**Finance and Asset Management Committee**

**Tuesday 21April 2023**

**Council Chamber**

**6.30 pm - 8.30 pm**

**Attendees: Cllrs. N Penny, M Cox, C Elsmore, M Beard**

**Cllr Getgood in attendance also re: Item 5**

1. Apologies were received from Cllrs. Holloway, Baker, and Allaway-Martin
2. There were no declarations of interest re: Items in the agenda
3. No dispensation requests received.
4. The minutes of 21 March 23 were proposed, seconded, and agreed, with one abstention due to absence

**Cllr. Penny signed a copy of the minutes as a true record**

1. To raise matters arising from the Minutes of 21 March 2023:

**Re: Item 7 b: Pensions Discretion Policy Declarations** The Town Clerk updated, expressing disappointment that the Workshop had been deferred due to low attendance; 1 Councillor, 2 apologies, and needed to be progressed urgently for compliance reasons.

**Re: Item 8: Tree Management / Stock Survey** Clarity was sought on this recommendation, and it was agreed that more work was required on stock, in advance of this work being commissioned; and for Cllr. M Cox to work with the office on thi**s.**

**Re: Item 11: Grant Application: Mid Wyedean Parish ‘Mustard Tree’** Cllr. Penny reported positively on this event, having attended, and stated that Matthew Parker, newly nominated CTC Councillor, had directed this event.

**Re: Item 17: Mushet Walk** Cllr. M Cox reported that this was being considered further in the context of a Planning application, although lighting had not been included. Cllr. Penny also reported that he had understood that lighting had been passed to this Council, by arrangement, and this to be investigated further

**Re: Item 18 1. 2 Picnic Benches**: Cllr Getgood summarised the latest position, and Cllr. Penny, in noting, feedback summary thoughts. After further discussion it was proposed, and unanimously agreed that this Item should be further considered at Full Council next week (25 April 23).

**Item 18. 7 Planters & Plant Baskets Quotation**

The Town presented revised Quotation, and it was agreed that this should be considered at next Full Council meeting, next week, 25 April 23

**Cllr. Penny signed a copy of the minutes as a true record**

1. There were no members of the public present

**Item 11: Grant Applications**

**6.40pm Cllr. Getgood left the meeting**

1. **To consider any relevant Staffing, and related, Matters, and to make any recommendations, as necessary (‘In Committee’):**

**6.45 Laura-Jade Schroeder left the meeting**

* 1. **‘Signing-off’ of Town Clerk’s Appraisal**

Cllr. Penny confirmed that he had ‘signed-off’ the Town Clerk report, stating that he had understood the Town Clerk’s comments re: him being excluded from the Appraisal Assessment process, but was able to overall comment, with positive endorsement, and the Town Clerk was content. After further discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. M Cox, in light of this appraisal, with unanimous agreement:

**Recommendation:**

1. **to award the Town Clerk and Pay Award Increase of 1 Point, within his Pay Band.**

**6.56 Laura-Jade Schroeder re-entered the meeting**

* 1. **Staff Appraisal matters and Process**

The Town Clerk reported that all other employee Staff Appraisal meetings were now scheduled, and Appraisal Reports would hopefully be ‘signed off’ by end of May, which Cllr. Penny acknowledged was a significant improvement regarding timings, and recorded thanks to Cllr. M Cox, the Town Clerk, and other Councillors involved in this Appraisal work, to have embedded, and integrated this key process, so successfully

Cllr. M Cox further led discussion, on a number of aspects re: Appraisal process and, after further discussion, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that:

**Recommendations:**

**Re: Appraisal Training:**

**2. For all Councillors, in the new Council, to undertake Appraisal Training, regarding the collection of evidence / examples in an ‘evidence log’, to better serve 360 Degree reporting, and Reviews, when asked;**

**Re: Appraisal Responsibilities:**

**3. For all Councillors on F & AM Committee to undertake full ‘Appraisal Training’, to support, and share, the Appraisal Team role, and responsibilities, re: Staff Appraisal for employees**

**Note: The Chair of Council, excluded from the Appraisal Process, to ‘ring-fence’ if needing to consider any disputed Appraisals**

**Note: Appraisal Training scheduled for Jun23, of New Council**

* 1. **Employee Salary Sacrifice Car Scheme**

The Town Clerk placed this Item in context, fully supporting its adoption, and Laura-Jade Schroeder more personally expanded re: her personal request for it to be considered. After further discussion, it was agreed that this was a supportive Scheme that Council should adopt, and it was proposed, and unanimously agreed that:

**Recommendation:**

**4. the Town Council Register with the Scheme, to secure more information, and specific figures, to then consider an application from this employee further**

**Note: It was also unanimously agreed that this Scheme would be equally available to other employees, as necessary, subject to agreement on the receipt of an application**

* 1. **LGPS Statement of Policy on Discretions**

The Town Clerk further summarised, and presented draft Pensions Discretions Policy for Completion through facilitated meeting, which was agreed could be held after CTC Clock Tower Committee meeting on Monday (24 April), to then be presented to Full Council for agreement, and ‘sign-off’ (See Item 5 also).

1. **To consider Contractor Increase Rates request(s), and make recommendations as necessary**

Requests from 2 Contractors were considered and, after further discussion, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed that:

**Recommendation:**

**5. both Contractors should provide more evidence / examples, where the increases have occurred and, subject to this being reasonably justified, for increased rates to be implemented in accordance with the appropriate RPI rates applied by FoDDC**

1. **To consider Bus Shelter quotations from GCC, and make recommendations, as necessary**

The Town Clerk summarised the GCC proposals, and the Town Centre Bus Shelter Seating work was noted. After further discussion, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that:

**Recommendation:**

**Re: Coalway Bus Shelter**

**6. the Town Clerk should progress this work, in consultation with GCC contact, noting the figures, and match funding, to engage Environmental Committee regarding environmental aspects, and enhancement**

1. **To receive update on CTC Premises matters, inc. potential expansion of Estate, to make recommendations, as necessary**

The Town Clerk, and Cllr. Penny provided updates on premises being considered, and further avenues were suggested re: architect assessments on one of the locations

1. **To consider Cllr. Kyne’s email re: ‘Coronation Event’ Trader Voucher Scheme, and to make recommendations, as necessary**

The Town Clerk updated following his discussions with Cllr. Kyne, and his email was further considered regarding auditing, and transactional aspects of this Scheme. After further discussion, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that

**Recommendations:**

**7. that the Voucher Scheme proceeds, with designated Traders, and that Traders will be required to note the value of the transaction, on the ‘used and traded’ Voucher, which will be the value to be reimbursed on submission to Council, for payment**

1. **To consider Broadwell Youth FC hire of KGV, and make recommendations, as necessary**

The request from Broadwell FC was consideredand, after further discussion, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that:

**Recommendations:**

**8. a three year lease is offered to Broadwell FC, with a specific schedule of sessions included, as a condition (to allow for other groups to potentially hire, around those times); and for this Lease to be reviewed each 12 months**

**9. Re: Payment of Hire the Town Clerk / RFO agree with Broadwell FC, the payment arrangements, as necessary, in accordance with current rates, e.g. monthly Direct Debit, if more convenient**

1. **To consider Quotations re: Cemetery Arisings: to make recommendations as necessary**

The Town Clerk summarised the position regarding arisings, in light of the Bels Field activity having been agreed to be undertaken by the current Contractor.

**Re: Quotations for Cemetery Arisings work**

After further discussion, and clarification, regarding Contractual matters, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed that:

**Recommendations:**

**10. the current Contractor undertaking Cemetery Grass Cutting (in light of his statement to request exclusion from the ‘wild grass’ areas) to be formally written to, specifying these areas now to be excluded from his contractual work (with specified map), but to reinforce the Contractual requirements still to undertake the hedge work, currently specified in the Contract, including the boundary hedging where the ‘wild grass’ areas are.**

**11. Monmouth County Council quotations re: Cemetery work, are agreed, as presented, and for this to be carried forward, as necessary, liaising with Environment Committee**

1. **To consider Cemetery Mapping Services and Quotation, and make recommendations, as necessary**

Cllr. M Cox led discussion on this Item and, after further clarification, it was proposed, and recommended, that:

**Recommendation:**

**12. The Town Clerk seeks further clarification re: costs, and compatibility re: software, as well as seeking comparable quotations, and to report back to Council**

1. **To receive an update, re: Angus Buchanan Trust matters, and make recommendations, as necessary**

The Town Clerk reported that he had sought Legal engagement re ‘Easement’, although further information was not currently available. This was noted, with encouragement, for the Clerk, to also seek legal advice from other known sources.

1. **To consider subscription to Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism, and make recommendations, as necessary**

Cllr. Penny summarised and, after further discussion, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed that:

**Recommendations:**

**13. The Town Clerk engages Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism further, in light of our high profile tourism activity, through the TIC, to seek an upgrade from our current ‘small silver’ package, to a ‘small gold’ package, at no additional cost.**

**8.25 A ten-minute extension was proposed, and unanimously agreed**

1. **To consider CCTV requirements, and to make recommendations as necessary**

The Town Clerk presented the 2023/24 Invoice from current CCTV providers, simply wanting to raise this matter afresh, and to provoke a discussion regarding our CTC requirements. After further discussion, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that:

**Recommendation:**

**14. this Item should be scheduled for new Council, at a subsequent F & AM Committee meeting, possibly June / July 23, to review our CTC coverage, and requirements.**

1. **To receive update re: RBS Financial System Closedown, to make recommendations, as necessary**

The Town Clerk, and RFO updated on the ‘Closedown’ activity, reporting that it should be completed within the next week; although had identified some VAT issues, which were currently being assessed by Rialtas, and was still showing 2 outstanding Quarterly VAT refunds from previous years, which were being pursued, but with difficulties due to HMRC resource delays, and backlogs. This was noted, and also that Payment listings for April 23 Full Council would be presented off-system on excel spreadsheets, which was further noted

1. **To receive update on Parish Inspections, and to make recommendations, as necessary**

The Town Clerk drew attention to some outstanding issues e.g. shelter at Bells Field, and this was noted, for new Council to further consider

1. **To review, and receive update on Committee Tracker**

There was some discussion re: Tracker, and the Town Clerk stated that he had been looking more critically at its purpose, and tracking methods, esp. re: prioritising and, after further discussion, it was recognised that the Tracker system had come a long way, but needed more refining, and re-setting, to properly track actions. It was also recognised that any refinements should be consistently applied across all Committees.

**8.35 pm Meeting ended**