

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 1 February 2021
Title: Financial Report & Associated Matters
Contact Officer: Town Clerk/RFO – Sharon Groth

Background

Due to technical issues unfortunately the Town Clerk is currently unable to access the Council's accounting software in order to produce the detailed income and expenditure statements – she hopes this situation will be resolved soon and will hopefully be in a position to circulate the accounts under separate cover.

Financial Implications of Recommendations made by Spending Committees

It is the Council's practice that all matters discussed, and recommendations made by spending committees, which have financial implications, are reported to this committee, as this committee is responsible for the overall financial management of the Council.

Sport & Play Committee

The Committee agreed to purchase an asbestos testing kit in order to ascertain if the Old Bowls Building, at The Leys has any asbestos in it.

The Committee agree to take over the Bowls Irrigation System – Officers are currently obtaining revised costings for which a supplementary budget will be required.

With regard to West Witney Sports Ground the Committee reaffirmed its previous decision to appoint a contract administrator to work with Officers to offer professional advice; and that the Operations and Estates Officer obtains quotations for modular versions of 4 changing rooms (2 male and 2 female), a kitchen/social space and at least one DDA compliant toilet – the officer would assess if an additional one would be required – this would be funded from the earmarked reserves.

Halls Cemeteries & Allotments

With regard to the Allotments it was agreed that the Council would offer to purchase an individual composter for each plot on Windrush Place – funded from Earmarked Reserves.

At the Corn Exchange Working Party on 7 December it was agreed that the provision and purchase of some protective vinyl flooring for the area behind the bar be delegated to the Venue Manager.

With regard to the Tower Hill Cemetery Vehicular Access the Committee agreed that a disability consultant be employed to give advice - delegated to officers.

Stronger Communities

The committee agreed to purchase the NHS flag. No budget for the NHS Event was discussed – but given that it would be relatively low key it could be funded from existing Events budget line.

The Chair of the Witney Music Festival attended to present an idea of having a Summer Celebration – and he was seeking support from the Town Council. The Committee gave agreement in principal – and would look at funding some parts of the event – but subject to them getting the necessary licences and permissions because he was proposing it be held on Market Square.

It was agreed that the Christmas Trees supplied by Real Christmas Trees are included for the term of the new Christmas Lights Display Tender.

The Committee agreed that the Spring Newsletter would be delivered to every household in Witney and that it would include a specific consultation for Smiths Estates on the proposal to install a pedestrian access into the Cemetery from that side of witney – the cost of the newsletter and hand delivery using local printers and deliverers was £3120 +VAT (to include 700 A5 leaflet drop)

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

All the Council's Committees receive periodic financial reports in order to carry out its checks and balances, and consideration is generally given to budgets and funding availability when agreeing expenditure.

Financial implications

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure incurred to be reviewed and to be compared with the Council's budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and agree the recommendations of the spending committees as detailed above.