

APPLEBY-IN-WESTMORLAND TOWN COUNCIL

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FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING HELD IN THE MOOT HALL MONDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2022 at 6.45pm

Present:

Cllr Davidson (Chair)
Cllr Anderton
Cllr Curley
Cllr Hayes (Mayor ex Officio)
Cllr Pape

Also in attendance:

Cllr Connell
Cllr Kemp
Cllr Rooke
Cllr Stephenson
Town Clerk
Clerk's Assistant

Cllr Hayes opened the Committee Meetings with a minute's silence for Cllr Hugh Potts, who passed away on Friday 11th November.

F1/11/22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Chalmers, and long term absence noted from Cllr F Potts.

F2/11/22 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to be made.

F3/11/22 Actions from Previous Meeting

- **Update on Rural Payments Agency Allowance:** The Clerk reported that although the Basic Payments Scheme will change in 2024, the payments won't be phased out until 2027.
- **Section 137 Grants:** The Clerk had spoken with the Internal Auditor regarding Section 137 Grants. As the Council has General Power of Competence it already has flexibility regarding what it can spend its budget on, which means that there is no real need to allocate funding to a Section 137 Grant. It should be noted that Section 137 does not provide the Council with any additional budget to be able to draw from.
- **Utility Costs for Public Hall:** Meter readings have been taken over the past couple of weeks, to establish the cost of gas and electricity for some of our regular bookings. This has been a useful exercise and has highlighted that one regular weekly booking for the main hall costs on average £61 a session to heat, meaning that the hire charge currently being paid, does not even cover the cost of heating the room. This has been discussed with the user and a more appropriate fee has been agreed from 1st January 2023.

Cllr Stephenson suggested that a profit and loss exercise be carried out, so we have solid evidence to be able to justify to any customers how much the hall costs to run. Cllr Anderton reported that Cllr Davidson and she had researched costs and facilities of other halls in the local area, and based on their findings, they felt the Public Hall provided good value for money.

F4/11/22 Chairman's Report

There was no Chair's report in respect of this meeting. The Clerk reported she had met with the Cllr Chalmers earlier in the day to review the accounts and discuss any financial items of note.

F5/11/22 Management Accounts

The Chair presented the Management Accounts for **October 2022**. The Management Accounts for October 2022 were agreed and accepted and **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council.

- The Clerk reported that the 2022-23 pay awards for local government staff has been agreed. As these pay awards need to be backdated to 1 April 2022, the Clerk had calculated that based on the actual hours worked by all employees to date, plus the projected hours to be worked up to 31 March 2023, this will amount to an additional cost to the Council of £7,000. Staff were also awarded an additional day's holiday entitlement. It was accepted and **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council to implement these increases in salary awards, which would be back-dated to 1 April 2022.

ACTION

All

Cllr Curley noted that as the national pay awards are announced halfway through the financial year, this made budgeting for salaries very difficult, but we need to ensure that sufficient provision for increases are built into next year's budget.

Clerk

Cllr Stephenson highlighted the need to justify all staffing costs and hours worked. The Clerk reported that where possible, staffing resources had already been optimised and no seasonal staff had been employed over the summer in the TIC as was the usual practice. It was noted that some members of staff were contracted to work a minimum number of hours per week.

F6/11/22 Cloisters Building Repairs Project

- The Clerk reported that the final grant payment has now been received from Eden District Council/English Heritage for the West Cloisters repair work.
- The Clerk reported that the first grant payment has been received from Eden District Council for the East Cloisters repair work from their Inspiring Eden fund.

F7/11/22 Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

There were no reports or items.

F8/11/22 Date of the Next Meeting

Councillors noted that the next meeting of the Finance Committee will be held in the Moot Hall on **Monday 12th December 2022 at 6.45pm.**

All

There being no further business the meeting closed at **7.17pm.**

AT THE COUNCIL MEETING ON: **WEDNESDAY 23rd November 2022**

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE WAS AUTHORISED BY THE COMMITTEE TO SIGN THESE MINUTES TO CONFIRM THEIR BEING A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD:
