

REPORT of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee  
held on Thursday 26 November 2020, virtually by Zoom

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Present: Cllr Chris Davies (Chairman)  
Cllr Jayne Stansfield  
Cllr Clive Parkinson  
Cllr Matthew Stringer  
Cllr Maggie Tyrrell (arrived late)  
Cllr Bob Griffin  
Cllr Benj Emmerson  
Cllr Guy Rawlinson  
Cllr Shirley Holloway

Louise Powell (Town Clerk)  
Minutes done from recording by Hannah Cornford

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**1. TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Eva Fielding – indisposed  
Cllr Helen Harrison – work commitment

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBER’S DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Emmerson declared an interest in one of the organisations to be discussed in item 13.

**3. TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public present.

*(Cllr Tyrrell arrived)*

**5. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON POLICING MATTERS (taken out of order)**

The committee was joined by PCSO Sheryl Drewitt who gave a comprehensive report on what was happening in the town. The Police had been very busy over the September-November period with Halloween and Bonfire Night, but staffing was now back to full capacity, which was good. There had been lots of incidents with youths throwing fireworks, including at the police. They had given lots of warnings and had tracked down and talked to individuals and their parents.

Burglaries were low, there had been one, but they had suspects for this crime. There were also suspects for the damage that had been caused to planters on the High Street and interviews with these suspects would be taking place soon. A group of known individuals who were taking part in anti-social behaviour and had received warnings also. They had CCTV footage of suspects damaging property in St Mary Centre.

Cllr Holloway congratulated the police on their results this period which were impressive. Cllr Emmerson queried where the fireworks were being sourced from. Sheryl explained that a lot of the big, organised events had not been able to take place this year and some were

probably trying to sell off their unused fireworks. They were investigating various suppliers and trading standards were involved.

Sheryl confirmed that the quiet streets could be contributing to the damage, as there are fewer people around to witness incidents. It helps to have through traffic so that opportunistic criminals are discouraged from having a go.

Sheryl was thanked for her attendance and left.

**4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES AND DISCUSS MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FINANCE & POLICY MEETING OF 29.10.20**

The minutes were agreed to be a true record.

**6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL MATTERS**

(a) To approve the Accounts for Payment

Cllr Stringer proposed the accounts for payment, seconded by Cllr Rawlinson and unanimously agreed.

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**ACCOUNTS PAID OUT OF MEETING**

South Glos Council	Rates (DD) – Town Hall	1310.00
South Glos Council	Rates (DD) - Cemetery	334.00
Avon Local Councils Assoc	Essential Councillors Course	60.00
Town Council Employee	Expenditure Claim	58.61
VP Plc Gravshore	Shoring Fluid	184.80
** Amazon co.uk	LED Energy Saving Light Bulbs	7.99
Bristol Fire	Fire Risk Assessment – Bakery,T/Hall,Pavilion	1299.00

**ACCOUNTS NOW DUE FOR PAYMENT – 26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

**Central Services**

Sage UK	Accounts Software – Final Payment	102.00
MCL Limited	Photocopier Charges	39.94
SLCC	Cilca Qualification Fee	410.00
Abbey Lifts Ltd	Lift Repair	439.20
Consortium	Cleaning Materials	143.15
DCS 2 Way Radio Ltd	Ofcom Licence	112.50
Acorn Recruitment	Temporary Cleaning Staff	93.02
Biffa Waste Services	Waste Disposal- T/Hall	88.61

**Playing Fields & Cemetery**

Abbey Loos Ltd	Mobile Porto loo Charges – March 20	104.40
Avon Display	Safety Signage	99.60
Alexandra	Staff Workwear	17.33
Rexel UK Ltd	Philips Lighting	143.18

Biffa Waste Services	Waste Disposal – Pavilion	372.05
Biffa Waste Services	Waste Disposal – Cemetery	84.24

### **Land & Property**

T H White Group	Fire Alarm Panel – Replacement	702.36
T.Hopkins Roofing & Building	Roof Repair – Bakery Annex (split bill)	180.00

### **Environment**

South Glos Council	Dog Waste Collection/Grass Cutting Services	5625.07
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### **Armstrong Hall**

Ecotricity.co.uk	Electricity Supply – Thornbury Museum	277.73
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### **\*\* Credit Card Payment**

- (b) To receive the income and expenditure report for October 2020 and any matters arising

The Clerk explained that overall, the Council was showing a small underspend. This is due to grants that had not been paid due to lack of activity and some larger works that had been postponed due to COVID-19 such as the roof repairs to the Town Hall and play area works. There was an overspend on professional fees due to the continuing requirement for a locum finance officer.

- (c) To receive and approve the reconciliation report for October 2020

Barclays had acknowledged receipt of the forms to close the accounts. The report was proposed by Cllr Stringer, seconded by Cllr Emmerson and unanimously agreed.

- (d) To receive feedback from the budget working group

The Clerk had issued a draft copy of the budget and the group had been through proposed additions and changes to the budget. She had received advice from a recent training session that contingency should increase where risk is high such as if the Council had aging assets and or those with considerable use. A 3% minimum inflation rate was therefore considered appropriate, and Councillors could consider adding more into contingency budgets. Council could also consider putting money aside each year for future replacement/ repair of assets into Earmarked reserves.

- (e) To receive an update on any further financial matters

There were none.

### **7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLORS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL**

Cllr Parkinson had attended meetings, but the reports were not yet ready.

### **8. TO CONSIDER ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING DRAFT POLICIES:**

- a) Equality and Diversity Policy

The Clerk explained that there was a need for a high-level policy across all areas of operation. We have a staff handbook which this policy works alongside, but the scope could be expanded at a later date. At the moment, this policy was focused on staff rather than the public. Cllr Emmerson proposed to adopt this policy, seconded by Cllr Stansfield and unanimously agreed.

b) Press & Media Policy

Cllr Emmerson queried point 7 which led to discussion around the matter. It was agreed that staff would look into similar policies at other councils to see how they compare, and it would be brought back to a future meeting.

9. **TO CONSIDER COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS:**

a) South Gloucestershire Council's budget for 2020-2021

This was considered to be a South Glos matter and Council had no comment.

10. **TO DISCUSS A REQUEST FROM THORNBURY VOLUNTEER CENTRE FOR A TRUSTEE**

Cllr Holloway expressed an interest in the position and would speak with the Volunteer Centre.

11. **TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY**

There were no issues.

12. ***To resolve under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.***

Resolved.

13. **TO DISCUSS LEASING ISSUES**

One party had agreed to a lease and were working on plans to include Council requests. Our solicitors dealing with this lease had needed to be changed.

There had been nothing heard from another party in connection to a different lease.

A third party was coming to the end of their lease and the Clerk was speaking to solicitors about necessary requirements.

14. **TO DISCUSS THE COUNCIL'S BUILDING CONDITION SURVEYS**

The Clerk suggested a way forwards which she strongly recommended. Cllr Stansfield felt that having a rolling programme of property maintenance was very important. Cllr Parkinson proposed that a working group be set up to look at this, seconded by Cllr Emmerson and unanimously agreed. The working group would be comprised of Cllrs Griffin, Parkinson, Davies and Stansfield.

**15. TO DISCUSS PROPERTY RELATING TO A STAFFING MATTER**

One option was ruled out and another suggestion given by the Clerk. Cllr Stansfield proposed to follow the suggestion, seconded by Cllr Tyrrell and unanimously agreed.

**16. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUOTATIONS:**

a) Additional fire detectors for the Town Hall

A quote had been given by the company contracted to look after the Council fire systems. All were in favour of accepting the quote.

b) LOLER quotations for Town Hall flagpoles

Three quotes had been given. Cllr Griffin proposed to take the middle one, as the cheapest one was likely to have additional costs of an amount unknown. Cllr Stringer seconded this and it was unanimously agreed.

c) Legal advice for the Town Council on relationship with the Trust

A workshop had been arranged.