

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

19th September 2017

At a meeting of the **Finance & Governance Committee** held in the Assembly Rooms on **Tuesday 19th September 2017**

Present: Councillors H Bushell (Chairman), P Duigan, R Hambidge and L Monument.

Also in attendance Town Clerk T Needham.

1. **To receive apologies for absence.**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H Clarke.
2. **Declaration of Interest.**
There were no declarations of interest.

The meeting was adjourned to receive a presentation from CHIPs summer play scheme. CHIPs has been organising summer play schemes for 39 years, the Town Council's funding was important because it enabled the scheme to be planned in advance before the majority of funding from the participants is collected. The scheme normally caters for around 100 children with an increase to 140 last year.

Meeting resumed.

3. **To consider Grants**
The following grants were recommended.

Organisation	Amount recommended	Purpose of grant
Dereham & District Allotment & Gardeners Society	£300	Towards cost of annual horticultural show
Dereham Windmill	£500	Towards cost of multi media display.

4. **To discuss possible grant policy to support aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan.**
The Clerk informed the meeting that from the consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan, improving the vibrancy of the Town Centre has come out as an important aspiration for many residents. The Committee discussed ideas around supporting potential voluntary groups which may want to improve the Town through initiatives such as Dereham in Bloom.

The committee discussed ways of removing financial barriers to volunteers wanting to improve the environment through the Councils grant scheme. The committee agreed to look at a detailed policy following the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5. **Report on expenditure against budget.**

The report was presented; the Clerk highlighted the following points which Councillors should be aware of.

Cost centre	Title	Comment
Allotments	Rent	Invoices sent out in October
Assembly Rooms	Cleaning	Contract cleaning introduced at weekends, as part of public toilet cleaning.
Assembly Rooms	General repairs	Two repairs to saniflow system
Cemetery	Burial Fees	Digging fees will be incurred until a new member of staff is recruited.
Memorial Hall	Fire protection and maintenance	£3,187, cost of servicing gas engines service every 5 years. i.e. £319 per unit per year.
Play and open spaces	Rent for Toftwood play area	The rent has been set at £1,200 per year. The additional amount covers a sum retained from previous year and part of the cost of the rent review.

Councillors asked for the following additional points to be checked.

Etling Green conservation budgeted income.

Neatherd conservation budget

6. **Review 5 year Projects Budget**

The budget was presented by the Clerk and made councillors aware that the budget has been left as it was following the offer to purchase additional open space, with adjustments from the end of the last financial year. The replacement photocopier has been moved to the current financial year as spare parts are no longer available for the current photocopier.

7. **Review Petty cash expenditure**

The report was reviewed with explanation requested for the £43.70 for refreshments; the Clerk explained that this was part of the Civic Sunday.

8. **Update on capital building repairs.**

The committee noted the following on going repairs.

Item	Comment
Repairs to timber cemetery entrance wall	First half of this is now completed
Repairs and paint timber cemetery buildings	This has been delayed because of the entrance timber. May need to wait until spring.
Alarm systems emergency lighting Assembly rooms.	progressing
Electrical test Assembly rooms	Testing of the system identified issues which are being investigated and resolved.
Repairs to 58 Norwich Street	Looking to go out to tender in the new year with work being carried out over the summer.

9. **Other improvements repairs.**

The committee noted the following on going repairs.

Item	Comment
Heating controls Memorial Hall	This is virtually complete and will be tested over the winter.
Off-site computer back up.	This is being installed this week

10. **Discuss and consider up and coming capital building repairs.**

The committee noted the following list, which is considered priority for repairs in addition to items listed on the project budget.

Work	2017/18	2018/19
Memorial Hall Painting		£25,000
Chapel windows	£15,000	
Assembly room window	£1,000	
Assembly rooms external timber		£30,000
Electrical Assembly Rooms	£2,000	
Assembly Rooms internal decoration	£5,000	

Total spend	£23,000	£55,000
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Budget available	£71,500	£56,000
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Balance	£48,500	£49,500
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The Committee recommended that improved lighting levels in the Council Chamber be included as a priority item.

11. **To discuss relationship with Headborough Estate regarding repairs to Assembly Rooms.**

The committee discussed the relationship between the Town Council and the Headborough Estate and how these funds are used.

Given the uncertainty around the relationship between the two bodies:

It was recommended that further work be carried out to research the relationship between the Town Council and Headborough Estate and if nothing already exists then a formal agreement be prepared between the Headborough Estate and the Town Council before the Headborough is asked to fund any additional work which may be construed as being the responsibility of the Town Council.

12. **Update 62 Norwich Street**

The Clerk made the committee aware that a new tenant was now in occupation.

13. **Update on Introduction of Referendum Principles to Local Councils.**

The Clerk informed the meeting that although the threat was still in place nothing has been announced.

14. **To discuss the adoption of the surface water drainage scheme at Etling View.**

The committee discussed the risk regarding the Councils VAT position if the adoption was taken on. It acknowledged that VAT was a complex area and it had been six years since Larking Gowen carried out the last review of VAT.

It was recommended that Larking Gowen be asked to carry out a review of the Council's VAT and the potential impact of adopting the Surface water drainage scheme at Etling View.

Chairman