**Market Drayton Town Council**

**Minutes of a Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 19 August 2021 at 7.35pm.**

**PRESENT: Councillors: R. Aldcroft, T. Beckett, B. Chapman, M. Erwin, T. Manton (Chairman), I. Nellins and M. Smith.**

There was 3 member of the public present and 1 member listening via Teams.

**Present:** **Town Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Projects Officer.**

The Chairman apologised for the delay with the meeting; this was because of technical issues experienced and announced the meeting was being recorded and live streamed.

**1.FG APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Chevins and Whittle due to work commitments and Councillor Hughes due to other commitments.

**2.FG DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillor Aldcroft declared an interest in item 6.FG Small Grants for Market Drayton Churches Together and will leave the Chamber when the discussions are made.

Councillor Chapman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6.FG Small Grants for Market Drayton Community Speed Watch and will be abstaining from the vote.

There were no other disclosable pecuniary interests declared.

**3.FG PUBLIC SESSION**

 No members of the public had requested to speak.

**4.FG MINUTES**

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Chapman seconded and it was **RESOLVED** with 1 abstention:

**To confirm and agree the minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 8 July 2021.**

**5.FG GRANTS POLICIES**

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

1. **Large Grant policy and application form**

Councillor Aldcroft thought the policy has been very well written and put together. He thought the appropriate ward councillor should be aware of how the awarded grant project is progressing instead of Council Officers.

Councillor Erwin suggested a staggered release in funds instead of it all being issued at once and would large grants be advertised on the website.

The Clerk said members should look and consider each large grant individually and decide then how the awarded money should be given.

The Chairman said it would be a positive thing to advertise and promote the grants on the website.

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Chapman seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

 **To approve the large grants policy and application form.**

1. **Small grants protocol**

 The Chairman said there is four thousand pounds allocated to small grants within budget; the money goes directly to small organisations and groups that see a lot of benefits from the money and is such a positive act the council do.

Councillor Chapman proposed, Councillor Smith seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

 **To approve the small grants protocol.**

**6.FG SMALL GRANTS**

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor Aldcroft left the Chamber.

 After a brief discussion

 Councillor Nellins proposed, Councillor Beckett seconded and it was **RESOLVED** with 1 abstention:

 **To agree to award £300 to the follow Small Grants applications:**

1. **Market Drayton Churches Together**
2. **Market Drayton Good Neighbours Scheme**
3. **Market Drayton Foodbank**
4. **Market Drayton Community Speed Watch**

 Councillor Nellins pointed out that three of the four small applications were from the same person, for transparency and possible auditing purposes should be looked into more next time.

 The Chairman said he understood and the person is a Treasurer for all the organisations.

 Councillor Aldcroft entered the Chamber and re-joined the meeting.

**7.FG LIVE STREAMING OF MEETINGS**

 The Chairman reported and updated members from the Working Group.

 He said the task has been more complex and difficult than they first thought but is keen to resolve to sound quality as quickly as possible so that residents logging on virtually can hear the meetings clearly.

 Councillor Aldcroft said Shropshire Council use individual microphones at their meetings and suggested contacting them for advice.

 The Projects Officer said she had contacted them at the start of the pandemic for advice but they were not keen on helping. She said she will approach them again.

 Councillor Smith said he has contacted a local firm who have confirmed they do not supply conference systems. He also confirmed the unit Council currently use to live stream meetings is their property, it has not been paid for and they want it returning.

 The Clerk said Councillor Smiths comment about the speaker is incorrect. The microphone used in meetings now and is Teams compatible has been purchased and paid for from a different supplier. The microphone Councillor Smith is referring to has been returned to the local firm.

 Members **NOTED** the report from the Working Group.

**8.FG SOCIAL MEDIA**

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chairman said members have been sent a link of the sample Town Councils website and there are pictures on the desk for information. He asked for members thoughts.

Councillor Aldcroft was conscious that the Chamber of Trade are also currently setting up a website for local shops and business and thought we should work together and share information.

The Chairman thought this would be a good idea.

Councillor Chapman asked if the cost just covers building the structure of the website, would the administration staff be able to change the layout and information easily?

The Chairman said there will be training given once the work has been completed, it should be relatively straight forward and will be kept up to date by the admin staff. He suggested members should also take pictures and forward them to the office with a few words so they can be uploaded on to the website so it becomes more informative.

Councillor Erwin said Councillor Smith knows a lot about producing websites and asked him if he feels this sample website looks good value for money.

Councillor Smith said the template to build the website is from a WordPress script; he likes the design and the costing of £500 to £750 is good value for money.

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Chapman seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To agree to go ahead and have a new Town Councils website and Facebook page.**

**To work along side the Chamber of Trade to share information**

**Agree funding of up to £750 for the new Website and Facebook page to be created.**

**9.FG THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECK**

The Chairman said members are visiting and attending playparks and events. He thought it would be a good idea to carry out a basic DBS check for all staff and members and asked members thoughts.

 Councillor Aldcroft said it is important to safeguard all involved.

 Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Erwin seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

 **To carry out a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service check on all Employees and Members every four years at the start of a new Council.**

**10.FG FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

 The Clerk said it is a formality that members approve the NALC Legal Topic Note on the Freedom of Information; she said there are very little changes, the only changes that have been made is in paragraph seven on the ICO guide on what you can refuse on answering which is very limited.

 Councillor Erwin said in the past he is aware the Council have received a lot of Freedom of Information requests and asked if we have received any lately.

 The Clerk said he was correct; she has had several requests but not recently.

 Councillor Nellins proposed, Councillor Erwin seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

 **To accept the National Association Of Local Councils Legal Topic Note on the Freedom of Information.**

**11.FG BANK SIGNATORY**

 i) The Chairman said due to the Clerk retiring shortly, members need to agree to add the new Clerk onto the bank signatory list.

 Councillor Chapman proposed, Councillor Aldcroft seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

 **To add the new Clerk onto the bank signatory list.**

1. The Chairman said due to a member resigning who was on the bank signatory list members should consider a replacement.

Councillor Beckett said he works from home, is easily available if a signature is required and would like to be considered be a bank signatory to the Council.

No other members came forward.

Councillor Nellins proposed, Councillor Aldcroft seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To add Councillor Beckett to the bank signatory list.**

**12.FG FINANCIAL REPORT**

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chairman asked if there were any comments members would like to make.

There were no comments made.

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Chapman seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To agree the income and expenditure report: 1 July 2021 – 31 July 2021.**

**13.FG INFORMATION**

Members **NOTED:**

\* The Chamber window has been ordered, the 50% deposit has been processed and fitting has been pencilled in for 1 October 2021.

\* A meeting with the Working Group and Inspector Greenaway has been requested and agreed for 31 August 2021.

 The Chairman said if anyone has any policing issues to ensure they contact the Chair’s and they will ask the relevant questions on their behalf and report back to them.

The meeting concluded 8.13 pm.

Chairman ……………………………. Date …………………………….