

## **STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 15 JUNE 2021 AT 6.00PM**

**PRESENT** Councillor Mrs Gloria Johnson (Mayor)  
Councillor Mrs Susan J Sandall - Chairman  
Councillor Bob Sandall  
Councillor Mrs Sheila Sismore  
Councillor Andrew Croft  
Councillor Mrs Marion Pitt  
Councillor Mrs Angela Carter-Begbie substituting for Councillor John Dawson  
Councillor Mrs Elaine Hooper substituting for Councillor David Taylor

**ALSO PRESENT** Town Clerk, Patricia Stuart-Mogg  
Representative of Team Stamford  
1 member of public

#### **Public Participation (Agenda Point 1):**

The representative from Team Stamford presented the feasibility study for a proposed Memorial Garden on the South Bank of the River Welland abutting the Cattle Market car park. The location is on land managed by South Kesteven District Council (SKDC), which supports the initiative subject to the Town Council adopting the land and taking on the future management of the Memorial Garden once it is delivered. So far, the clearance of the area has been undertaken by SKDC and the volunteers of Pride of Stamford Litter Pickers. This project will be led by Team Stamford which has collected donations from local businesses towards this initiative. A number of professional bodies – including the Forestry Commission and the Welland Rivers Trust - have been consulted on how best to clear, plant and landscape the area. A proposed design was circulated to members of the Committee. It was agreed that considerable effort has been invested to cover the cost of the project with the aid of volunteers and the donation of trees from the Woodland Trust and local businesses pledging support with the provision of materials and professional advice and guidance. It is intended to secure further funds through grants from SKDC, LCC, Skells Trust and Lottery Funding. It was hoped that the Town Council would consider supporting the project by agreeing to adopt the area being considered and provide a suitable name for the project.

Following discussion there was great concern expressed over yet another project where the Council is being asked to commit to accepting blind maintenance costs on a proposed project which is not yet clearly defined. The Council is regularly burdened with extensive expenditures following similar community projects which start most earnestly and are then neglected so the Town Council bears the on-going costs. There were safety concerns over the unfenced river's edge, especially as it would be attracting visitors possibly with children.

The Chairman Councillor Mrs S J Sandall thanked the representative from Team Stamford for the presentation, which would be considered by the Committee later on the agenda.

Formal meeting commenced at 6.20pm.

#### **64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Point 2)**

Councillor John Dawson and Councillor David Taylor submitted their apologies. These were noted and agreed.

**65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Point 3)**

None made.

**66. MINUTES (Agenda Point 4)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2021 which had been ratified at the Town Council meeting of 27 April 2021 had been signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

**67. UPDATE ON ACTION POINTS (Agenda Point 5)**

- a. *Sec. 106 Fund relating to Empingham Road Playing Field, Stamford* - The Chairman advised that this is being discussed by SKDC Cabinet with a view of distributing the proposed fund of £308,484.23 between various eligible Clubs that are already located on the site. Following discussion, the Town Clerk was requested to inform SKDC that the sums allocated to each Club had been noted, however, the Town Council remains resolute in its wish to have all the Stamford Special Expense area transferred to the Town Council. **Action:** Town Clerk
- b. *Town Hall Solar Power Project* – It was noted that this matter remained in hand awaiting a third contractor to quote.
- c. *Memorial for HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh* - It was noted that all the educational establishments had been approached inviting students to design a commemorative plaque reflecting the Duke of Edinburgh's armorial. **Action:** Civic Officer
- d. *Stamford in Bloom* – It was noted that Stamford-in-Bloom group would not be entering Stamford in the 2021 competition due to Covid Pandemic having devastated its working arrangements. However, the enthusiastic team will continue to look after the floral displays around the town centre. It was recognised that the bushes in the planters in Red Lion Square had rejuvenated and it would be a shame to disturb them. However, it was hoped to bring some floral colour to the square. **Action:** Town Clerk
- e. *Red Lion Square furniture refurbishment* – The Town Clerk confirmed that HMP Peterborough had confirmed that they would be able to refurbish the seats in Red Lion Square. It was anticipated that the first two benches would be removed this week. **Action:** Town Clerk
- f. *Disposal of obsolete computer towers* – The Town Clerk confirmed that the obsolete computer towers of the Administration team had been collected by Restore for secure disposal. It was confirmed that the cost was £152.00.

**Proposal 1** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Sismore, seconded by Councillor Mrs G Johnson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the invoice for £152.00 is approved for payment.

**68. FINANCE (Agenda Point 6)**

- a. *External / Internal Audit for 2020/2021* – The Town Clerk confirmed that all documentation for external audit had been dispatched to PK Littlejohn the appointed auditor.
- b. *Review of Budget Status Year 2021 / 2022* - The Chairman Councillor Mrs S J Sandall advised that there were items to consider for budget expenditure:
  - i. **Neighbourhood Plan** – It was noted that now the Stamford Neighbourhood Plan is with the Independent Examiner some clarification is required on certain

elements of the submitted Plan. This is being provided with the assistance of the professional services of L.A.B Planning at the cost of £800.00. Following discussion, it was noted that there was funding left in the earmarked reserves which would be allocated to cover this expenditure.

**Proposal 2** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor A Croft and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the quote from L.A.B. Planning for £800.00 is accepted.

- ii. **Newsletter** – The Committee considered the report from the Civic Officer in respect of the three ‘blind’ quotes received for the design and printing of the Town Council Newsletter. The quotes were all like-for-like based on 600 and 800 quantities of four, six or eight pages. Following consideration of the quotes the Committee opted to accept Quote B.

**Proposal 3** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Sismore, seconded by Councillor A Croft and unanimously **RESOLVED** that quote B at the cost of £267.00 (4page) or £416.00 (8 page) + VAT is accepted.

Following the vote, the Town Clerk informed the Committee that the selected printer was Classic Printers based in Crowland.

- iii. **Telephone Lines** – It has been brought to the attention of the Town Council that the ISDN telephone lines provided by Openreach, over which broadband runs, are being switched off. This will impact administration operations at the Town Hall. However, this has highlighted to our service provider that they have not been invoicing the Town Council over the past 24 months for two lines. The outstanding cost is £699.54 + VAT [(£14 x 24 = £336 + 13.77) x2]. Following discussion there was mixed opinion as to whether the Town Council should be liable for this oversight.

**Proposal 4** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S J Sandall, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and **RESOLVED** by a majority vote that the Town Clerk informs the Service provider that the Committee is not happy to pay for its oversight but would like to resolve this matter amicably. There was one vote Against. **Action:** Town Clerk

- c. **HR and Employment Advice** – The Chairman Councillor Mrs S J Sandall informed the Committee that discussion had been held with Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd and that the company had agreed to continue to work constructively with Stamford Town Council. The Terms and Conditions were reviewed, and it was noted that the revised monthly cost would be £150.00 + VAT.

**Proposal 5** – It was proposed by Councillor B Sandall, seconded by Councillor Mrs G Johnson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the revised Terms & Conditions for the services of Personnel Advice and Solutions at a cost of £150.00 + VAT is accepted.

The Town Clerk reminded Councillors of the virtual Employment Training session which had been organised specifically for Councillors to attend on 29 June 2021 at 5pm.

- d. **Town Council’s ‘Thank You’ Event** – The Mayor Councillor Gloria Johnson informed the meeting that there is a National Day for celebrating and recognition of all those who had gone above and beyond in efforts to help their communities during the present Pandemic. A ‘Thank You’ Event is being organised on 4<sup>th</sup> July in the Court Room between 11am and 12.30pm. At present there are 30 organisations that have been identified and one representative from each organisation will be invited due to restricted numbers provisions.

- e. *LCC Verge Cutting 2021/2022* - The Chairman Councillor Mrs S J Sandall confirmed that the appointed contractor had commenced cutting but there was still a large area of the Town uncut which is leading to complaints being received. The Town Clerk confirmed that quotes had also been received to cut the private Open Spaces which landowners had requested to be cut and subsequently would reimburse the Town Council accordingly. Discussion ensued and it was noted that the request to maintain the corner of Wharf Road opposite St. Mary's Surgery would be £269.26 + VAT for a one-off tidy plus £11.33 + VAT for four occasions of grass cutting. To crown lift the tree in the Town Hall rear garden and remove cuttings will cost £43.83 + VAT and to weed kill the gravel area on four occasions per year will cost £11.33 + VAT. The Town Council Open Spaces off Casterton Road would be cut at £93.04 +VAT per cut.

**Proposal 6** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Sismore, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Carter-Begbie and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the following quotes are accepted: Quote to maintain the corner of Wharf Road opposite St. Mary's Surgery at £269.26 + VAT for a one-off tidy plus £11.33 + VAT for four grass cuts To crown lift the plum tree in the Town Hall rear garden and remove cuttings at cost of £43.83 + VAT and weed kill the gravel area on four occasions per year at cost of £11.33 + VAT; To cut the Town Council Open Spaces off Casterton Road at £93.04 +VAT per cut.

- f. *Town Hall and Town Bridge floral displays* – The Town Clerk reported that Waterside Nursery had offered to plant up the tubs. Team Stamford had kindly offered to deliver the tubs to Waterside Nursery. **Action:** Town Clerk
- g. *Schedule for Payment* – Schedule No 3 had been circulated to the Committee for examination. It was agreed that the schedule is presented to the Town Council for approval.
- h. *EM Law Share* – The Chairman Councillor Mrs S Sandall reported that the matter of residents encroaching on Town Council land is being pursued with Geldards as had been previously discussed. However, it had been recommended that the Town Council may wish to sign up to EM Law Share which handles many Local Council legal matters. This is being pursued by the Chairman and the Town Clerk.
- i. *Review of Policies relating to Committees Terms of Reference* – Following discussion it was agreed that Councillors A Croft; Mrs M Pitt and Mrs A Carter-Begbie would form the Working Group to review the Policies and Procedures relating to the Personnel Handbook.

**Proposal 7** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Sismore, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Carter-Begbie and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Councillors A Croft, Mrs M Pitt and Mrs A Carter-Begbie would form the Working Group to review the Policies and Procedures relating to the Personnel Handbook.

#### **69. ASSETS (Agenda Point 7)**

- a. *Museum Accreditation Application* – The Committee had been circulated with the final application for Eligibility together with the supporting documentation. The appointment of seven Museum Committee members was required and following discussion, Councillors Mrs M Pitt, Mrs E Hooper and J Dawson had expressed a wish to serve on the Committee. It was noted that this matter would be raised at the forthcoming Town Council meeting when it was hoped the remaining four members could be appointed.

**Proposal 8** - It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S J Sandall, seconded by councillor Mrs S Sismore and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Councillors Mrs M Pitt, Mrs E Hooper and J Dawson serve on the Museum Committee.

b. *Town Council video conference and Streaming facility* – The Town Clerk had presented a quote which had been received to provide a fixed video conference and streaming facility in the Council Chamber. On considering the quote, the Town Clerk was asked to investigate whether the Council is legally required to continue with further streaming of meetings once all restrictions are lifted. **Action:** Town Clerk

It was considered that a fixed system would be prudent in the Council Chamber but a further two quotes would be required in line with Standing Orders before a decision could be made.

c. *Confirm booking form for Town Hall Meeting Rooms & Civil Ceremonies:* The Licence for Civil Ceremonies had been prepared and the Town Clerk enquired as to whether the Committee may consider also including the Malcolm Sargent Room as further Licenced Premises at an additional cost of £50.00.

**Proposal 9** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor Mrs M Pitt and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Malcolm Sargent Room is added to the Civil Ceremonies Licence at an additional cost of £50.00. **Action:** Town Clerk

d. *Town Hall Remedial Work* – The Chairman Councillor Mrs S J Sandall reported that there had been a significant damp patch identified in the front office of the Town Hall which required investigation. It was also noted that the Entrance Hall doorway had been scheduled for some remedial work which need now to be progressed as restrictions were gradually being lifted.

**Proposal 10** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs A Carter-Begbie, seconded by Councillor Mrs E Hooper and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk is delegated to make arrangements to have the damp in the front office investigated and obtain quotes to refurbish the front doors and entrance porch. **Action:** Town Clerk

e. *Management of the Cemetery Lodge* – It was reported that the Lodge had suffered some significant roof damage and some emergency work was required in light of thunderstorms. The Town Clerk has arranged for Orchard Building Services to erect a temporary cover to protect the building from further damage. During discussions it was considered that this was third occasion that the roof had been repaired and there was concern that there could be a more significant problem. The Town Clerk would arrange for a Structural survey to be carried out.

**Proposal 11** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs A Carter-Begbie, seconded by Councillor E Hooper and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk is delegated to obtain a structural report on the roof and quotes for the repair of the Collyweston slate roof. **Action:** Town Clerk

f. *Management of the Shack* – The Chairman Councillor Mrs S J Sandall informed the Committee that the Methodist Church had relinquished the lease of the Shack. The Town Clerk confirmed that a final inspection of the property had been carried out and meter readings taken. There is significant equipment which has been gifted to the Town Council which will be useful. Councillor Mrs S J Sandall reported that there had been a couple of organisations that had expressed interest in taking on the Lease. After due consideration the Finance Committee considered that it may be prudent for the present to

retain the building and manage the bookings for the use of the Shack. It was noted that a Toddler Group had expressed a wish to hire the Shack on the 23 June 2021 at a rate of £10phr.

**Proposal 12** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S J Sandall, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Toddler Group is approved to hire the Shack on 23 June at a rate of £10phr. A key deposit would be required of £50.00

g. *Structural Report on Cemetery Chapel* – The Town Clerk reported that Smithers Purslow had investigated the repairs and the costs would not be far off £3,500 + VAT. It was suggested that the repairs to the Chapel would be completed first to enable that building to be returned to service.

**Proposal 13** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor A Croft and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Smithers Purslow proceed with the building repairs to the Chapel.

h. *War Memorial* – The Town Clerk advised that the contractor had confirmed that they were now scheduling the work to the Stamford War Memorial and anticipated a start date in September 2021. This was noted.

#### **70. TEAM STAMFORD MEMORIAL WOODLAND PROJECT (Agenda Point 8)**

The Committee considered the project and viewed that there were drawbacks, and the transfer of the land should be thoroughly investigated with SKDC. It was recognised that the Queen would be celebrating her Platinum Jubilee, and this could mark that celebration. However, there was a serious matter of liability at the water's edge.

**Proposal 14** – It was proposed by Councillor B Sandall, seconded by Councillor A Carter-Begbie and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Council supports Team Stamford's project, but the transfer of the land should be thoroughly investigated with SKDC. The name of the project should be related to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and ~~that an appropriate safety fence is installed along the water's edge~~ that the Council takes advice on safety measures from appropriate authorities in respect of the rivers edge

#### **71. GRANT/DONATION REQUEST TO BE CONSIDERED (Agenda Point 9)**

None submitted.

#### **72. PERSONNEL MATTERS (Agenda Point 10)**

**8.10pm** – The Chairman confirmed that in pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, a side meeting would continue in closed session during consideration of the next item, which relates to personnel matters.

It was noted that during discussion in Closed Session that one of the Amenities Operatives had resigned and has left the employment of Stamford Town Council. The vacancy will be advertised in due course.

It was considered in view of Step 3 restrictions being the extended, it was suggested that the Town Hall doors remain closed until August and the appointment system continues. The Town Clerk was instructed to advise Beebys accordingly.

It was also resolved that Officers assigned to evening Committee work would commence their day in the afternoon at 12.30pm on the day of their committee meeting, to include the meeting during their working hours and be allowed protected time to completed draft notes of the Committee meeting the following day, so minutes are circulated within two days of the meeting.

8.20 – The meeting resumed in Open Session.

**73. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT MEETING (Agenda Point 11)**

None.

**74. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: (Agenda Point 12) –**

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S J Sandall, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and unanimously RESOLVED that the Finance Committee meetings would commence at 6pm. The date of the next meeting is scheduled on **Tuesday 20 July 2021 at 6pm**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm