

KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

Audit, Grants and Charities Committee

**Monday 29th January 2018 at 7.00 pm
in The Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Kendal**

- PRESENT** Councillors Rachael Hogg (Chair), Geoff Cook (Vice Chair), Andy Blackman, David Evans and Sylvia Emmott
- APOLOGIES** Councillors Paul Bramham and Austin Robinson
- OFFICERS** Jack Jones (Town Treasurer) and Hazel Belshaw (Temporary Council Secretary)
- 888/17/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
None
- 889/17/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
None
- 890/17/18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30TH OCTOBER 2017**

The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting held on 30th October, which had been approved by full Council on 27 November 2017
- RESOLVED** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30th October be accepted as a correct record.
- 891/17/18 MATTERS ARISING (Not on Agenda)**
Grant Applications 2018/19 (ref minute 562/17/18)
The Treasurer advised that Council had agreed to award Chestnut Community Events (ref minute 576/17/18) £1,000 instead of £500.

Council also agreed to award Kendal Lads and Girls Club (ref minute 578/17/18) £920 instead of £720.
- 892/17/18 Schools of Science and Art Charity** (ref minute 588/17/18)
The Treasurer advised that Councillors, acting as Trustees of the Charity, had agreed to award the Kendal & District Engineering Society £120 as a one off grant.
- 893/17/18 Feedback from Lauren Pender** (ref minute 589/17/18)
The Treasurer advised that he had been in touch with Lauren who was happy to appear on the Council website and in the newsletter.
- 894/17/18 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENT 2017/18 (9 MONTHS ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017)**
The Treasurer presented a report on the Council's financial position as at 31st December 2017, providing figures showing actual income and expenditure against the expected portion of the budget for the period, together with a commentary on variances. The overall position was favourable, with a substantial net underspending of approximately £46,604.

The Treasurer highlighted the following points from the report:

Staff salaries – Currently showing an underspend of £6,127 although this is expected to level off by the year end.

Suppliers and Services – Showing an underspend of £2,299, which is typical for the time of year. Council has agreed that the variance be used to offset the overspending on the Newsletter budget, currently £481.

IT and Website – Currently an underspend of £1,778 but there are plans to use the budget to replace equipment.

Kendal in Bloom – The summer and winter planting are underspent by £2,753 due mainly to the deduction from the contracted fee.

Christmas Lights and Festivals – The Displays heading is currently showing a £2,584 underspend, however this amount will be used to maintain and replace existing lights and to purchase new displays.

Balance Sheet & Reserves Statement – £75,000 is currently invested with the Cumberland Building Society on a temporary basis. This is to be withdrawn in early February and is an item on the Council Agenda.

There is £22,977 of VAT that is reclaimable and £3,500 outstanding from the Christmas Lights Switch On sponsors.

There was a discussion by Members on the large amount of underspend and how the money needs to be invested. It was felt that some of this may be helped by the Project Manager attending the Environment & Highways Committee.

Members noted the statement.

RESOLVED

That the Budgetary Control Statement 2017/18 be noted.

895/17/18

REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Treasurer presented the review of risk assessments.

He highlighted the following points:

Working practice – there was an overhaul of the risk assessment in relation to the hanging baskets. A cherry picker will be used by the contractor going forward.

Councillor Blackman highlighted that the same assessment should be used for hanging banners in Highgate.

Council van – a bulk head, tracker and a reversing camera have been added. The tracker is useful for the Townscape Manager whilst he is lone working. Councillor D Evans suggested the installation of a dash cam.

The Treasurer has advised the Townscape Manager to make him aware of any further improvements should they arise. There is a scheduled visit from the Health and Safety Advisor on 22nd February.

Members noted the review.

RESOLVED Committee reviewed the risk assessments and authorised the Treasurer to sign them.

RECOMMENDED That the risk assessments be forwarded to full Council for approval.

896/17/18

ADVANCE PAYMENT OF 2018/19 APPROVED GRANTS

The Treasurer advised Members that the 2017/18 underspending on the General Grants budget is currently £5,500. In January Council agreed that any underspending on the General and Festival Grants budgets by the end of February can be used to make advance payments of grants already approved for 2018/19. This will be reported at March Council. This was noted by Members.

RESOLVED Members noted that advance payments of the 2018/19 approved grants are to be considered by Council.

897/17/18

CUMBERLAND BUILDING SOCIETY – TEMPORARY INVESTMENT

The Treasurer advised that in November 2017 Council agreed the investment of £75,000 into the Cumberland Building Society for three months. He will be asking at February Council to the withdrawal of that amount in order to meet cash flow requirements. This was noted by Members.

Councillor D Evans asked if the temporary investment with the Cumberland Building Society would be something to do on a regular basis. The Treasurer commented that, because the Cumberland account operates on the basis of a three months' notice period, decisions on temporary investments may not always fit with the pattern of Committee meetings.

Councillor Cook suggested that a discussion on whether this investment is something we should be doing regularly should be added to the next Agenda. Members discussed allowing the Treasurer to make the proposal to invest outside of the Committee Meeting, in consultation with the Chair. The proposal would then be referred to full Council for decision. Councillor Emmott suggested this is something that could be added to the Terms of Reference for this Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Emmott to allow the Treasurer to seek approval from the Chair of Audit, Grants and Charities Committee to make proposals for decision by full Council to invest money on a temporary basis with the Cumberland Building Society. This was seconded by Councillor Cook and carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATION That the Treasurer can propose to invest money with the Cumberland Building Society on a temporary basis by seeking approval from the Chair of Audit, Grants and Charities Committee, prior to it being submitted to full Council for decision.

898/17/18

BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

The Treasurer advised that there are currently seven Councillors authorised as bank account signatories. It is considered prudent to mitigate the potential risk of several of those signatories ceasing as Councillors after May. It will be suggested at February Council to add a further three Councillors. Those will be Councillors Blackman, Tirvengadam and Coleman.

This was noted by Members.

RESOLVED

That the request for three new bank account signatories be noted.

899/17/18

APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

The Treasurer advised that Council had opted in to a process whereby the appointment of its external auditor would be made by Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA). The firm has notified the Council that PKF Littlejohn LLP has been appointed for five years from the 2017/18 audit.

This was noted by Members.

RESOLVED

That the appointment of the external auditor was noted.

900/17/18

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

The Treasurer advised the Spring edition will include the story on Lauren Pender and information on the 2018/19 budget.

901/17/18

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

902/17/18

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

30th April 2018 at 7.30pm. (later time)

The meeting closed at 7.47pm.

Summary of Information, Resolutions and Recommendations to Council

Min	Subject	Information/Resolution/Recommendation to Council	
894	Budgetary Control Statement	RES	That the Budgetary Control Statement 2017/18 (9 months ended 31 st December 2017) be noted.
895	Review of Risk Assessments	RES REC	Committee reviewed the risk assessments and authorised the Treasurer to sign them. That the risk assessments be forwarded to full Council for approval.
896	Advance Payment of 2018/19 Approved Grants	RES	Members noted that advance payments of the 2018/19 approved grants are to be considered by Council.
897	Cumberland Building Society – Temporary Investment	REC	That the Treasurer can propose to invest money with the Cumberland Building Society on a temporary basis by seeking approval from the Chair of Audit, Grants and Charities Committee, prior to it being submitted to full Council for decision.
898	Bank Account Signatories	RES	That the request for three new bank account signatories be noted.
899	Appointment of External Auditor	RES	That the appointment of the external auditor was noted.