

KESGRAVE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee held on 11 January 2021 (virtual meeting)

Councillors present:

Cllr A Athwall
Cllr N Beecroft-Smith
Cllr A Comber
Cllr R Gibson (joined the meeting at 7:18pm)
Cllr G Lynch
Cllr J Ogden
Cllr B Patten

Officers present:

J Abbott – Town Clerk (joined the meeting at 7:17pm)
A Dougall - Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

- 1. Welcome and to Receive and Accept Apologies for Absence** – The Chair, Cllr J Ogden explained that the meeting was to be recorded before welcoming those present and confirmed apologies from Cllr Fairbrother (personal) - this apology was accepted following the vote.
- 2. Declaration of Interests** – Cllr Beecroft-Smith: Item 13 (Chairman's Allowance budget).
- 3. Minutes of the last Meeting** held on the 2 November 2020, the Committee received, considered and all agreed following the vote. It was recognised that due to the social distancing restrictions imposed by Covid, it is not possible to sign the minutes at the meeting. It was accepted that as the minutes are recorded, they could be signed retrospectively.
- 4. Clerks/Officer Report/Update** – nothing to report.
- 5. Members of the Public** – None present.
- 6. Bank Reconciliation** – A Dougall presented the Bank Reconciliation Reports dated 30/11/2020. Councillors received, considered and agreed following the vote. Bank statement balances as at 30/11/2020 were £10,742.38 (current account) and £600,883.99 (savings account). Cllr Ogden will confirm the reports agree with the hardcopy bank statements held in the KTC office. All agreed following the vote.
- 7. Receipts and Payments** – A Dougall presented accounts for the period ended 30/11/2020. These were received, considered, and agreed following the vote.
- 8. Detailed Income and Expenditure Report to 30 November 2020** – A Dougall presented the report for information only.
- 9. KTC Direct Debits/Standing Orders as at 1 January 2021** - A Dougall presented a report showing all direct debit/standing orders currently active. Monetary values are not shown as the monthly charges may be subject to change depending on usage and predicted year

end values, e.g., from January 2021, the monthly EON (electricity) charges are to be reduced for the MJH and KTC due to closure/homeworking.

10. **MJH hire charges following lockdown** – J Abbott confirmed that the decision to reduce the MJH hall hire charge by 50% for all regular hirers from September 2020 was agreed for 6 months and then the decision would be reviewed. The decision taken during the first lockdown was to support local businesses going through a difficult time, as the reduction in class sizes, in line with the Government guidance, would have a direct effect on their income. This 50% reduction in hire charge was well received and helped the hirers to return back in September 2020. Now the MJH is closed during this 3rd lockdown, a review of the hire rate is needed so that the hirers can plan whether their classes will continue in the future. It was agreed following the vote, that the Council would like to continue to extend the 50% reduction for the hall hire charge until the next review by 31 August 2021 (ready for the September term start) for:

- regular existing hirers
- new hirers – providing there is a commitment to multiple bookings.
- One off hirers - at the discretion of the Office staff (e.g., charities, fund raising activities), otherwise charge full rate.
- Corporate Business hirers – charge full rate, but with discretion of the Office staff to charge 50% (e.g., if benefit Kesgrave residents).

It was agreed to discuss at the next Full Council meeting.

11. **Grant Request update from SARS** – J Abbott discussed the letter received from SARS explaining how the service has and will continue to support Kesgrave residents. All in favour, following the vote, that SARS provide a valuable service to the local residents and agreed to fund £250 (the same amount as in 2019/20). It was acknowledged that the budget for S137 (£3000) would be slightly over by £89.20, but this was a minimal amount considering the current situation.

12. **Biffa Contract: to give notice to terminate in Sept 2021** – A Dougall confirmed that the Council has three waste collection contracts with Biffa: – Cemetery (standard waste), MJH (standard waste) and MJH (recycling). Two alternative quotes have been sought from other providers and both show a considerable saving. Notice to terminate is required before the contract anniversary date (12 June 2021) and then a 90 day 'End of Notice Period' has to be served until 11 Sept 2021. It was agreed, following the vote, to proceed to terminate the contract before the contract anniversary date.

13. **2021/22 Draft Budget** – A Dougall presented the 2021.22 Draft Budget v3 (for F&G 11 January 2021) highlighting 2 amendments from the Draft Budget agreed at Full Council held on 16 November 2020. The following amendments were discussed: -

- C & R 4249 One off Events £2000 – provision for an open-air cinema

It was noted that this event would need to take place before summer or early Autumn, for the correct light levels/weather.

- C & R 4257 Kesgrave Fun Day £3050 – manned roller-skating rink

This would be provided by the same company who supply the ice rink. It was hoped that the deposit paid for the December 2020 Ice Rink event would be transferred for a manned roller-skating event in March 2021, but with Covid, this now seems unlikely, so it is hoped to transfer

this deposit to this event at the Fun Day. The date for the Fun Day is currently under review but it seems likely to move to July (or later). It is hoped that external funding will be raised towards the costs, so this is a contingent amount only. As this is the first big event following lockdown, it is hoped to provide different activities for all the family, a roller rink allows more people to use during the day than some alternatives.

It should be noted that East Suffolk Council have finalised the council tax base for 2021/22 for KTC as 4753.56 Band D equivalent properties (an improvement and increase from the indicative tax base figure provided in October 2020 from 4719.21). This means that there are more properties multiplied by the charge per Band D property (£63.07), resulting in an increase to the Precept calculated (with 0% change to the tax charge per Band D property). The council agreed at the Full Council meeting (16/11/2020) to fund the shortfall between the budget required for 2021/22 and the Precept requirement. This shortfall will be reduced by £2166 due to this revised tax base.

All agreed, following the vote, to these amendments and to submit this draft as the Final 2021/22 Budget to the Full Council meeting (18/01/2021) for approval. The Precept requirement must be submitted to ESC by 31/01/2021.

14. **KTC Policies** – Cllr Ogden confirmed that updates are still ongoing. Cllr R Gibson’s offer to help review the policies was accepted.
15. **Other/Urgent Communications** – J Abbott confirmed that SALC has issued guidance stating that it is now illegal for Councils to hold public meetings face-to-face until further notice.
16. **Date of Next Meeting** – Monday 1 March 2021 at 7.15pm, online via Microsoft Teams.
17. **Agenda Items for Next Meeting** – None.
18. **Resolution to exclude the Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960** – no public present. Recording stopped at 8.00pm
19. **Staffing Matters** –
 - a. Incremental progression award/contract reviews – to receive, consider and agree.
 - b. Covid-19 Jan 2021 Lockdown – to receive an update.

Agenda items 19 was then discussed in the CONFIDENTIAL part of the meeting.

This part of the meeting *finished at 8.00pm*

Chairman.....

Date.....