to the current caretakers if they wanted additional hours. Concern was raised about working alongside the highway. **Action:** TE agreed to get advice from Wrexham Council on H&S guidance on working on the highway. Members felt that the Council should support the current staff first, only if they were willing. SW reminded Members of the age of the caretakers and that they may not want additional hours.
- **Parish Hall**
 - The Clerk highlighted the £1,790 room hire income related to outstanding invoices from last financial year received in 20/21. There was no Parish Hall income in the first six months. The Welsh Blood Service had been invoiced in October.
 - Caretakers wages underspend due to only basic hours being paid due to the closure of the Parish Hall.
 - Electricity, heating oil, water, repairs and cleaning materials all underspent due to the Hall closure.
 - Fire equipment has overspent due to the two fire risk assessments.
- **Recreation Grounds**
 - Large underspend in this area to date, but play area remedial works, repairs and tree works are due to take place in Q3/4.

In summary at the end of quarter 2, there is £39,525 underspend, however this is due to be reduced by year end due to appointment of Administration officer and planned play area repairs and tree works.

The Clerk sought feedback on the other reports circulated Net position report, quarter flexed budget report. Members agreed to receive the Summary report only in future, with the Clerk having the other reports as backing reports if required for questions.

The Finance Committee approved the quarter one and quarter two financial reports. The Clerk stated that the bank reconciliation on the new system was still being worked on and will be presented at the next Finance meeting.

It was also noted that the monthly payment list for authorisation by Council had slipped off the agendas. **Action:** Clerk to ensure retrospective approval of payments to 30/09/2020 is sought and monthly authorisation is sought each month thereafter.

4. Consideration of the following purchases/quotes.

4a. CCTV at Longfield

Quote received from MFS systems to supply and install an additional camera on the Longfields play area is £700 +vat, plus an additional £150 for the 240v connection into the lamppost. Members discussed affordability and due to an overall underspend in the Environmental budget area, TE proposed to authorise this spend. FH seconded the proposal, all agreed.

4b. Electrical Quotes x 2

Quote 1 was for all the category three works found in the periodic inspection to be remedied. Quote from Simon Jones Electrical is £784 +VAT.

Quote 2 was for additional plug sockets (with trunking) in the lighting and sound booth, back stage lighting and office as identified in the fire risk assessment due to electrical overloading from all the extension leads in use. Quote from Simon Jones Electrical is £991 +VAT.

CB stated that the Council had a duty to address these issues and proposed to authorise both quotes. TE seconded the proposal, all agreed.

4c. Headsets for Councillors using Zoom

Each basic headset from Viking is £4.49 + VAT. It was agreed to purchase four headsets.

Action: Clerk to order four headsets.

4d. izettle & tablet (contactless payments for Parish Hall users)

The Clerk presented the izettle contactless payment system, there are several brands on the market, all with a similar costs, however Rebecca Ap Gwyn has experience of using the izettle system and states how easy to use it is. Members queried the card transactions costs; it was noted that as the number of transactions would be low and the time it would save in cashing up and paying into the bank. CB proposed to purchase the izettle package (card reader, docking station and tablet) for £127.99. FH seconded the proposal, all agreed.

4e. Lift maintenance

Following the six monthly maintenance inspection, a quote from Ace Lifts had been received to undertake a clean, degrease and paint the lift pit floor for £625.00. CB proposed to undertake this work as our insurance could be invalidated if the Council didn't. FH seconded the proposal, all agreed.

Action: Clerk to progress all agreed works.

5. 2021/22 Budget Preparation

The Clerk had emailed all Councillors seeking views on next years priorities; so far the following had been suggested.

- focus on the lack of parking.
- Curtains in the Parish Hall
- Additional speed warning cameras to permanently position in Lodgevale, on approach from Oswestry (or other agreed site) and at Pentre
- hire some hours of a dog fouling 'officer' to start to impose fines
- Website

The Finance Committee discussed suggested areas and agreed not to take forward the additional speed signs as we currently have a portable speed sign, which was felt by some to have minimal impact. The larger impact is from Arrive Alive.

All Members were in agreement that the website needed to a priority as the current website needed updating and complying with Welsh Government regulations.

Dog Fouling fines was rejected as it was very difficult to enforce.

This was a starting point in narrowing down priorities and further discussion would take place at the next Council meeting.

Non Agenda Item – Christmas Lights

FH provided an update on this year's Christmas lights. Christmas trees on lampposts have been ordered. New lights are being installed on the Christmas Oak tree. There will be additional road lights. Modelez have assisted once again but on a smaller scales as the groups are not going into shops this

year. FH sought a donation of an additional £1,000 from the Council due to the additional works and costs involved with re-installing the lights following the tree works last year when the lights were all removed and some damaged. TE thought this could be classed as damages. FH thanked Glyn Wylfa and MFS for their donations.

SW mentioned the Matt Fleet santa video and asked for a donation of paint and lights. The Finance Committee agreed to buy some lights for the sleigh and retain ownership and give to Santa. **Action:** SW and Clerk to work with Santa on purchasing some suitable lights.

Meeting closed 19:23

Signed

Chairman

Date