



**ILFRACOMBE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting**  
**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 – 7.00pm**  
**Venue – The Ilfracombe Centre – Council Chamber**

**Members Present:** Cllrs: R Donovan (Chair), D Turton, V Gates, G Coulter, B Gear, T Elliott, P Crabb, S Wilson

**Also Present:** Carole Coombs (Responsible Finance Officer), Steve Seatherton (Programme Manager), I Howard (Minute Taker), 1 member of the public

**1. Meeting Introduction**

**1.1. Receive and note Apologies:**

None Received.

**1.2. Declarations of interest:**

Cllr Crabb had a declaration of interest regarding item 2.2.1.

**1.3. Chair's discretion for any matters or announcements for Information Only.**

None Received.

**1.4. Adoption of minutes for Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023:**

The minutes of meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023 were adopted, proposed by Cllr Gear, seconded by Cllr Gates, with all in favour.

**1.5. Matters arising from actions:**

None.

**2. FINANCE AND AUDIT**

**2.1. Finance Officer Report ITC 22119**

All invoices for payment including those on the addendum for the meeting, which included invoices for wages, road tax and vehicle insurance and the main ITC insurance, were approved, proposed by Cllr Donovan, seconded by Cllr Wilson, with all in favour.

The report includes a review of the current rents with potential increases against the current RPI. Looking at the figures the Councillors decided that the 10% proposed increase would be a fair increase. This was proposed by Cllr Donovan, seconded by Cllr Gates, with all in favour, apart from one abstention and one against the proposal. Although the majority of Councillors agreed that an increase was needed, the councillors who did not support the increase felt that the nursery sector is already an underfunded sector.

Looking at the rent review of the Lantern café there was discussion with regard to future plans of the café. It was decided that a working group should be organised with Cllr Turton, Cllr Crabb, Cllr Gear and Cllr Coulter all offering to get involved.

The RFO noted that in the interim between now and receiving the precept in April a request was made to transfer £50,000 from the Working Reserves account into the



Business account, which will be replaced once the precept has been received, or sums we are awaiting are paid into the Business account. All Councillors were in favour of this. The RFO pointed out to the committee that in the budget some amounts have been set out to be included in the Specified Reserves. Along with this, she asked that the committee consider the amount in the Staffing Reserve as this has been depleted in previous years and does not stand with a month's wages as a contingency, this would be the normal amount to hold in this type of reserve. Cllr Donovan recommended that the committee take this information away to consider and bring back to the next F&GP meeting.

#### **2.1.1. Lift contract renewal update**

The ITC lift contractor gave notice three days after they had closed down their business and transferred the contract to another provider; this is a national company with no local provision. As such in order to comply with our Health & Safety requirements three quotes were gained for an equivalent service and a quote was accepted by Cllr Turton for a new contract with Safe Working Lifts based in Barnstaple. This quote was the lowest.

#### **2.1.2. Bouncy castle**

The RFO noted that the bouncy castle provider would no longer be providing the bouncy castle after the end of April. It was noted that the majority of parties use this service, however the Councillors expressed their wish not to take this service on. Another provider has been identified and may be available on an ongoing basis depending on his prior commitments.

### **2.2. Budgetary Matters**

**2.2.1. Dotto Train update** – Having declared an interest, Cllr Crabb retired for the duration of this item. The Programme Manager said a revised acceptance agreement will be in by the end of the month. A safety certificate for the train needs to be done as well as the insurance which needs to be completed by the operator. Once the operator has obtained the correct insurance, a license can then be taken on after that point.

#### **2.2.2. Public Conveniences**

- An audit of the public conveniences is currently being completed by an officer, which will then be sent out to Councillors.
- Due to concerns with the state of some of the public conveniences, the Programme Manager has been tasked with going back to NDC to discuss how this will reflect in the contract.

#### **2.2.3. Provision of litter and recycling bin project resources**

- An audit of the litter and recycling bins are currently being carried out by an officer, this will give an idea on the numbers and state of the bins currently.

### **3. GENERAL PURPOSES**

#### **3.1. Main Reports – Updates**

##### **3.1.1. Town Assets**

- Facilities and Maintenance Managers Report ITC 22120. The report was read and noted by Councillors. Concerns were raised with the increase in vandalism within



the town, with the Facilities and Maintenance Manager stating that a bus shelter in town had recently been vandalised. Although this incident had been reported to the police, Councillors expressed concerns regarding the vandalism and what has been done to tackle this. The Programme Manager and Minute Taker have been tasked with writing a letter to the police to ask a representative to attend the next Full Council Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> April in order to receive updates and discuss these issues.

- Town Maintenance Officers Report – ITC 22121. The TMO's report was noted with no comments being made.
- Project Manager Report – ITC 22122  
The report of the proposed plans to the former phone box on Northfield Road was noted by Councillors who suggested that it would be an improvement to the current state as well as reduce the risk of potential vandalism by the removal of all glass in the box. The motion to agree to this change in use of the phone box was proposed by Cllr Gear and seconded by Cllr Elliott with all in favour.
- Update on NDC use of Ilfracombe Centre – ITC 22117. The licence for the hired room in the Ilfracombe Centre by NDC has now finished meaning all items from the room have been cleared out. The revised licence including the front desk, store cupboard and interview room will need to be reviewed and negotiated. Discussion was made regarding the current rental charges for CAB within the Ilfracombe Centre and whether NDC should be paying the same rate. The Programme Manager has been tasked with going back to NDC and negotiating rates.
- Town Crier update. Councillors noted that a decision needs to be made regarding the engagement of the new town crier. The applicant for the role performed a "cry" at the last Full Council Meeting therefore the decision was made to engage the applicant as the new town crier of ITC, proposed by Cllr Gear, seconded by Cllr Gates with all in favour except for 1 abstention due to the Councillor not being present during the previous "cry".

**3.1.2 Vision Community Centre** – There are currently 1 or 2 overdue payments, however, these are being dealt with. A previous hirer of the centre will soon be collecting items that were being stored in the centre meaning more space will be made available. A regular long term hirer has now cancelled their sessions.

**3.1.3 One Ilfracombe** – There was nothing to report.

**3.1.4 Town Team Meeting Feedback** – Cllr Elliott explained that the recent vandalism to Cow Green Gardens was discussed with the police present. Progress on the spring clean within the town was also discussed, however, there was nothing to note.

### 3.2. Other Updates

**3.2.1 Work Hub Update** – The remainder of the grant will be spent by Wednesday on a CCTV system as well as a bespoke booking system. The promotional video is nearly complete and a big promotion push will be made soon to increase awareness of the rooms available. However, it was noted by the Programme Manager that 4 people in the last month have viewed the spaces and seemed interested. The RFO suggested that the hirer currently in the shower room office should be offered a room down in the work hub in order to free up the room currently being used, this



was agreed by councillors. The final claim for the work hub will be put in to DCC by Friday.

**3.2.2 Harbour report** – The boats went back into the water on Monday; this was delayed due to the big swell over the weekend. Plans for the potential deep sea water pool down the harbour are currently being pushed.

**3.2.3 IRB meeting update** – A meeting is being held on Wednesday, however, this may change due to a funeral which may involve members of the IRB committee. Discussions are currently being made regarding a potential training facility in Ilfracombe for RYA training.

**3.2.4 Correspondence**

- **Challenge Alarm Services** – An email was received by the RFO stating that, following the recent maintenance of the Ilfracombe Centre and Lantern Centre, the engineer noted 8 failed emergency lights. The cost of replacing these would be £400 plus VAT. The motion to pay this was proposed by Cllr Gear and seconded by Cllr Gates, with all in favour.
- **Lineal Software Solutions** – Sent an email to notify that there is a price increase for all broadband and Ethernet circuits starting in April.
- **Coastal Recycling Recovering Resources** – Sent a letter to notify that there is a price increase for all their recycling services starting in April.
- **Guarantor Security** – Sent a letter to notify that there is a price increase for their call out services, 24-hour standby and annual key holding fees starting in April.
- **NDC Car Parks Managers** - Sent an email to ask whether the RNLI could use two permits for Ropery Road in order to park whilst resurfacing/lining works were completed on the cove and marine drive car parks from 16/4/23 to 25/4/23. The spaces will only be used if there is an emergency call out and the permits will only be valid from 17/4/23 to 19/4/23. The motion to agree to this request was proposed by Cllr Donovan and seconded by Cllr Gear, with all in favour.

**4. Chair's Discretion**

None noted.

The Next F&GP committee meeting will be on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7pm in the Council Chamber.

Meeting ended at 8:45pm.

**Cllr Rod Donovan**  
**Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee**  
**Ilfracombe Town Council**  
**27/03/2023**