



# Sodbury Town Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Finance & General Purposes Committee

### 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 via Zoom

**Committee Members:** Councillors B Allen, J Ball (Chairman), C Hays (Vice), M Lewis, P Rumney & A Williams

**Present:** Councillors B Allen, J Ball, C Hays & P Rumney

Cate Davidson – Town Clerk

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**47. Apologies**

No apologies were received. Councillors Lewis and Williams were absent

**48. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared at this time.

**49. Approval of Minutes of 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

It was **Resolved** the Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020 are approved as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman

**50. Matters Arising**

No matters were reported at this time.

**51. Budget Reports to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020**

The Clerk circulated the income and expenditure reports with the agenda for this meeting. Members noted that the spend is at 38% of budget currently. Due to the COVID pandemic some annual services have not taken place and this will lead to some savings. It is expected much of these will be offset by the additional costs particularly in the additional cleaning of the public conveniences that is required to meet HSE guidelines.

**52. Bank Reconciliation**

The Clerk circulated Banks Statements and Reconciliations to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. These were noted and approved by members.

**53. Public Conveniences**

The Clerk reported that she has been working with South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) since April to get the public conveniences open. HSE has introduced stringent guidelines for the cleaning to reduce the risk of the transmission of Coronavirus. The facilities have been open since mid June.

SGC had been extremely co-operative and offered to take over the cleaning of the facilities at no cost to the Council until the 1<sup>st</sup> September which the Clerk gratefully accepted. SGC are locking and unlocking the facilities daily, cleaning 3 times a day and carrying out a deep clean once a week.

The Clerk has agreed to extend the service and pay for this for the month of September and the Committee was now asked to consider whether to continue with the service. The total monthly cost for the services as described is £1,361.94, it is hoped this will be reduced once monthly deep cleans are no longer required. The

previous cost for cleaning once a day was £775 and it was noted that since SGC had taken over the service had been significantly better.

It was **Resolved** that the Town Council would continue with this service with South Gloucestershire Council until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This Committee recommends to Full Council that this service is continued next year but due to the significant cost Full Council is to review the matter at its annual budget meeting.

**54. Grant Applications**

Members received grant applications and it was **Resolved** that the following applications are approved:

- St John The Baptist Church, Old Sodbury - £2,000 towards Churchyard maintenance
- St John The Baptist Church, Chipping Sodbury - £2,000 towards Churchyard maintenance

**55. Budget 2021/22**

The Clerk reminded members that the budget will be considered at the next meeting of this Committee. It was noted that there is likely to be a reduction in the council tax base due to the increase in people having to claim Council Tax Relief due to COVID-19. STC had a reduction to its tax base last year (reasons not specified by SGC) so kept the precept required at the same amount which led to an increase to council taxpayers. It will not be possible to do this next year without some cuts to services.

The Clerk asked members if there any specific matters they want considered during budget preparation – none were raised at this time.

**56. Items to report**

The Clerk has received a quote in relation to Christmas Tree services which is an increase on last year, due to the fact there is no Markets meeting before the work is needed members were asked to approve a quote of £2,860. It was **Resolved** this quote is accepted and the contractor appointed to carry out the usual services.

Members were informed the Parish Plan group has asked to use the meeting room; the Clerk has concerns about meetings of other groups taking place in STC premises due to COVID-19. Members were happy for the Parish Plan group to use the room as long as the Councillor who was present ensured appropriate cleaning took place before and after the meeting.

**57. Date of next meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> November, 19.30 via Zoom**

The meeting closed at 20:20

Signed .....

Dated .....