

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Finance Committee

**Meeting held remotely via ZOOM at 6pm on Thursday 11th
February 2021.**

Present:

Councillors

A Sadiq (Chairman)

B Bailey.

C Nicholas.

F Cullis.

B Toye.

O Davey.

L Elson. Joined the meeting at 6.25pm

S Gazzard.

Officers:

Lisa Bowman, Town Clerk. Julie Gregory, Minute Taker.

Apologies:

Cllr J Whipps

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

Public Forum:

There were no requests from members of the public to address Members during the public speaking session.

F21/001. Finance Committee meeting minutes

It was proposed by Councillor Brian Toye, seconded by Councillor Brian Bailey, and unanimously agreed that the minutes from the previous meeting should be approved.

F21/002. Matters arising from previous minutes.

None.

F21/003. Declarations of pecuniary interests and dispensations

None.

F21/004. Exclusion of the Press and public

There were no items which necessitated the exclusion of the press and public.

F21/005. Report from the Responsible Financial Officer

The RFO reported that there were no areas of concern in terms of the current year income and expenditure budget but highlighted cost centres where an overspend had exceeded the budget for 2020/21 due to prior agreement that costs would be taken from reserves at the end of the financial year as follows:

110-4131 Christmas Tree & Servicing

Underspend last year was moved to reserves. New Xmas decorations were purchased this year.

201-4051 Computer Equipment

Overspend due to equipment bought to enable staff to work from home and costs incurred due to Fraudulent Activity.

201-4415 Community Fund

Due to COVID-19 projects have been put on hold so a credit is showing.

204-4411 CCTV

Installation of mobile CCTV and cameras at Exmouth Seafront, Parade and The Strand.

205-4133 Grants

Agreed at Full Council on 07-12-2020 to allocate £5,000 to support local not for profit communities with any initiative aimed at supporting the local Community at Christmas during the pandemic.

206-4419 Transition Town/Climate Change

Town Council agreed to support this new project.

209-4154 Gorfin Hall

Supply & Installation of Solar Panels.

The RFO reported that at the last Trust Fund Working Party meeting, members gave authorisation to seek external investment advice; this was being pursued on behalf of Exmouth Town Council by Thomas Westcott Chartered Financial planners.

Expenditure totals for November, December, and January, were noted by Members as follows:

A total of £14,144.80 was expended in November 2020.

A total of £38,042.54 was expended in December 2020.

A total of £34,471.50 was expended in January 2021.

The Committee also noted funds held in the CCLA Sector Deposit Fund and held on behalf of others as follows:

£100,000 had been invested in CCLA Investment on 25th January 2016.

£343,000 had been invested in CCLA Investment on 20th January 2020.

Funds held on behalf of others as at January 2021.

Coast Hopper	£7243.20
Trees for Avenues	£87.11
Garth Gibson Fund	£75.98
Millennium Wood (Cllr B Taylor locality budget)	£40.82

Brixington Improvement Group	£207.60
Beach Wheelchair project	£13,970.83

Charitable trust funds held at end of December 2020.

Williams Adam Westwood Trust (provision for charitable residential homes in Exmouth which provide for the elderly sick) £100,992.33.

Exmouth Projects Trust (provides grants for helping projects within the town of Exmouth, and grants to individuals) £184.71.

Barratt Bequest (for elderly sick) £839.48

Shares held (as at January 2021)

RBS	£ 7,738.08
Keurig Dr Pepper	£13,927.00
Mondelez	£24,239.82
Kraft Heinz	£ 4,133.71

Total holding £50,038.61.

These shares are held on behalf of William Adams Westwood Trust in addition to the cash holding. As Dividend dates vary between companies these can be verified on an as and when basis. Dividends are paid into the relevant COIF Fund.

HM Treasury Stock
National Savings Bond = £7,000.00 on behalf of William Adams Westwood Trust

Interest is paid into the relevant COIF fund.

F20/006. To receive and approve the Statement of Income and Expenditure against budget and the payment lists / reconciliation of accounts against bank statements.

A detailed income and expenditure report for the year to date and a list of payments made between November 1st 2020 and January 31st 2021 were noted and approved.

Councillor Cherry Nicholas checked the bank reconciliation against the bank statements and the bank balances as of January 31st 2021 were noted as follows:

Community Account	£99,646.56
Business Current Account	£5,000.00
Active Saver	£1,260,538.17

F21/007. To review Grant Applications for 2020/21

APPLICANT	PURPOSE	AMOUNT APPROVED
Heron Homecare	Contribution towards premises and utility costs	£1,000.00 on a receipt basis.

The RFO reported that she had a further telephone conversation with Heron Home Support to try and gain an insight into what they were wishing to achieve. There are two parts to their organisation; Heron Home Support (which provides home support to the elderly at home via 20 employed home support assistants) and Exmouth Senior Support Services (a charity with a focus on providing social activities for the elderly). The ladies involved in running these ventures are former staff of Age Concern and their aim is to fill the void created by the closure of Age Concern Exmouth. They are looking for help with start expenses for dedicated premises which could be used as a drop-in centre and they have secured funding from Norman Family Trust and are applying for other grants. Members expressed concerns that they were a new company and queried what would happen to their assets should they close. It was clarified that the Articles of Association for Heron Home Support specified that if the company was wound up, any uncommitted funds would go to Age Concern Devon. After much discussion, Members approved a grant of £1,000 to be paid on a receipt basis, which could include rent costs and / or equipment.

Proposed: Cllr B Bailey

Second: Cllr C Nicholas

RESLOVED that: A grant of £1,000 be given to be paid on a receipt basis only which could include rent costs and equipment.

F21/008. To receive an update from the RFO regarding an application for financial assistance from Littleham Church.

The RFO reported that she had spoken to NALC for advice on where the Town Council stood legally regarding Mr Souters request for assistance for Littleham Churchyard. As Littleham is an open cemetery and the Town Council is not a burial authority in its own right. NALC's position is that it would be illegal for us to support them. Members agreed that the RFO write to Mr Souter of Littleham Church and explain that we had taken advice and, regrettable as it was, we were unable to support their request for financial support due to legal issues.

F21/009. To consider a report (and any recommendations therein) from the RFO and Tourist Information Officer regarding the Exmouth website.

The RFO had circulated a report which gave the background information to the Visit Exmouth website and outlined a proposal to buy the domain name and intellectual property rights for the website from the current owner, a local designer.

Subject to the RFO checking that there were no 3rd party rights and making sure that we received full ownership of everything, Members agreed that the Council should purchase the website at a cost of £5000.

Proposed: Cllr A Sadiq

Seconded: Cllr C Nicholas

RESOLVED that: To Purchase the Visit Exmouth website from the designer at a cost of £5,000.

F21/010. To review quotes and agree expenditure related to the cost of removing the clock in the Magnolia Centre.

The RFO reported that she had received confirmation that the clock was gifted to the Town by the Exmouth Round Table to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of its Exmouth Branch. The Exmouth Town Committee which was part of the Urban District Council was to assume responsibility for maintaining the clock going forward, however when the Urban District Council was abolished in 1972, ownership was transferred to EDDC. EDDC maintained an Exmouth Town Committee until the Town Council was eventually informed. EDDC have made the clock safe and prepared it for dismantling but have now given up all responsibility for it. Members agreed that it was an eyesore and should be removed completely and a decision would be made later regarding any replacement structure.

Two quotations had been received and the RFO reported that there was money in the Town Management reserves to cover this expenditure.

The Committee authorised acceptance of the quote from JAR Building Services Ltd @ £2,016.00

Proposed: Cllr Cullis

Seconded: Cllr O Davey

RESOLVED: That authority be given to JAR Building Ltd to remove the Magnolia clock at a cost of £2,016.00.

The RFO reported that the contracts with our current energy Supplier EDF was up for renewal this year. We have been in contact with an energy consultancy company to look at our options; in particular, the Council's desire to use a renewable energy provider has resulted in a recommendation to use Opus Energy. We also require a smart meter to be fitted at Gorfin Hall so that we can claim the export tariff from the solar panels at the premises. Excluding any benefit gained from the export tariff, the extra costs over the five contracts which the Council has for electricity (metred and un-metred) would be approximately £500 based on the usage during the period January 2020 – January 2021.

Proposed: Cllr S Gazzard

Seconded: Cllr F Cullis

RESOLVED that: The Council's energy supplier be changed to Opus Energy when the contracts are up for renewal later in the year.

The RFO advised that there would be an extra meeting on Thursday 25th March to consider the SLA's for the year 2021/22.

F21/011. Date of next meeting

Thursday 25th March 2021

The meeting concluded at 7.18pm

Signed.....

Date.....

(Chairman)