

STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 19 JULY 2022 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT Councillor David Taylor (Mayor)
Councillor Mrs Marion Pitt (Chairman)
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor John Dawson
Councillor Mrs Sheila Sismore
Councillor Mrs Gloria Johnson
Councillor Dave Dorson
Councillor Mrs Elaine Hooper
Councillor Shaun Ford

ALSO PRESENT Town Clerk, Patricia Stuart-Mogg
Councillor Richard Cleaver, LCC Stamford West Division
Members of public: five in person, one on-line

143. Public Participation (Agenda Point 1):

- *Chairman of the Flower Club* was invited to present the Club's application for financial assistance. It was noted that the Club had submitted a request for support funding for £700.00 towards the activities of the Flower Festival scheduled 17th September 2022 which will be held in St. Michael's Churchyard. Last year's event was a huge success, with a significant number of families participating in the activities and visitors enjoying the floral demonstrations and displays. All the proceeds and donations raised go towards the Marie Curie Cancer Care.
- The *Art Pop-Up Director* was invited to present the three requests submitted to the Committee for consideration. The requests submitted all supported Youth Arts Workshops which are scheduled to be held from Thursday 28 July 2022 to Saturday 03 September 2022. The Workshops are hoped to be held in the Shack on Thursdays for three hours between 6pm and 9pm, and over the weekend for six hours between 10am to 4pm. A short film will be produced of the children during the workshops and screened on Tuesday 20th September in the Court Room between 6pm and 8pm. As it is a meeting day, it is hoped that the room would be offered without charge. The third request is for a banner to hang on the Town Hall railings from 30th August until 13 September promoting the project.
- *Representatives of the Armed Forces Veterans* were invited to present their proposal to the Committee for consideration to use the Shack as a base for the veterans. The proposal would also include operating the Shack as a Community Hub for organisations to hire. The idea is to operate from the Shack seven days a week, so the veterans can establish a permanent and secure base. Although the Armed Forces Veterans is a worthy organisation to support, concerns were expressed by several Committee members over the management of the facility as there are costs to be covered. The representatives stated that looking after the Shack and maintaining the grounds in front of the building would give the veterans an objective and purpose. They would also be willing to support Community events and offer security marshalling should it be necessary.
- *Community Speed Watch Scheme* - Councillor Cleaver informed the Committee that 15 volunteers had now been trained by LCC Safety Partnership Group and to kick-start the

scheme an application needs to be submitted by the Town Council. The Safety Partnership Group would only operate this scheme if sanctioned by the Town Council. The Committee was circulated with the list of equipment and costs together with the details of the initial locations where the schemes would operate. Following discussion, it was noted that insurance liability cover would be provided by Lincolnshire Police. It was suggested that quarterly reports were prepared and submitted to the Town Council.

Councillor Mrs M Pitt thanked all representatives for their presentations. Their requests would be discussed during the Committee meeting and the Council's final decision advised accordingly.

The meeting commenced at 6.20pm.

144. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Point 2) –

Councillor Andrew Croft submitted his apologies for being unable to attend and these were noted.

Proposal 1 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs E Hooper, seconded by Councillor S Ford and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the reasons for absence are accepted.

145. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Point 3)

Councillor D Dorson declared a Personal Interest and Prejudicial Interest in any discussions relating to personnel as his wife is Deputy Town Clerk.

146. MINUTES (Agenda Point 4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2022 which had been ratified at the Town Council meeting of 26 April 2022 had been signed as a true record of the meeting.

147. UPDATE ON ACTION POINTS (Agenda Point 5)

a. *Community Speed Watch* – It was reported that the order for a solar powered speed indicator unit is in hand. It was noted a group of volunteers had already been trained and were ready to operate. The formal application which was needed to be submitted to LCC Highways to operate at specified locations had been circulated to the Committee members. There was consensus that the scheme would widen operationally across Stamford as it developed. To progress, there is a requirement for the Town Council to provide the following equipment, (all prices subject to VAT):

Speed watch handheld velocity device - £306.00 + VAT and carriage £12

Five Hi-Vis jackets; long sleeve jackets with front and rear logos either Velcro or zip fastening - £10.43 + VAT each,

Community Speed Watch Advisory signs - £84.80 + VAT carriage £12

Application fee £50.00

Proposal 2 – It was proposed by Councillor J Dawson, seconded by Councillor S Ford and unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council support the application to operate a Community Watch Scheme in Stamford and purchase of equipment above, as requested.

b. *Memorial for HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh* – Councillor John Dawson had pursued the completion of the memorial plaque. It was noted that the original design had been adjusted by the College of Arms to ensure that it was appropriate. A letter had been sent to the Earl and Duchess of Wessex's Private Secretary so an appropriate date could be scheduled for the plaque's unveiling. The Committee thanked Councillor Dawson for his generous contribution in producing the silver and gold plaque. The Town Clerk suggested that as Councillor Gloria Johnson had initiated this project, she should be involved in the

presentation. Following debate, it was also the consensus that the £500.00 donation towards the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme would be most fittingly awarded to 2071 Stamford RAF Cadets to support their D of E and Challenge Coin Scheme. It was also wished that this project, and details of the plaque, should be a feature in the Town Council Newsletter.

Action: Town Clerk

Proposal 3 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs M Pitt, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and unanimously **RESOLVED** the £500 be awarded to the ATC and the Town Clerk progresses this project with the plaque being encased in a cabinet. Arrangements for a presentation ceremony to be organised by the Town Clerk with Councillor Gloria Johnson involved in the arrangements.

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

- a. ***Quarter 1 Report and Review of Earmarked Reserves:*** The report had been circulated to all members of the Committee for consideration and comment. The Report would be circulated to all members of the Council and accessible through SharePoint. The new rate per unit for gas was increasing from 8.370p to 11.425p from 24 July 2022. This was noted.
- b. ***External Audit – The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2021/2022*** had been submitted to PKF Littlejohn, the appointed External Auditors. It is anticipated the audit should be completed by September 2022. The Public Rights Notice has been displayed on 09 June 2022 and inspection availability has been available since 13 June 2022 closing on 22 July 2022. It was the consensus that all members of the Finance Committee become involved and familiarise themselves with all aspects of the operation and the inspection of the accounts. It was important that all members undertake LALC Finance training to underpin their understanding. Councillors Hooper and Ford advised that they had completed such training recently which they found very valuable, effective and practical.
- c. ***CCLA Investment Report:*** The latest report had been circulated to the Committee confirming interest of £709.36 earned since the original investment of 31 December 2021. It was also considered that a short-term investment could also be considered later in the year to maximise any gain. This was noted.
- d. ***To consider Schedule for Payments*** - Schedule No 4 had been drafted, it was noted that there were additional invoices to add to the schedule which would be presented to the Town Council for final approval. This was noted.
- e. ***LCC Grass Verge 2022-2023 Renewal Agreement and cutting of Open Spaces*** – The Committee was circulated with the details of the offer by LCC for cutting grass verges in Stamford. It had been noted that the Town Council had agreed that this Agreement should be renewed for 2022-2023. It was noted that the contribution rate from LCC for 2022-2023 is £6,100.68. The Committee recognised that this was for a standard three cuts per annum, which complies with LCC Highways code of practice for grass verge cutting one metre back from the kerb to avoid obstruction to vehicle sight lines. However, the Town Council, due to public request, enhanced the specification to cut and strim the entire areas of highway verge and increase the number of cuts per year from three to four. It was also recognised that the Open Spaces for which the Town Council is responsible are cut at the same time. Some private landowners wished to be included within this schedule and have been invoiced for this service accordingly.

Proposal 4 – It was proposed by Councillor D Dorson, seconded by Councillor S Ford and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Council goes out to tender for the cutting of LCC grass verges and appropriate Open Spaces. The Tender should include two quotes – (i) cut and drop and (ii) cut and collect.

- f. ***UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)*** – The Town Clerk informed the Committee she had met with the SKDC Director of Growth and Culture together with local town and Parish Councils in respect of this funding resource. The objective of the fund is to strengthen social fabric and foster a sense of local pride and belonging through investing in activities which enhance community infrastructure, local green spaces and community-led projects. There is also an element which focuses on local business needs. SKDC must submit a presentation to Government towards their bid for £3,742,639.00 of revenue over a 30month programme running from 2022 until 2025 across the district. Due to the very small window of opportunity to gather information, the Town Clerk had submitted the following list of initiatives which may be considered for Stamford:
- i. Enhancing and introducing information boards or directional signs to support Tourism (E1)
 - ii. Improve disabled access to some local clubs and community facilities (E1)
 - iii. Mobile CCTV Camera unit (E2)
 - iv. Local recycling projects for retail units to reduce single use plastics (E4)
 - v. Introduce Emergency Flooding response centre in Town centre (E4)
 - vi. Provide Cultural Arts programme / Workshops to support health, wellbeing, delivery of Stamford Museum, effective Tourism Centre (E4/5/6)
 - vii. Provide start-up hubs for small businesses; Community Hubs and Fridges (E11)
 - viii. Initiatives to support sustainable green travel (E14)

The Town Clerk now awaits feedback from SKDC in respect of the above projects. This was noted.

Councillor Bisnauthsing also reported that SKDC's Big Clean Team is scheduled to visit Stamford in October and encouraged all Ward Councillors to feed back any 'grot spots' in their areas which required attention.

- g. ***Changing Places Funding*** – The Chairman Councillor Mrs M Pitt confirmed that Stamford had been successful in achieving funding towards the provision of a toilet facility designed for people with multiple and complex disabilities. A recent site visit was conducted with SKDC's Asset Officer, Architect, together with herself and the Town Clerk examining various sites. It was understood that the funding towards a project had to be commenced swiftly to avoid losing the £40K resource. Feedback is from SKDC in respect of the feasibility of the various suggested sites – The Shack; Recreation Ground Toilets and the toilet facility by the grass tennis courts.
- h. ***Ukrainian Welcome Reception and Dinner*** – The Town Clerk reminded the Committee that at the beginning of June an email been circulated to members of the Town Council in respect of supporting the fund up to the sum of £500.00 towards hosting Ukrainian Refugees arriving in Stamford. The feedback from Councillors was positive.

Proposal 5 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Council support the Ukrainian Welcome Dinner up to the value of £500.00.

149. **ASSETS (Agenda Point 7)**

- a. ***Update on Cemetery Lodge Roof Repairs*** – It was reported that work on the roof of the Cemetery Lodge is progressing, and it had been confirmed that all materials had been secured. It was anticipated that this task should be completed by September 2022. Councillor D Dorson offered to monitor the work as he visited the Cemetery regularly.
- b. ***Town Hall Internal Repairs*** - It was reported that the emergency repairs to the Gent's toilet unit in the Town Hall has been completed at a cost of £1,646.64. The cistern located behind the wall had split and has been replaced. The service access point to the cistern had been improved by making it slightly larger. This was noted.

Details of the internal work was outlined in respect of the leaking roof void above the stair passage opposite the Archive leading to St. Mary's Place. A Party Wall Agreement is being secured with the neighbour and the Listed Planning Application approval is awaited. It was noted that the estimated cost for the roof work is £7,695.50 + VAT. There will be additional cost of £1,000.00 for the Architect's cost and a further cost for some minor electrical work which will need to be undertaken by the Town Council.

Proposal 7 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor D Dorson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that this urgent work at the projected cost of £10,000.00 + VAT is approved and expedited before the onset of winter.

c. *Special Expense Areas / Community Asset Transfer* – The Town Clerk reported that the arrangement for transfer of the Uffington and Empingham Playing Fields is progressing. The Town Council's decision to take on the Red Lion Square toilet facilities had also been communicated to SKDC's Asset Officer. It was noted that the Red Lion Square Public conveniences are currently open Monday to Thursday, Saturday and Sunday from 9am until 4pm (7hrs x 6 days = 42hrs) and on Friday from 7am until 4pm (9hrs x 1day = 9hrs). Following discussion, it was recognised that a quote has been requested for a cleaner to be present throughout the day and also to include the unlocking and locking of the Recreation Ground Toilets on Saturday and Sunday from 8.30am until 4.30 pm with a refresh once a day. This was noted. A further site visit to the Red Lion Square public conveniences is being arranged and details awaited.

d. *Open Spaces offer by Vistry Homes* – The Committee were circulated with the offer by Vistry Homes of the three open spaces of land between Arran Road and Cedar Road., which the Town Council has agreed to adopt. It was reported that Vistry has agreed to pay for the solicitor's costs for both parties; the land will be transferred at no cost; tree works will be undertaken before any transfer. This was noted.

e. *Booking at Town Hall and Civil Ceremonies:*

Civil Ceremonies: There were three Civil Ceremonies bookings scheduled. The bookings were for Wednesday 03 August 2022 in the Parlour at 1pm; two requests for 2023 – Saturday 10 June 2023 at 2pm and Saturday 17 June at 12noon both in the Court Room at the standard booking cost. This was noted.

Proposal 8 – It was proposed by Councillor S Ford, seconded by Councillor D Taylor and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Civil Ceremonies above are granted approval.

Town Hall:

- *Court Room – Thursday 21 July 2022 Twinning Reception* - The Committee was circulated with details of the welcome reception for the Vence Twinning visitors. This was supported and the Mayor had offered one of his free allocations for this event.
- *Court Room – Tuesday 20 September 2022 Art Pop Up* – The Committee was circulated with the details of the request which had been received from Art Pop-Up. Following debate, it was noted that this organisation wished to promote a short film premiere of the youth workshop work project which it was anticipated would be held at the Shack. It was observed that this project would be receiving Art Council Funding. It was appreciated that this organisation is not a Charity but a Community Interest Company. The Town Clerk suggested that either the concessionary rate of £100.00 is applied or the Mayor may be able to offer

another of his free-of-charge allocation to this organisation. It was the consensus that this organisation should be charged the standard rate. It should also be confirmed whether an entry fee is to be applied in respect of the viewing.

It was also noted that Art Pop-Up has requested permission to install a banner on the railings of the Town Hall from 30 August until 03 September 2022 to promote the Youth Art Workshops. This was noted

Proposal 9 – It was proposed by Councillor D Dorson, seconded by Councillor D Taylor and unanimously **RESOLVED** Art Pop-Up is charged at the standard charge rate for hire. Permission is also granted for the attachment of a banner on the Town Hall railings from 30 August until 03 September 2022 to promote the Youth Art Workshops.

SHACK:

- *Art Pop-Up, Youth Arts workshops:* The Committee discussed the request by Art Pop-Up to use the Shack from 28 July 2022 until 03 September 2022. It was understood the organiser would be using the Shack on Thursdays between the stated dates for 3 hours from 6pm to 9pm and on Saturday and Sunday for 6 hours from 10am to 4pm. Total cost of £300.00.

Proposal 10 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the hire of the Shack by Art Pop Up is approved at the cost of £10.00 per hour for the total of 30hours (Total Cost £300.00)

- *Armed Forces Veterans Association* – The Committee considered the Stamford Veterans Association request to hire of the Shack seven days a week. It was noted that this request had been considered before and there was serious concern that this could be an eventual extension of the Veterans Breakfast Club. Following debate, it was considered that the Shack could not be provided free of charge and there would be a cost involved. It was appreciated that the Association was willing to work with other organisations to develop the Shack not only as a Community Hub but also a location that the Veterans would consider a base to operate and gather. It was requested that a formal, detailed proposal should be submitted for further consideration.

Proposal 11 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor D Taylor and unanimously **RESOLVED** that this request is declined until more information is forthcoming.

War Memorial:

- *Polish Veteran's Association* – A request had been received to install a bench at the War Memorial at no cost to the Town Council in recognition of the Polish Veterans. Following discussion, it was agreed that this should be supported but more details in respect of the style of bench should be provided.

Proposal 12 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Sismore, seconded by Councillor S Ford and unanimously **RESOLVED** that this request is supported by the Town Council subject to the provision and approval of the details of the proposed bench.

150. GRANT/DONATION REQUEST TO BE CONSIDERED (Agenda Point 8)

- Stamford Flower Club* - It was noted that an application for Grant Assistance had been received from Stamford Flower Club for £700.00 towards the Club's Floral Event on

Saturday 17 September 2022 in St. Michael's Churchyard. The Committee considered that this successful event had proved very popular with visitors and should be supported.

Proposal 13 – It was proposed by Councillor J Dawson, seconded by Councillor D Dorson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the full grant of £700.00 is awarded.

- ii. *Royal British Legion* – It was noted that an application for Grant Assistance had been received from the Royal British Legion for £1,500.00 towards the Legion's centenary celebrations. The Committee considered that this was an important event which should be recognised and the Grant Award supported.

Proposal 14 – It was proposed by Councillor D Dorson, seconded by Councillor H Bisnauthsing and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the full grant award of £1,500.00 is awarded.

151. PERSONNEL MATTERS (Agenda Point 9) – No issues raised.

152. ITEMS TO BE POSSIBLY CONSIDERED AT FUTURE MEETINGS (Agenda item 10)

The Chairman Councillor Mrs Pitt stated that this is an additional item on the agenda for members of the Committee to raise items which could be discussed at the next meeting.

- i. *Grant Award Criterion* - Councillor D Taylor wished that this is reviewed. It was agreed this item is placed on the next agenda.
- ii. *Recruiting a second Operative* – Councillor D Dorson wished that the recruitment of a second Operative is reviewed. The Committee considered that this proposal had already been deemed unwarranted by the Town Council, and would not be discussed further.
- iii. *Outdoor Gym PL Insurance and maintenance* – Councillor D Dorson wished this item is reviewed by the Finance Committee. It was agreed that this item is placed on the next agenda.

153. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: (Agenda Point 11) – Tuesday 16 August 2022

The Chairman
Closed the meeting at 20.50pm