NANTWICH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 18th March 2021

Present – Councillors: David Marren (Chair), Arthur Moran, Stuart Bostock, David Greaves and John Statham and with the Facilities Manager David Thomas and Samantha Roberts the Town Clerk.

Also present: Councillors Pam Kirkham, Peter Groves and Andrew Martin

31.   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Phil Staley and Stephanie Wedgwood

32.   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest expressed.

33.   MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE OF 25th February 2021

Committee approved the minutes of the Meeting held on 25th February 2021.

34.   INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Members considered the previous circulated report detailing the income and expenditure to 28 February 2021.   The Clerk advised members that she had provided a different format of the detailed spreadsheet for March to show members the predicted expenditure for the end of the financial year to help members to consider the likely year end balances. The Clerk provided members with an additional spreadsheet which incorporated the likely general reserve bank balances for year end. She advised that the estimated general reserve balance of circa £170k was an improved position from December due to the additional grant funding received through the Government Job Retention Scheme and the business support grants from Cheshire East which had not been expected. Whilst the estimated figure was an improvement, if achieved it would still only equate to approximately two months gross expenditure of the town council, where the policy and good practice is to retain 3-6 months expenditure.

The Chair asked for an explanation in the change of accounting methods for salaries, and the Clerk confirmed that previously there had been separate cost codes for employee salaries, employee national insurance contributions and employee pension contributions. All these are now combined within one cost code.

Councillor Statham asked if the additional spreadsheet could be emailed to members, and the Clerk confirmed that she would email it to all members and include it on the website. Councillor Statham questioned the Clerks comments relating to expected grant funding, suggesting that no grant funding was expected when last years budget was set. The Clerk clarified that once COVID impacted on the Town Council grant funding had been received from the Government Job Retention Scheme and from Cheshire East, but at the end of the year it was not expected any further funding would be received, but an additional combined figure of £56k had been received from Cheshire East, and the Government job retention scheme since Christmas.

Councillor Moran asked if last years budget had allowed for a 2% salary increase. The Clerk confirmed that the budget had allowed for a 2% increase, but the agreed local government increase had been 2.75%, which had impacted on the budget. The Clerk also confirmed that an allowance of 2% had been included for 2021/22 but it is likely that there will be a freeze on local government salaries in 2021.

> **Resolved:** It was resolved:
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> > a)   To note the report and approve the review of income and expenditure and the bank reconciliations as of 28th February 2021.

35.   GRANT APPLICATIONS

Members considered the one grant application for £500 from Nantwich Pride to hold a smaller event in July 2021. Following comments from the Chair and Councillors Moran and Statham members supported the idea of returning to some normality with the event, subject to the organisers ensuring risk assessments are in place to meet relevant social distancing requirements.

Resolved: It was resolved to approve the award of £500 for the Nantwich Pride event in 2021.

36.   ACCOUNTS AND PAYMENTS

Resolved: That the schedule of payments be approved in accordance with the previous resolution of the Town Council to use the General Power of Competence, the total sums as follows:

Trading Account = £65,461.04
Current Account = £101,944.80
One card = £41.62

The meeting ended at 6.50pm

Signature of Chair :……………………………………

Date :……………………….