



EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 16th JANUARY 2023
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, EVESHAM TOWN HALL AT 6:30PM

- PRESENT:** Councillor: Mark Goodge (Mayor)
- Councillors: Sarah Schaathun (Deputy Mayor), Sue Amor, Alan Booth, Jenny Johnson, Robert Hale, Bill Kimberley, Peter Knight, Robbie Raphael, Frances Smith, Julie Tucker, Norbert Tucker and John Clatworthy
- OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mrs Jo Adams, Town Clerk
- ALSO PRESENT:** The Mayor's Chaplain Rt Revd Robert Paterson; 1 representative of the Samuel Wallace Smedley Trusts; 4 members of the public

Prayers were led by the Mayor's Chaplain.

78/22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Nigel Deacon, Wendy Dyke, Andrew Dyke, Patrick Clifford, Chrissy Smith, Beryl Timbrell and Marlene Sale.

79/22 Declarations of pecuniary or other interest

Cllr Hale, agenda item 5 Finance. Shareholder of BHGS.

80/22 Announcements by the Town Mayor

The Mayor had attended several events since his last report. His full report is attached to these minutes.

81/22 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2022 be adopted as a true record.

82/22 Finance: Payments and Receipts for October and November 2022

It was resolved that the Town Council payments for October and November 2022 be approved.

83/22 Budget and Precept for 2023/24

The council discussed the draft budget and its impact on the precept, and the recommendations put forward by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The following had been noted:

The income was anticipated to be broadly similar to the previous year. Grants had been excluded as any awarded grants could be expected to show a matching spend.

Some of the budget figures had been amended based on last year's actual spend or indications from the current year's spend. There were many costs that were repeatable and fixed, such as the costs of rent and contracts. Other budget headings had been increased because there was a need or desire to carry out certain projects during the financial year.

These included:

- The NJC pay rise for 2022/23 +3%. The additional admin salaries were also included.
- An increased budget for software licences as this was overspent.
- Health & Safety including fire extinguisher services, and to fund the new contract for H&S consultancy and support services.
- Internal maintenance of the Town Hall: The budget had been increased to meet the need of internal maintenance being investigated by the working group. The budget was based on redecoration works, as well as routine maintenance.
- Increase in funds available for the council's Small Grants Scheme to provide additional support for town organisations.
- 2023 elections: a budget of £23,000 for the elections in May 2023. Additional elections resulting from casual vacancies were not funded.
- Battleton Brook, for tree works.
- Bus Shelters: The council had received complaints over the state of its bus shelters. The £5,000 budget would make a start on addressing this.
- Trees: Inspections were needed on the council's many trees, the budget included funds to put towards tree works required following these inspections.
- Buildings Maintenance, Cemetery: work was identified for the cemetery chapel buildings, following the recent condition report. The budget would make a start on addressing these issues. Maintenance was also required for cemetery outbuildings.
- Loan Repayment: Discussed further at item 6.
- Additional support for the Samuel Wallace Smedley Trust.

The council resolved to agree the draft budget as presented. This included additional funds for Wallace House of £19,000 that would be drawn from reserves.

With regard to the precept for 2023/24, the following was resolved:

- That a precept be set of £749,708. This would draw £706,992 from taxation resulting in an annual charge to a Band D property of £75.58, a monthly increase of £1.02 per month. The additional requested support for Wallace House of £19,000 would be drawn from reserves. This would be in addition to the proposed £100,000 being drawn from reserves for the Almonry project.

84/22 Matchfunding Almonry Project

Following the submission of the Expression of Interest to the MEND Fund, the Almonry had been invited to apply for £2.6m for restoration works. This application had been submitted and was under consideration with the funders. The outcome would be notified in late March 2023.

At the Extraordinary Town Council meeting in August 2022, it was agreed that the council would meet the cost of the 10% matchfund required under the terms and conditions of the fund. The matchfund amounted to £260,000.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee had made recommendations at its meeting held on the 9th January.

The Council accepted the recommendations from the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The following were confirmed:

- i. To confirm the breakdown of loan and council funds to meet the matchfund for the Almonry bid
It was confirmed that to meet the £260,000 required for the matchfund, £100,000 would be drawn from the council's reserves and a loan of £160,000 would be applied for from the Public Works Loan Board.
- ii. To confirm the amount of the loan
It was confirmed that the amount of loan would be £160,000.
- iii. To confirm the term of the loan
It was confirmed that the annual repayment would be £12,000 per year and the term of the loan would be 21 years. This was with a proviso that, should the interest rate change before the loan had been finalised, the term of the loan would be adjusted to maintain the repayment value at £12,000 per year.
- iv. To confirm that repayments will require an increase in the precept
It was confirmed that the repayments would require an increase in the precept.
- v. To confirm that it will carry out the required public consultation regarding the loan
It was confirmed that the council would carry out the required public consultation regarding the loan.
- vi. To confirm the council's wish to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £160,000 over the borrowing term of 21 years for major refurbishment of the Almonry Museum, being a matchfund of 10% against grant funding from the MEND fund.
The above proposal was agreed, subject to the bid to the MEND fund being successful.

85/22 Coronation of King Charles III

It had been confirmed that the King's Coronation would take place on Saturday 6th May. It was proposed to set up a working group to assist with preparations. Members would be Cllrs Kimberley, Schaathun, Goodge, Booth and Johnson. It was resolved to set a maximum budget of £5000.

86/22 Twinning Association

At the Town Council meeting in October, Mr Worrall had reported that the Twinning Association had ended, and the funds would be transferred to the Town Council as required in the Association's constitution. These had now been received. The Association had been struggling in recent years with a shortage of committee members and local hosts. Currently there were

three twin towns each with a charter with Evesham. It was resolved that the charters would remain and that the funds would be ringfenced for initiatives towards international links with the twin towns.

87/22 Parish Grit Bins

During December, snow fell across Evesham which then turned to ice. The Town Council received calls from the general public asking for pavements to be gritted due to pedestrians slipping. It was resolved not to purchase parish grit bins, but to advise residents to contact their county councillor, or management company if they lived on an unadopted street.

88/22 Christmas Lights

The council's Christmas lights contract had come to an end. The current supplier had put forward costs for a two-year extension. The quotation was noted, but it was resolved that a working group would investigate a new contract, and talk to the existing supplier about requirements.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Public Questions

There were none.

CLlr Mark Goodge
Mayor