



**A MEETING OF ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE AND
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE WAS HELD ON
TUESDAY 30th APRIL 2024 AT 7.00 pm
AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER**

Present

Cllr V Blake (Mayor), Cllr M Bowe (Deputy Mayor), Cllr G Forman and Cllr K Cargill.

In attendance Mrs V Lowe, Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

1. Apologies

None – all councillors present.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on agenda items.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the previous meeting had been signed at Full Council.

4. Matters arising (not otherwise dealt with on the Agenda)

- a.** The Town Clerk reported that there had been more vandalism at Jubilee Fields with another large section of fencing being broken. The broken fencing had been removed to make the site safe and quotes were being obtained for replacement fencing. It was agreed that traditional metal "bow top" playground fencing was probably the best option to consider.
- b.** There is still an impasse between the parties on the new ATFC lease documentation.

5. Staffing Issues

- a.** The Town Clerk reported that she had interviewed candidates for the role of Deputy Town Clerk with the Deputy Mayor. The preferred candidate had been offered the job and had accepted. This offer was subject to references and a DBS check – once these are complete, an announcement will be made.
- b.** The Town Clerk attended the NALC online seminar "Emerging Trends in Local Government Finance", on 24 April 2024.
- c.** The Town Clerk has started on the annual appraisal process. A Staffing Committee meeting will be called in due course to sign off these appraisals and consider any pay reviews.

6. Finance Issues

- a.** The end of year management accounts which had been circulated in advance were approved. These will be signed at Full Council.
- b.** There was a discussion about the level of general reserves. The current level (taking into account the s106 funds referred to in 6c. below) stand at circa £100,000. Ideally this figure should be nearer £180,000 (ie half of the value of the precept). It was agreed that there were limited options for making savings in the annual budget. It was agreed that when the precept was set for 2025-26, a provision towards adding to general reserves would be considered.
- c.** On the basis of the position of the general reserves, the Town Clerk did not recommend that any of the PWLB loans were repaid at the current time. This was agreed.
- d.** It was agreed to accept a quotation from Davis Ground IT Services to replace the server at a cost of £3557.98 plus VAT. It was noted that the server was over 7 years old. The Town Clerk had move funds into an earmarked reserve for this purpose at year end.
- e.** The Town Clerk reported that the first instalment of the precept - £184,670.00 - had been received on 22nd April.
- f.** The Town Clerk reported that the s106 funds from Bloor Homes - £38,916.77 - had been received on 22nd April. As agreed, this sum would be added to general reserves.
- g.** The quarterly VAT return had been submitted and paid by HMRC.

- h.** The Town Clerk had transferred £20,000 from the PSDF account to Lloyds to cover expenditure in April pending receipt of the precept. Now that the precept had been received, funds would be repaid into that account.
- i.** Significant payments since the last F & GP committee relating to the squash courts project were as follows – final balance payment of £7,200 for the roof and final balance payment for the HVAC system £8,498.10 (all including VAT).
- j.** The two outstanding rental demands for the ATFC site had been received from C G Corbett. These had been paid and the Football Club had been invoiced for the rent due which had also been paid.
- k.** All paperwork had been sent to the Internal Auditor.
- l.** Cllr Mills had signed the bank reconciliations for December 2023 and March 2024.

7. Statement of Internal Control

The annual Statement of Internal Control prepared by the Town Clerk and circulated in advance was approved as drawn.

8. Maternity Leave and Pay Policy

The draft Policy prepared by the Town Clerk was approved as drawn. It was noted that this was in accordance with the NALC template. There will be a proposition to Full Council to adopt it.

9. Propositions to Full Council

There is a proposition from the Committee at 8.
The meeting was then closed by the Mayor.