

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL**  
**held on 13 January 2022 at 6pm via video conference**

<b>Present</b>	Cllr A Buckfield Cllr C Evans Cllr R Blacklaw-Jones Cllr S Hooper Cllr P Johnson Cllr T Moses Cllr G Roberts Cllr J Twigg Cllr E Perkins	Mayor / Chairman Deputy Mayor / Vice Chairman
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The Town Clerk, Administration Officer, press and members of the public were in attendance

### 2132 Declarations of Interest from Members

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Nature of interest</b>
2133 HTC New Office	Cllr C Evans	Personal & Prejudicial	Cllr Evans is the director of an Architects' practice interested in tendering professional services for the work to adapt and refurbish the premises
2133 HTC New Office	Cllr S Hooper	Personal & Prejudicial	Cllr Hooper's partner is a director of iDeA Architects and they are interested in the opportunity to tender for the redesign of the Old Wool Market as the new premises of Haverfordwest Town Council

### 2133 Budget and Precept for the 2022/2023 Financial Year

The Mayor opened the meeting by welcoming the guests, and reminding councillors that this is the most important meeting of the year affecting all areas of councillors' work. Following on from the full council meeting on 22 December 2021, it was agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting on 13 January 2022 to consider setting the 2022/2023 budget and precept.

The budget report was presented by the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer for the year 2022-2023.

#### Reserves

The Wales Audit Office had suggested it was good practice to keep the general reserves equalling half of the budget.

Town Clerk advised that the elections fund of £50,447.64 will need to be reactivated into the mainstream income for the elections in May 2022.

HTC new offices – this covers costs for rent, rates, running costs, and legal costs. Professionals will need to be engaged regarding the brief for the new building of futureproofing against flooding, adapting for access and consultations on the proposed design.

Sheriff's reserve is an amount we are holding on behalf of Sheriff's Association.

Town band reserve is ring fenced; it has sat there since the town band sold off its instruments.

#### Action Plans

St Martin's Cemetery – essential work needs to be carried out to the wall. It will be a localised repair not full repair to wall.

Upper and Lower Prendergast Cemeteries – it was felt that the final stage of repairs to the boundary wall at Lower Prendergast should be completed in the next financial year. The work to the railings could be left as this is not critical or essential to do this year

**Resolved** **Budget of £28,450 for Cemeteries**

Events Sub Committee – It was proposed that this budget be scratched, in view of ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, and the circumstances we face. It may be seen that we are spending and wasting money which could be spent on essential works. Councillors suggested sponsorship for events, or applying for an HTC grant. Concern was expressed that getting rid of this budget would mean missing opportunities to engage with the people of the town. Council was advised that ongoing smaller projects are taking place engaging with schools, Soroptimists and MIND.

**Resolved** **Nil budget for the Events Sub-Committee**

Farmers Market – it was proposed that this amount be withdrawn and the majority voted in favour of this.

**Resolved** **Nil budget for the Farmers Market**

Grants and Donations – The majority voted in favour to increase the budget from £15,000 to £20,000.

**Resolved** **Budget of £20,000 for Grants**

Haverfordwest Improvements – it was recommended at the Management, Estates and Strategy Committee meeting in December 2021 to withdraw this action plan as no longer needed and to include it within the events action plan.

Priory Saltings - At the Management, Estates and Strategy Committee meeting in December 2021, it was recommended that this budget was essential maintenance and this amount needed to stay in the budget.

**Resolved** **Budget of £1,950 for the Priory Saltings**

Town Twinning Event - This budget has been withdrawn as it had been recommended to be included in the Events Sub Committee budget which has subsequently been withdrawn

Welsh Language Policy - This isn't a legal requirement at present and even though the area should be a priority it is uncertain that this could be achieved at such a low cost. The new councillors may wish to join the task and finish group. The majority voted to remove the £3,000 from the Welsh Language Policy budget.

**Resolved** **Nil budget for Welsh Language Policy**

Youth Involvement - Although it had been suggested that this budget be reduced to £500 the Sheriff was happy to reduce the budget to nil. This budget can be withdrawn as the Sheriff has been proactive in sourcing equipment and facilities through Pembrokeshire County Council.

**Resolved** **Nil budget for Youth Involvement**

Deputy Mayor wished to record his thanks to the Sheriff in being proactive and exploring other avenues to continue with his work and finding alternative means to fund this.

Mayor Making Civic Event - The Mayor suggested the £2,000 for the Mayor Making luncheon be removed. All voted in favour.

**Resolved:** **Nil budget for Mayor Making Luncheon**

Councillor Allowances and Expenses - Councillor Moses asked if there was anything that could be trimmed from these items. Town Clerk advised that some items were mandatory in line with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Final Annual Report, which is reviewed by council each year so that would be the point at which to consider them.

*At 7.25pm, all voted in favour to take a 15-minute break to allow for the Town Clerk to update the accounting system with the revised figures.*

*Council reconvened at 7.40pm.*

During the break, the Town Clerk reduced the advertising budget cost by £1,000.

Community garden – the lease agreement has been received, and the funding will be released in stages. Some money may be received in this financial year but an amount needs to be set for 2022-2023. It was proposed that £25,250 be set to include the cost of 1 year’s rent of £250 and £25,000 money from the grant funding.

**Resolved** **The majority voted in favour of setting the budget at £25,250 for the community garden.**

Twinning and friendship town budget of £1,500 is removed.

**Resolved** **Nil budget for the Twinning and Friendship Town**

Town Events – Nil budget is set for the sleigh as it is no longer road worthy.

**Resolved** **Nil budget for the Sleigh**

Councillor Moses queried if any savings could be made around the River Festival budget. The main expense of that event is the boat hire. This is an important and unique occasion special to the people of Haverfordwest which attracts a lot of activity and publicity.

Clarity was sought regarding the funding for Haverfordwest Library, and the possibility of withdrawing from that agreement. But advice was given that this agreement had been made and all had been in favour of guaranteeing the funding for 4-5 years to allow for the library to open on Saturdays.

Picton Centre improvements/upgrade budget of £2,000 was withdrawn.

A proposal was made that we set the precept at £370,000 which equates to an £8.38 increase to each household in band D, taking the resulting shortfall of £24,902 from the general reserve, £50,447 from the Elections earmarked reserve to set the budget at £498,872 for the 2022/2023 financial year. The majority were in favour of this proposal.

**Resolved** **For the 2022/2023 financial year, the budget is set at £498,872 with a Precept of £370,000, Elections earmarked reserve of £50,447 and £24,902 from the General Reserve**

The Mayor gave thanks to the Town Clerk on behalf of Council.

With no further business to consider the meeting ended at 8:30pm.

**Chairman of Council / Mayor** ..... **Signed**

**Proper Officer / Town Clerk** ..... **Signed**

**Date** .....