



Brixham Town Council

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 24th November 2020 at 2.00pm

Present	Cllrs Addison, Haddock, Hoggart, Giles, Massey and Laurie
In attendance	Tracy Hallett, Town Clerk, Linda McGuirk, Deputy Town Clerk and Councillor Steve Leech
Welcome	Cllr Addison opened the meeting.
Members of the Public	

20048	Apologies for absence through the Clerk None.
20049	Declarations of Interest Cllr Leech declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 due to his commitments with Youth Genesis. The Clerk advised a dispensation request form will be sent to Cllr Leech.
20050	Minutes The minutes of 11.11.20 were resolved and signed as a correct record subject to a minor amendment to the mis spelling of Cllr Leech's surname.
20051	Budget a) To discuss and consider the draft 2021/22 Councillors considered report 34-2020 revision 2 and proceeded to discuss the report page by page and raise any questions with the Clerk. Cllr Massey felt the list of essential core expenditure received included non-essential expenditure and suggested delaying discussing Cllr allowances and staff salaries until December when the outcome from public sector pay freezes had been discussed by Government and the three Councillor vacancies have been filled by co-option. Page 2 <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Stationery. Members were happy to see a reduction but will need to be monitored.2. Performing Rights Society (PRS). Members asked if this was just for the Theatre? The Clerk advised approx. 90% was related to the Theatre. It was resolved to start discussions with the Theatre and advise them that the Council are considering handing over the PRS fee to them.3. Rates. Why have we included this amount? The Clerk advised that in normal years we are liable to pay rates. A credit was received this year via the business support loan but it is not guaranteed for future years.

4. Insurance. When does the existing insurance schedule expire and are there savings to be made here? The Clerk advised the schedule runs from May to May and usually increases, further reminding members the Council signed a three year contract last year. Best value is always strived for.
5. Lengthsman PPE. Have we included enough funds to cover necessary replacements during the year? The Clerk advised it was sufficient.
6. Subscriptions. Do we need them all? The Clerk advised of the necessity of professional memberships and outlines their benefit to the Council.
7. Repairs and Renewals. It was noted the recommendation contained in the report is to significantly reduce the repairs and renewals budget to £3,000. This can be achieved by carrying out as much essential repairs as possible within the current financial year.

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8. Devon Contract Waste (DCW). What service are they providing and do tenants pay a share? The Clerk advised DCW carry out weekly collections of two general waste bins, one recycling bin and one glass bin from the Town Hall and that tenants do not pay a share. Members discussed the possibility of the Theatre paying a percentage towards the glass recycling collection.
9. Allotments. Councillors discussed the possibility of including a charge towards cost of water in 2021. The Clerk was asked to investigate what other Councils are doing. The Clerk advised that it was important to give advance notice to allotment holders and reminded Councillors that it could not be implemented until the annual renewal in October.
10. Seasonal Displays. What have we spent on contractual commitments? The Clerk advised we have not paid the events contractor for this year as the decision to cancel the event was made early. The start date of the contract has been delayed until 2021 for a three year period. As a result a saving has been made in the seasonal display budget this year.
11. Cllr Hoggart raised concerns about how the council reflects the cost of running the Council compared to the cost of running services which appears disproportionate. The Clerk was asked to identify ways to differentiate how staff time is allocated to projects and delivering services.

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12. H&S/ Fire and scheduled inspections. Why do we budget £16,000 when the highest has been £9,000 with an average of £5,000 to 6,000. Potentially this could be reduced to £10,000.

The clerk advised members of the requirement to purchase two more Office 365 licences for new members, the cost of which will be added to the draft IT budget.

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13. Professional fees. Members asked the Clerk what they related to? The Clerk advised that legal fees arise from seeking professional services to assist the Council with matters relating to law. Although this was not a core expenditure it is a necessity.

14. Newsletter. Is this the Signal? The clerk confirmed it was for the production of the Signal Newsletter.

15. Tax base. Have Torbay Council made a decision yet? The Clerk advised this is expected in December.

Cllr Giles reminded members of the need to consider the grants given to organisations where the Council has consistently supported organisations they will not know how successful they can be.

Reserves must be considered as part of the budget discussion.

Cllr Haddock suggested removing the budget for the Civic Award and Outstanding Sports Achievement Award and provide a certificate only. He further suggested that BTC takes over cutting the grass at Shoalstone Pool and support floral projects where we can.

Cllr Giles advised that BTC should think carefully about the Town Hall regeneration budget being put back into the budget.

Members discussed the Reserves list, suggesting some items can be moved.

What is the Neighbourhood Plan amount in reserves? The Clerk advised this is the balance of monies received from government grants.

Community Health Care Working Group, is this necessary?

What is the Community Led Clean Up. This is the balance from a grant received.

Members discussed red telephone boxes which have been deferred from the last Full Council meeting to be discussed as part of the budget discussions. It was **resolved** to progress the project with a maximum budget of £2,000.

£80,000 Town Hall regeneration? The Clerk advised that if the Council agrees to proceed with the project there will be a requirement to match fund some of the grant funding.

Members agreed figures must be put against the projects identified in the recovery plan.

b) To discuss and consider the draft consultation document

Cllr Massey was dismayed at the draft consultation and requested several changes were made. The Clerk advised that a new version had been circulated to members and shared her screen for the benefit of members.

Members agreed the document needs to include context about the way the budget is being considered in relation to the current world crisis and to reduce some of the initial information.

Concerns were raised about timescale. It was **agreed** to make the document available as soon as possible online version with hard

	<p>copies in the Signal in January. The Clerk reminded members that BTC must legally inform Torbay Council of the precept requirement by the end of February.</p> <p>Cllr Hoggart offered to carry out presentations to organisations if required.</p>
20052	<p>Date of Next Meeting It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 9th December 2020 at 2pm.</p>

The meeting closed at 15:40pm

Chairperson Date.....