

**Tiverton Town Council**

Town Hall, St Andrew Street, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6PG

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Draft until approved

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held virtually on the 14th December 2020 commencing at 6pm.

Present: Cllr's D Knowles (Chairman), W Burke, C Daw, S Bush, N Davey, S Griggs, C Harrower, I Hill, B Holdman, J Rendle, and C Slade.

In Attendance: Town Clerk (Mr J Vanderwolfe), Assistant to the Town Clerk (Mrs J Hubbard) and one member of press.

Non Attendance: Cllr T Lindus.

The Council agreed for the recording of the meeting for purposes of minute taking.

131	Apologies Cllr J Blagg (Bereavement), A Perris (Working) All accepted the apologies.
132	Declarations of Interest Cllr's C Slade, C Daw, N Davey, S Griggs, & J Rendle declared personal interests as members of the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee.
133	Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on the 9 th November 2020 were agreed as a true record.
134	Matters arising from the Minutes that are not an agenda item Nil
135	Democratic Period The member of the press informed the committee that the recently deceased Cllr A Bush's family had been in contact with him on a tribute piece for a local newspaper. He added, that if any of the members wanted to send him their personal tributes then they were free to do so. Cllr C Slade informed that he had done a tribute which had been added to the town council website that he was welcome to use.
136	Financial Reports a) Balance Sheet as at 31st November adopted b) Income and Expenditure for November 2020 was accepted c) Payments for November. Agreed There was a question regarding a large payment to Pennon Water for the New Hall. The Town Clerk explained that this amount had been due to a faulty urinal flushing that had been continually running, thereby using a large amount of water. The Town Clerk said that he had contacted the supplier with a view to getting a discount because of the fault but they would not accept this. The company granted the town council to clear the bill in instalments.

d) Bridge Lights: to receive an estimate for improvement of the lighting on the bridge and replacement of light bulbs.

The Town Clerk said that he had been in contact with Encore Electrical a subcontractor of Festive Lighting who had installed the town's Christmas lights and had received a quotation of £1,191.00 to do the works. This included the replacement of 170 lamps, the installation of 4 poles, hire of machinery and labour.

One of the issues at this location was vandalism which had resulted in the lights getting damaged. So the solution would be to raise the lights to prevent them from being tampered with.

Cllr W Burke asked what colour the replacement bulbs would be.

Cllr S Bush said his preference would be for warm white bulbs.

Cllr C Daw said that there had been complaints regarding the Christmas lights in Westexe from some of the traders who felt let down by the display.

Cllr C Harrower said that she had been unaware of the vandalism and trader complaints and thanked Cllr Daw to bringing this to her attention.

The Town Clerk informed the members that the council had taken out a three year contract with Festive Lighting at just over £20,000, with the amount and positioning of the lighting being pre-determined.

He noted Cllr Daw's comments and replied to say that he too had received correspondence from some of the Westexe traders expressing their disappointment. He suggested that the Town Centre Partnership could discuss the Christmas lights for the town in the new year and funding possibilities.

Cllr N Davey asked when the work to repair the Bridge street lighting would commence.

The Town Clerk replied to say that he could not guarantee that the work could be carried out before Christmas but that he would endeavour to pursue this. He said that the current Christmas lighting averted attention from the broken lightbulbs on Bridge Street and it was not so noticeable.

Cllr S Griggs disagreed with the Town Clerk and felt that the missing lights looked shocking as there were so many missing bulbs and let the town's Christmas display down. She said it had been a shame that the broken or faulty bulbs could not have been replaced when the contractors had been installing the Christmas lights. She understood that the Town Clerk could not authorise the works himself without authorisation, but felt that a special meeting could have been set up to discuss and authorise the works before the Christmas period.

Cllr Griggs asked the Town Clerk if there was going to be an amount set aside in the forthcoming council budget for 2021/22 for the maintenance of the Bridge street lights.

Cllr S Bush asked if any new contract for installing Christmas lighting could incorporate the checking of light bulbs on an annual basis as part of the works.

Cllr B Holdman said that he felt that the CCTV cameras in the town centre were not proving very helpful in terms of leading to convictions following crimes within the town. He said that the council used to receive regular police reports but that had dwindled to no reports.

The Town Clerk referring to a separate incident of vandalism involving the Christmas tree sited at Lowman Green, said that he had been in communication with the police and the CCTV Operating Officer and that he hoped this would now lead to a conviction.

Cllr C Slade proposed to accept the quotation from Festive Lighting to repair the Bridge street lights, this was seconded by Cllr C Daw.

All agreed to accept.

e) Defibrillator Provision: To consider a suitable location and funding for a defibrillator within the town.

The Town Clerk said that the office had made some enquiries and found that there was currently no external defibrillator sited within the town centre, although there were a number of interior ones. He said that the most suitable type for outside areas were the ones operated by a dial up keypad code provided by the ambulance service. He said that in his opinion, the most suitable location would be the Pannier Market. It would need to have an electrical power source to keep the battery charged.

The Town Clerk said that the cost for this type of defibrillator would be approximately £3,000.

The Town Clerk said he had been in contact with the market manager and Mid Devon District Council regarding this.

Cllr S Griggs explained to the members why she was very keen to propose this and went on to inform them of an incident where there had been a need for a defibrillator and how they had been unable to access the one sited within the town hall building due to it being locked. She said that the locations of defibrillators in the town were not well publicised.

Cllr Griggs also pointed out that not all the town councillor's phone contact numbers were listed on the town council website.

Cllr B Holdman said that he recalled the town council meeting regarding the current defibrillator in the town hall and the debate then on whether it should be located on the outside of the building or the inside.

He wondered whether the current internal one could be moved and placed outside the town hall in order to save purchasing a new one.

The Town Clerk responded to say that the Town Hall is grade II listed and it would be very difficult to get permission to site an exterior defibrillator on the outside of the building. Before the Covid-19 pandemic struck, the building had been well used by the community of Tiverton and had been open to the public 5 days a week.

He also explained that the current internal defibrillator was not suitable for outdoor use.

Cllr N Davey agreed that there was a need for an outside defibrillator for the town centre which could be accessed 24 hours a day.

Cllr S Griggs said that at the town council meeting in 2018, it had been agreed to look at installing an outdoor defibrillator at a later date, so this decision had already been taken.

Cllr C Harrower reiterated that there was a real need for an exterior defibrillator located in an easily accessible site both in terms of any medical transportation and for members of the public. She agreed with Cllr Griggs in that it had already been decided to move this in 2018 and it was disappointed that this had not happened.

The Town Clerk responded to say that no formal decision to move the proposal had been taken in 2018, and it had been left as being looked into.

Cllr S Griggs proposed that the council consider looking for a suitable location to site the defibrillator and provide the necessary funding for the project, she felt it should be in a location that was well covered by CCTV cameras.

Cllr W Burke suggested that some of the grant funding given to the town council for the Covid-19 pandemic could be utilised for the defibrillator.

The Town Clerk asked if the committee would give him permission to seek out a suitable location for the proposed defibrillator and then he would liaise with both the Mayor (Cllr C Slade) and the Chairman of Finance & General Purpose Committee (Cllr D Knowles) to enable the project to be completed as quickly as possible.

	<p>f) To consider quotations for the repair work to the Town Hall roof.</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed the members that the required works for the town hall roof were necessary to prevent further internal water damage to the building. The office had sought to obtain 3 quotations for the project but due to the specialised nature of the works, had only managed to secure two suitable options.</p> <p>The Assistant to the Town Clerk provided more details for each proposal and outlined the works involved.</p> <p>Cllr W Burke proposed to accept Contractor A.</p> <p>Cllr S Bush seconded this.</p> <p>All agreed to accept.</p>
137	<p>Budget and Precept for 2021/22</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed the members that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, both the Town Hall and the New Hall suffered a substantial loss of revenue. He had previously circulated a loss of revenue report to the members and a proposed 2021/22 budget.</p> <p>He said that he had strived to keep the budget the same as last year in order not to raise the precept.</p> <p>Cllr C Harrower thanked the Town Clerk for the documents.</p> <p>Cllr B Holdman asked if a small budget for the Climate Change Committee had been added. The Town Clerk informed him that he had allocated the amount of £1,000 to the committee but had taken this from the Chettiscombe Weir project in order to keep the budget balanced and as low as possible.</p> <p>Cllr I Hill asked how much the Chettiscombe Weir project had for their budget as there would be ongoing costs for this.</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed her this was £5,000.</p> <p>Cllr I Hill acknowledged this and said that she was happy for the Climate Change Committee to have a small budget.</p> <p>The Town Clerk then proceeded to run through the draft budget page by page to the members.</p> <p>There were three minor amendments to the draft budget, for the town band, the Grand Western Canal and the Bridge Street Lighting. These amounted to an extra £2,500.</p> <p>Cllr C Slade proposed to accept the budget subject to the minor amendments as discussed.</p> <p>Cllr W Burke seconded this.</p> <p>The draft budget would now go to the Full Council Meeting on 11th January 2021 for full approval.</p>
138	<p>Christmas/New Year Office Hours: to agree the office opening hours during the festive period.</p> <p>All agreed to the proposed office hours for the Christmas and New Year period.</p>
140	<p>Close of meeting</p> <p>Cllr B Holdman requested schedule of meetings to be sent to him in 3 month blocks.</p> <p>The Town Clerk agreed to do this.</p> <p>The meeting was closed at 7.35pm.</p>
141	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Monday 8th February 2021 at 6pm.</p>