Workington Town Council

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**Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 20 August 2020 at 6.30pm on the Zoom platform under the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus Emergency.**

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| Cllr C Armstrong | Present |
| Cllr H Briggs | Present |
| Cllr R Briggs | Apologies |
| Cllr G Glaister | Apologies |
| Cllr H Harrington | Present |
| Cllr S Melton  | Apologies |
| Cllr B Sansom  | Apologies |
| Cllr P Scott (chair) | Present |
| Cllr S Stoddart (vice chair) | Absent |
| Cllr W Wilkinson | Present |
| Cllr J King (Mayor) | Present |

In attendance: Town Clerk.

**FG19.82. Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted as being for approved reasons under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972, s85, from Cllrs R Briggs, G Glaister, S Melton and B Sansom.

**FG19.83. Declarations of Interest**

No further declarations were made

**FG19.84. Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)**

No issues were noted.

**FG19.85. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2020.

**Resolved:** To affirm the minutes as a true record.

**FG19.86 Schedule of Payments**

The Committee received the Schedule of Payments to 31 July 2020.

**Resolved:** To note the Schedule of Payments

**FG19.87 Bank Reconciliation Statement**

The Committee received the Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31 July 2020.

**Resolved:** To note the statement

**FG19.88. Budget Monitoring Statement**

The Committee received a report on the Budget Monitoring Statement for 2020–2021 to 31 July 2020.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

**FG19.89. Banking Arrangements – Electronic and Online Banking**

The Committee considered a report on the requirements for enabling electronic banking. The Clerk explained that the Covid-19 risk assessment would be unlikely to support face to face payments of allotment rents, and that increasingly suppliers were refusing to handle cheques.

**Resolved:** Subject to an approved amendment to standing orders, the Council should take the necessary steps to adopt online bank management and payments, and receipt of card payments using a connected device. Amended Financial Regulations should be put before the full council for approval at the earliest opportunity.

**FG19.90. Banking Arrangements - Mayor’s Charity Fund**

The Committee considered the arrangements for the proper management of the Mayor of Workington’s Charity Fund. It was noted that the existing signatures were no longer Councillors and should be replaced by current Councillors.

**Resolved**: To appoint the existing Council bank mandate signatures as signatures for the Charity account, along with the Clerk.

**FG19.91. Employment Matters - Town Clerk**

The Committee considered the arrangements for the recruitment of a new Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, following the departure of the present incumbent at the end of September. Because of the tight timetable for recruiting a replacement, the Chair and the Mayor have liaised with the Town Clerk over the Job description, based on his existing Job description, and the vacancy has been advertised with a deadline set for 9 September, and interviews the following week. The Committee considered who should be on the interviewing panel, and the Chair suggested Cllr Rollo, who had been present on several previous employment panels would bring valuable experience to the role.

**Resolved:** To note the recruitment process in hand and to ask Cllr Rollo to join the Interview panel.

**FG19.92 Property Matters - Princess Street Day Centre**

The Committee received an update from the Clerk on the Council’s ambitions to purchase the former Princess Street Day Centre in Vulcan Park from Cumbria County Council. He reported that the property had been subject to a certain amount of negotiating over price, with the two Councils attaching different valuations to the property. However, he believed a negotiated price of £50,000 was probably the best price to be obtained. The Committee concurred that this, though at variance from their original valuation, was probably the best price that could be obtained. It was noted that the Council currently pays over £16,000 pa in rent for various rooms, and that this may be reduced through purchase of its own building.

**Resolved:** That subject to the approval of the full council, the Clerk makes the necessary arrangements to purchase the building for the Council to use as offices and as a base in the park for the Estate team and community facility. The Clerk will bring a report to the next meeting of the Council setting out the proposed payment methods and other costs. A timetable for that process should be set out as soon as possible, with a special meeting of the Council being arranged if required.

**FG19.93 Property Matters - Council Van**

The Clerk reported that the Council’s Ford Transit lease was due to expire in November, and the Estate Team Leader had prepared a report on the supply of a successor vehicle. The Estate Team Leader has requested that the next vehicle should be a caged tipper, with a tarpaulin cover to enable winter/rainy day use by the events team. Various prices were discussed, including a sample price from Vanarama around £300 per month. The Committee considered the advantages of leasing against HP and cash purchase.

**Resolved:** That the Estate Team Leader source a suitable caged tipper van and tarp to lease with a repair contract.

The meeting closed at 19.00.