

Morpeth Town Council
Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
Wednesday 6th January 2021 at 6:30pm
via Zoom

Present:

Councillors: D Bawn - Chairman
N Best
A Byard
R Hogg
R Wearmouth

Clerks: Mrs T Bell
Miss L Roberts

Absent Councillors: Cllr A Tebbutt - Personal
Cllr K Holmes - Personal
Cllr D Herne -No apologies received
Cllr R Thompson -No apologies received
Cllr L Cassie -No apologies received

Open Session

There were no members of the public present who wished to ask a question on this occasion.

129/20 Committee Chairman's Announcements

- Members were advised of the usual rules about the recording of meetings.
- Members were reminded that mobile phones should be turned on to silent and should not be used during the meeting.

130/20 Mayoral Announcements

- All mayoral activities have been suspended due to the new government restrictions.

131/20 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman received no declarations of interest on this occasion.

132/20 Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 2nd December 2020

The minutes of the above meetings were approved as a true record.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be approved and signed as a correct record by the chair.

133/20 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising on this occasion.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

134/20 Authorisation of Payments

The payment list for January 2021 was circulated for consideration.

RESOLVED

- (i) That members agreed the payment lists for January 2021, totalling £169,284.16.

135/20 Update on the Community Asset Transfer Project

Members were provided for information with a report.

The Clerk advised that St James is complete and is available for hire, however due to the current Government COVID restrictions this is not allowed.

The Pavilion is progressing well, no definite completion date has been confirmed as the majority of works are now external and will be weather dependant.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

136/20 Community Centre Hire Charges

Members were asked to consider hire charges for the Newly Refurbished St James Community Centre. The Clerk advised that there had been no increase in hire charges over the past 5 years.

The Clerk reminded Committee that they had agreed to opt to register for VAT, in order to reclaim the VAT on the refurbishment. VAT must now be charged whenever the venue is hired. The Town Council will absorb the additional VAT costs until 31st March 2021 so that users do not see any increase in charges.

The current hourly rate is £18 per hour which will not change however, VAT will be added at 20% which will take the total amount payable to the user to £21.60 per hour from 1st April 2021. The Council will not benefit from the additional charge this will be passed straight to HMRC.

The Clerk advised that charities current receive a generous 25% discount on room hire and are not normally subject to paying VAT (evidence must be provided by the hirer that they qualify for VAT exemption under the rules) therefore they would not see any increase in charges unless the pricing structure is changed.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the hourly charity rate from April 2021. It was suggested that a flat rate of £17 be charged to qualifying charities. This equates to approximately a 20% reduction from the normal room hire rate.

This will result in the hourly cost being increased for both regular users and charities. Charges will be kept under review moving forward to ensure they cover running costs but remain competitive with local venues.

A vote was taken, 5 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.
- (ii) That the charity rate be increased to £17 per hour with appropriate evidence.
- (iii) The Clerk will write to all users informing them of the new charges from April 2021.

137/20

Budget 2021/22

Members were provided for consideration with the third draft budget for 2021/22.

The Clerk presented the budget reports and summarised the budget position. A discussion took place on the Subsidy Applications. The Committee were advised that the Subsidies Working Group had met on a number of occasions and discussed at length the applications, a rigorous scrutiny process was undertaken for each application and a consensus was reached regarding the outcome. The Committee were happy to support the recommendations of the Working Group.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the future running of the Pavilion. Due the current COVID situation it is impossible to project any future revenue stream for the site. It was noted that due to the project being a new venue it is highly unlikely to be profitable in the first years. Cllr Hogg requested that the budget be reviewed regularly to ensure that the site does not become a burden to the Council. The Clerk advised that the income and expenditure would be monitored closely to ensure the site is run as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Members agreed to refer the Precept requirement to Full Council for approval prior to submission to Northumberland County Council.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.
- (ii) To accept the Subsidy Working Group recommendations.
- (iii) To refer the 2021/22 final draft budget to Full Council for approval.
- (iv) To refer the Precept requirement to Full Council for approval and submission to Northumberland County Council.

138/20 Local Council Issues

There were no issues raised on this occasion.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

There was no other business to discuss and the meeting concluded at 7:18pm with Councillors D Bawn, N Best, A Byard, R Hogg, and R Wearmouth present.

Morpeth Town Council
Authorisation of Payments - 6th January 2021

Date Processed	Supplier	Cheque No.	Description	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount
03/12/20	MKM	BACS	Allotments	87.00	17.40	104.40
03/12/20	Wicksteed	BACS	Play Equipment Repairs	18.50	3.70	22.20
03/12/20	SLCC	BACS	Staff Training	410.00	0.00	410.00
03/12/20	Phoenix Software Ltd	BACS	Office 365	2,070.36	414.07	2,484.43
07/12/20	NCS	BACS	Office Telephone Charges	44.04	8.81	52.85
12/09/2020	Inside Magazine	BACS	Town Cryer	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00
12/09/2020	NCC	BACS	Salaries	16,852.79	0.00	16,852.79
12/09/2020	NCC	BACS	Admin Fees	34.17	6.83	41.00
12/09/2020	Datim	BACS	Pavilion Refurb	119,729.42	23,945.88	143,675.30
12/09/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James CC Maintenance	11.10	2.22	13.32
12/09/2020	Blok N Mesh	BACS	Security Fencing	19.22	3.84	23.06
12/09/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James CC Maintenance	37.02	7.40	44.42
12/09/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James CC Maintenance	5.80	1.16	6.96
15/12/2020	Annodata	BACS	Photocopying	57.87	11.57	69.44
15/12/2020	Blok N Mesh	BACS	Security Fencing	18.60	3.72	22.32
17/12/20	Jewson	BACS	Allotment Maintenance	21.17	4.23	25.40
17/12/20	Jewson	BACS	Allotments Maintenance	34.85	6.97	41.82
17/12/20	Jewson	BACS	Allotment Maintenance	4.47	0.89	5.36
17/12/20	C G Haynes	BACS	Christmas Tree 2020	105.00	0.00	105.00
				140,761.38	24,438.69	165,200.07
Direct Debits Paid						
December 2020						
01/12/2020	Gaffey Technical	DD	Hyprolyser Rental Fee	306.92	61.38	368.30
01/12/2020	Team Valley Web Design	"	Website Hosting	41.67	8.33	50.00
01/12/2020	Crown Gas & Power	"	SJCC Gas Investigation	125.00	25.00	150.00
04/12/2020	Wave	"	Paddling Pool and Toilets	63.06	0.00	63.06
04/12/2020	Wave	"	15/08-14/11/20			
04/12/2020	Wave	"	SPCC 15/08-14/11/20	513.88	0.00	513.88
04/12/2020	Wave	"	Wellwood Gardens 15/08-14/11/20	28.90	0.00	28.90
10/12/2020	EE	"	MTC Office Mobile	61.66	12.33	73.99
10/12/2020	Pitney Bowes	"	Rental Charges from 9/12/20	73.44	14.69	88.13
14/12/2020	Crown Gas & Power	"	SPCC 1-30/11/20	127.57	6.38	133.95
14/12/2020	Crown Gas & Power	"	SJCC 1-30/11/20	227.80	45.56	273.36
15/12/2020	Bankline	"	Online Banking Charges	31.30	0.00	31.30
15/12/2020	EDF	"	SPCC 29/10-27/11/20	12.10	0.61	12.71
17/12/2020	Pitney Bowes	"	Postage Top Up	208.00	0.00	208.00
18/12/2020	Worldpay	"	Subscription Fees Dec 20	9.95	1.99	11.94
21/12/2020	Worldpay	"	Transaction Fees Nov 20	29.09	2.82	31.91
23/12/2020	EDF	"	SJCC 06/10-07/12/20	68.43	3.43	71.86
31/12/2020	Shred-It	"	Confidential Waste	109.87	21.97	131.84
				2,038.64	204.49	2,243.13
Sub Total Direct Debit Payments						
Petty Cash December 2020						
02/12/2020	Home Bargains	4800	SJCC Cleaning Supplies	7.84	1.57	9.41
03/02/2020	Iceland	"	Refreshments	8.12	1.63	9.75
03/12/2020	Post Office	"	Air Mail	4.25	0.00	4.25
16/12/2020	Post Office	"	Postage	10.30	0.00	10.30
				30.51	3.20	33.71
Sub Total Petty Cash Payments						
Credit Card November 2020						
29/10/2020	Morrisons	CC	FSM Vouchers	600.00	0.00	600.00
29/10/2020	Dobbies	"	Poppy Planting	49.88	9.97	59.85
30/10/2020	Adobe	"	Adobe Acrobat	42.96	0.00	42.96
30/10/2020	Morrisons	"	FSM Vouchers	200.00	0.00	200.00
02/11/2020	Morrisons	"	FSM Vouchers	300.00	0.00	300.00
03/11/2020	Things4Craft	"	Wall Planners	8.80	1.76	10.56
05/11/2020	EE	"	SJCC Wi-Fi	12.50	2.50	15.00
17/11/2020	Amazon	"	Transparent Screens	114.64	22.92	137.56
19/11/2020	CCA Occasions	"	Mayoral Christmas Cards	202.00	40.40	242.40
20/11/2020	Amazon	"	Stationery	3.86	0.78	4.64
23/11/2020	Amazon	"	SJCC Noticeboard	24.58	4.92	29.50
23/11/2020	Amazon	"	Refund Import Fees	-4.03	0.00	-4.03
24/11/2020	Office Products	"	Webcams	47.76	9.55	57.31
27/11/2020	Amazon	"	Key Cabinet	92.92	18.58	111.50
				1,695.87	111.38	1,807.25
Total Payments F&GP Committee January 2021						
				144,526.40	24,757.76	169,284.16