

Kingsbridge Town Council

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2021 IN QUAY HOUSE

Present: Cllr Anne Balkwill (Chairman)
Cllr Philip Cole
Cllr Barrie Fishman
Cllr Chris Povey
Cllr Graham Price
Cllr Julia Wingate

In Attendance: Martin Johnson (Town Clerk)

21/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Martina Edmonds.

Public Open Forum

There were no members of public present.

21/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Members received the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 October 2021 which were approved as a correct record.

21/24 FEES AND CHARGES

Members were in receipt of Fees and Charges effective from 1 April 2021, alongside a report of historical charges, and a thorough review was completed. It was **RECOMMENDED** for:

- Quay House and grounds fixed leases for the Rear Hall (TQ7 Hairdressing), Age Concern/Rest Centre and Bin Store (Creeks End Inn) to be noted.
- Quay House rentals for Rooms 8, 10 & 12 to be increased by circa 3%.
- Quay House rental for Room 9 for Kingsbridge & Saltstone Caring to remain free of charge (in lieu of historic Grant Aid).
- Room 4 and The Loft to be let with effect from 1 January 2022 and 1 December 2021 respectively at rents already agreed with the new tenants.
- Quay House casual/commercial room hire for the Council Chamber and Rooms 3 & 7 to be retained.
- Hire of the Council Chamber for weddings to be increased by 50% noting nil increments since 2018.
- Allotment rents to be increased by 11% for a full plot and retained for a half-sized plot.

- Bandstand hire charges to be retained.
- Equipment hire charges to be retained.
- Photocopying charges to be retained.
- Embankment Road Cemetery fees to be increased by £5 for each charge i.e. between circa 2% and 6% increases.

A listing of proposed Fees and Charges for financial year 2022/23 is at Annex A.

21/25 BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23

Members received a discussion paper regarding the draft budget for financial year (FY) 2022/23 and then considered individual cost codes for projected income and expenditure. In particular, Members noted/agreed the following:

- Cost code 52 (Quay House maintenance). £6,300 included for repainting 6 sash façade windows and external porch in accordance with the Planned Maintenance Schedule. Plus repainting of ground floor recent plaster/woodwork repairs using breathable paint however, there was potential for the works to be completed within the current FY. Quotations would be required.
- Cost code 130 (Grant Aid for Recreation & Social). £1,000 budget for local groups.
- Cost code 131 (Grant Aid for Community projects). £500 budget for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee via the Royal British Legion and annual accounts to be requested for other community project grants.
- Cost codes 220,221 & 222 (Staffing). Increase at £3,710 to reflect Staff pay scale increases and potential national pay award.
- Cost code 240 (Fair Week). The Fair Week Committee had confirmed that the event would go ahead in July 2022 and Members supported retention of the council's previous funding commitments e.g. fireworks and fun run. Members to review the traditional summer civic reception at the next council meeting.
- Cost code 245 (Bunting). Nil budget as the 2021 bunting was deemed to be in a satisfactory condition and could be erected again for 2022.
- Cost code 260 (Potholes). £750 for labour costs; cold tarmac stock already supplied.
- New cost code 266 (Street furniture maintenance). £1,000 historical budget for seating maintenance within cost code 272 transferred to the new cost code and increased to £2,500 due to installation of new seats, benches, planters, bollards and litter bins.
- Cost code 270 (Solar Farm – community benefit projects). Year 7 of 10 expenditure at £4,104 to be earmarked for a public art project(s) which could include a re-invention of Kingsbridge In Bloom's current Mayflower sculpture with potential use of the Victorian water fountain base in Quay House grounds
- Cost code 272 (Parks & Open Space improvements) projects:
 - Love Your Park fun day in the Recreation Ground at £2,000.
 - Street furniture budget increased from £25,000 to £27,500, plus a Capital Reserves transfer also at £27,500, to achieve new seats and litter bins in the Town Square and footways on both sides at the head of the estuary (to match street furniture in Fore Street).

- Youth/OSSR project at £4,000 to introduce a ground level trampoline in one of the parks (which is likely to require top-up from Reserves).
- Movies on the Square potential budget earmarked at £5,600 for 4 Friday evenings to be reviewed by the next full council meeting.
- A 'sinking fund' to commence, via a transfer to Revenue Reserves, for the following potential projects: 2nd basketball hoop at Trebblepark play area, pump-priming for a new Skatepark, music/buskers during market days and/or Bandstand concerts, mature tree planting, uplighters for estuary trees (along west footway adjacent to Quay Car Park), repainting of original festoon lighting posts (along east footway adjacent to The Promenade), pocket park at the mouth of Fore Street car park, potential EV charging point in Quay House grounds, re-invention of the current attenuation area to the north of the Tesco retail store, and free parking on Saturdays in December to for Christmas shopping in December.
- SHDC would notify local councils of the Council Tax Base Rate for FY 2022/23 in mid-December whereupon a draft Band D council tax rate could be calculated.
- Further to the operational budget, Capital Receipts at £3,000 to be earmarked for a feasibility study to enhance the Recreation Ground pond and related landscaping.
- An update on expenditure to date and future proposals from the High Streets Re-opening Fund budget at £4,000 would be provided to the next full council meeting. Such expenditure would complete on 31 March 2022.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to progress the draft Income and Expenditure Budget for financial year 2022/23 at Annex B to be re-considered at the next committee meeting.

Within the budget discussion Members considered the following related matters:

- Whether Kingsbridge In Bloom was able to take water from the Western Backway leat for hanging basket watering or if a holding tank/water butts system could be devised?
- Whether the town Christmas Tree could be used in future years as a location for community carol singing?

21/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 6 January 2022 at 7.00 p.m. (3rd quarter FY 2021/22 income & expenditure report and to re-consider the draft budget for FY 2022/23).

Annexes:

- A. Draft Fees & Charges with effect from 1 April 2022.
- B. Discussion paper for draft Income & Expenditure Budget for Financial Year 2022/23.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.