



# MANNINGTREE TOWN COUNCIL

UNAPPROVED

## Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting

held in the Methodist Church Hall on

Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

**Present:** Cllr. R. Stocks (Chair) Cllr. M. McClarnon  
Cllr. M. Taylor Cllr. S. Tattam  
Cllr. L. Lay-Flurrie Cllr. K. Blacker

**In attendance:** Mrs. L. Djuve-Wood (Clerk)

### 1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes of the previous meeting

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2019, having been circulated previously, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 4. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and matters of mutual interest

There were no members of the public present.

### 5. Matters arising from the previous finance committee meeting

There were none.

### 6. To review Year to Date actual expenditure versus budgeted expenditure for 2019/20

**RESOLVED** that the year to date actual expenditure versus budgeted expenditure be approved by the Finance Committee.

### 7. To consider the income and expenditure draft budget for 2020/21

**RESOLVED** that the Finance Committee propose that the following categories and budgeted amounts be added:

- a) Training: £340 (based on four EALC courses at an estimated average cost of £85 each)
- b) VE 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event: no budget allocated as should be a cost neutral event;
- c) Annual Tree Survey: £200
- d) Grants (other) for donations that do not come under S137: £1,000

**RESOLVED** that the Finance Committee propose that the following categories be removed entirely or transferred to Earmarked Reserves:

- a) 2019 Election Costs to be removed;
- b) Special Constables to be removed;
- c) Emergency Plan: £1,000 covering one-off costs should an emergency happen where an evacuation would be necessary, to be moved to earmarked reserves;
- d) Capital Expenditure Contingency: £3,000 for the potential repair or replacement of street furniture, including the repainting of the town's two fingerboards, to be moved to earmarked reserves.

In addition to the above, it was **RESOLVED** that the Finance Committee propose that the following new categories be added as earmarked reserves:

- a) Cemetery: £2,000 for the potential re-instatement / maintenance of the cemetery footpath
- b) New wildlife sign: cost currently unknown

**RESOLVED** that the Finance Committee propose that the following budgeted amounts be either reduced

or increased:

- a) Clerk's salary and expenses category to be increased to £8,876 to allow for any annual incremental salary increase yet to be agreed;
- b) Rent for meeting room to be increased to £280;
- c) Insurance amount to be reduced to £590 due to set 3-year contract, still allowing for a small increase in Insurance Premium Tax;
- d) Subscriptions to be increased to £582 taking into account a slight increase in EALC fees plus the addition of the ICO fee which has been moved from the Sundries category;
- e) Administration Sundries to be decreased to £431 as the ICO fee and trainings costs have been removed from the category;
- f) Stationery to be reduced to £218;
- g) Contract Maintenance to be reduced to £1,744 covering agreed works to be carried out by the contractor. Costs for any unforeseen work to be covered by earmarked reserves going forward;
- h) Public Lighting to be increased to £2,583 to allow for increased costs and new agreement to have an annual survey carried out of the council's street lights by the lighting contractor;
- i) Beach and Pond category to be titled Beach going forward and for the amount to be increased to £683 to allow annual sand purchase for the beach;
- j) Maintenance Sundries to be reduced to 0;
- k) Flower tubs to be reduced to £1,600;
- l) S137 Donations to be reduced to £1,000 in line with the proposal of the new 'Other' category, also £1,000
- m) S137 contingency to be reduced to 0.

The clerk requested that the council look into investing in Rialtas Alpha Software to enable better management of the council's finances and limit the potential for errors. The Finance Committee proposed that the clerk test the software before putting the request on the full council's agenda. This would need to come out of the current year's reserves to ensure it is set up and ready for the upcoming financial year if going ahead once tested. **Action: Clerk**

#### **8. To consider capital expenditure and other projects for 2020/21**

Cllr. McClarnon requested that the fingerboards be repainted. The clerk explained that they had been repainted in 2018. Cllr. McClarnon explained that they look like they need repainting again. The clerk is to bring up the matter with the maintenance contractor. **Action: Clerk**

#### **9. To set the recommended precept request for 2020/21**

Having considered the total budget it was agreed that in order to balance the council's budget an increase of 19% in the precept request for 2020/21 will be necessary. The council has in the past partially covered some of their set expenditure by drawing on reserves but this is not sustainable in the long term. The increase is also partially needed to recover the loss of the remaining TDC grant, no longer issued as of 2020/21. Other costs have increased over the past couple of years, including that of street lighting, the clerk's increased hours from 11 to 13, the introduction of annual sand purchases for the beach and twice yearly planting of the town's flower tubs. **RESOLVED** that the Finance Committee recommend a precept request of £20,714 for 2020/21, an increase of £2,914 from £17,800 in 2019/20.

#### **10. To consider the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2020/21**

**RESOLVED** that Miss V. Pretty be reappointed as internal auditor for 2020/21.

There being no further business Cllr. Stocks closed the meeting at 9:00 p.m

Signed.....

Dated.....