

LISKEARD TOWN COUNCIL

AT A MEETING of the **FINANCE AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 22 April 2014 there were present:

The Mayor Councillor Susan Pike - in the Chair

Councillors: Rachel Brooks, Ian Goldsworthy James Shrubsole and Jane Pascoe, Councillor Holmes arrived late

Town Clerk - Mr Andrew Deacon

Minute Clerk - Mr Stuart Houghton

Member of the Public: Mr Tony Wood

958/13 PUBLIC SPEAKER

The Mayor introduced Mr Wood who was organising a Ploughman's Fare for the Town.

Mr Wood explained that in the past he had organised events to promote the Town, some of these events had been supported by the Town Council and he hoped that it would support this one.

In the vicinity of Liskeard three prize winning cheeses were manufactured, they were Cornish Yarg, Cornish Blue and more recently a Gouda style cheese. He felt that with the local quality beers, ciders and breads, they were the main constituents of a Ploughman's Lunch. This gave him the idea to resurrect the medieval fares that were held each year until the 1850's on the Feast of the Assumption as a Ploughman's Fare. He hoped that by holding the event in the summer, it would bring people into the Town.

A Committee of about twelve had been formed and he was asking the Council for backing and support both financially and with umbrella support for insurance. The intention was to hold a market type event on The Parade in the morning, with entertainment to link with Fore Street and Westbourne Gardens where later in the day, the cheeses and beers and ciders would be on sale. He hoped that the shopkeepers would support the event by decorating their shops with associated displays. In response to questions he replied;

- It would be up to the individual shopkeepers to decide on the amount of involvement they would give
- Some shopkeepers had already been approached and had indicated their agreement
- The event would be run through the Stuart House bank account for this year, if any monies were made they would go towards repeating the event each year
- Stuart House would not underwrite the event
- Insurance was essential, he had asked for the event to come under the Town Council

There being no further questions, the Mayor thanked Mr Wood for attending.

959/13 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Phil Seeva and also from Cornwall Councillor Mike George.

960/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made either Registerable or Non Registerable.

961/13 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEETING 25 MARCH 2014

Correction

1. Opportunities for Increasing Revenue (Minute 885/13)

Add "A member of CCLD LEADER should be invited to speak to the Council"

2. Grants (3. Liskeard Ploughman's Fare (Minute 886/13))

Following discussion about the wording of the last point, a vote was taken which was tied. The Mayor gave a casting vote for the wording to remain unchanged.

The Mayor proposed, Councillor Goldsworthy seconded and the Committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Finance and Strategy Committee meeting held on the 25 March 2014 with the amendment 1 above.

962/13 MATTERS ARISING

1. Amendment to the Format of Internal Budgets (MInute881/13)

The Town Clerk reported that he had received information from one accounting company in the Town that they would be able to do SAGE training. They were of the opinion that the SAGE system contained all the required information, it was just a case of being shown how to recover it. They anticipated that it would take about 2 hours for this training, at a cost of £50 per hour plus VAT.

The Chairs of the Property and Communication and Engagement Committee's agreed to delay the finalisation of their budget changes until the details of the training were known and the new TIC Website was operational.

2. Office Equipment (Minute 882/13)

The Town Clerk reported that Concorde Copiers had informed him that the purchase price of the new copiers would be £7995 and that the early termination fee would be £2002.91. Concorde would cover this cost and make good the settlement. He would clarify the costs and report to the next meeting.

3. Update on TIC Shop Procedure (Minute 884/13)

The Town Clerk agreed with the Chair of the Communication and Engagement Committee that they would delay the visit to the TIC until after the launch of the new TIC Website.

4. Grants (1. Jessica Lamble (Minute 886/13(1)))

The Town Clerk confirmed that an application form for the Philip Blaney Trust grant had been sent to Jessica Lamble, but had not yet been returned.

963/13 BUDGET REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2014

A report was not available. It would be circulated as soon as possible.

964/13 AMENDMENT TO THE FORMAT OF INTERNAL BUDGETS

Reported in matters arising.

965/13 OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Reported in matters arising.

966/13 PREPARATION FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT BY KEN ABRAHAM

The Town Clerk reported that the preparations for the Audit were complete, all papers had been prepared.

967/13 UPDATE ON TIC SHOP ACCOUNTING PROCEDURE

It had been agreed under matters arising, to delay the implementation of any changes until the new TIC Website had been launched. Items discussed included;

- Overall and cashing up procedures
- How SAGE training could help
- Although regular stocklists had been prepared, the increased volume needed a more regimented system
- The new cash register had the ability to record individual items, this information would need to be reconciled
- What was the value of the increased stock holding?

968/13 FINANCIAL LIMITS

Councillor Brooks introduced this item as the information that had been circulated showed some discrepancies. She also had questions about small value items and suggested that items under £100 could go ahead without approval.

The Town Clerk said that he considered up to £250 would be a workable amount provided that the budget would not be exceeded, if the item had not been included in the budget, the matter should be discussed by the Committee.

Councillor Goldsworthy stated that, as Chair of the Property Committee, the existing limit of £500 was very low, even if it was increased to £1k it would still be low compared to the amounts that have had to be found this year for boiler replacement etc. He was concerned that a low limit might cause unforeseen problems to escalate whilst finance was being found, he quoted the flooding of the office and the consequence of delaying repairs to the roof as examples requiring immediate action.

The Town Clerk said that he would immediately contact the Council's insurers should a major problem occur, this discussion was for uninsured items.

Councillor Brooks suggested that the emergency expenditure limit could be increased from £3k to £4k. She also suggested that all Committees should have the same limit of £1k for approved items.

Councillor Holmes said that we must not confuse regular work with emergency work, they required different procedures.

The Town Clerk announced that he would attend a CALC meeting tomorrow, he would discuss these items there and circulate a recommendation that could be confirmed at the AGM.

Other items for clarification were;

- The threshold for tendering to be £20k, not £50k
- Three quotations must be obtained, whenever possible, for sums between £1k and £20k
- It was recognised that for specialist trades such as steeplejacks and stonemasons it would not always be possible to obtain three quotations
- If the value of work escalated after commencement the work should stop and the additional expenditure agreed by the Council.

969/13 GRANTS

1. Cruise Bereavement

The Council had supported this cause in previous years. Cruise Bereavement were active in Liskeard and provided one to one support.

The Mayor proposed, Councillor Brooks seconded and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council **AWARD** £100 to Cruise Bereavement.

2. Ploughman's Fare

Following the presentation at the beginning of the meeting, Councillor Brooks proposed, Councillor Goldsworthy seconded and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council **AWARD** £300 to the Ploughman's Fare, mainly for printing and advertising costs.

970/13 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

971/13 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that in previous years, the Council had not provided the grant to the Town Forum until the end of the financial year. This had caused some problems of cash flow to the Forum. He would like to change this arrangement to pay the grant to the Forum in two stages, in April and September each year, when the Town Council receives its Precept from Cornwall Council.

Councillor Goldsworthy proposed, Councillor Brooks seconded and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council pay the Forum grant in two stages.

972/13 PART II. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

None.

973/13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Finance and Strategy Committee meeting would be at 7.30 pm on 27 May 2014.