

# Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting

Kidsgrove Town Council  
Victoria Hall  
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## Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021 7:00pm Meeting held in the Victoria Hall, Kidsgrove.

*The meeting opened at 7:10pm*

**FPG/21-22/4/1 Present**

Cllr A Cooper (Chair); Cllr S Dymond (Vice-chair); Cllr P Waring; Cllr C Dickens;  
Cllr A Cartwright; Cllr M Maxfield;

Clerk to the Council – Sue Davies

**FPG/21-22/4/2 To receive and consider apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllr C Dickens and Cllr M Stubbs.

**FPG/21-22/4/3 To note declarations of Member's Interests**

None declared.

**FPG/21-22/4/4 To consider and approve the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.**

The committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

**FPG/21-22/4/5 Public Participation (A period of not exceeding 15 minutes for the press or public to make comments.)**

No members of the public present.

Chair .....

**FPG/21-22/4/6**

**Matters Arising: Updates only on items outstanding not otherwise on the agenda including:**

Cllr Waring asked about the NSI Account transfer. The Clerk reported that the forms had been returned. It was noted that the account is currently on hold.

**FPG/21-22/4/7**

**Finance:**

**a) To receive bank statements and reconciliations dated 30th September 2021.**

The council received and verified the bank statements and reconciliations dated 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**b) To receive schedules of payment for approval.**

**i. Retrospective approvals since the last meeting**

Deferred to Full Council.

**ii. Payments requiring approval and payment through the banking system.**

Deferred to Full Council.

**c) To receive and approve the Q2 budget update and report including any virements required.**

Deferred to Full Council.

**FPG/21-22/4/8**

**Victoria Hall Issues:**

**a) To receive a request from Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council relating to the wall at the frontage to the building and consider recommending to approve the proposal in principle to Full Council or otherwise.**

The committee considered the request from Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council to assist with the cost of repairing repointing the wall that fronts the Town Hall at an estimated total cost of approximately £33,000.

The Committee unanimously resolved that, whilst recognising the shared responsibility, the committee would require more information prior to putting a recommendation to Full Council. The Clerk was asked to write back to assert that the committee feel that the percentage share of costs should be based on area of wall and not length. In addition, the need for an expensive consultant should be questioned.

*Action: The Clerk to write back to NULBC with the committee's feedback.*

**b) To receive a revised hire charges sheet and to consider approval subject to any agreed changes.**

The clerk informed that she is drafting the charges information. The committee clarified that a clause to lose the surety payment if the hall isn't vacated by the agreed time (with a small amount of leeway) should be added. The increased cost of security guards was raised.

*Action: The Clerk to bring the payment sheet to the next meeting.*

**c) To receive an update from the Clerk on maintenance and operational issues and to agree any actions required.**

The Clerk updated the Committee:

- The temperature in the disabled and gentleman's' toilets has been reported by Watermans as being too low. Ford Mainwaring are looking into this and will provide a solution and quote.
- The kitchen boiler is scheduled to be serviced.
- The disabled lift in the hall is not operational again. The Clerk informed that she is challenging the contractor as it hasn't been used since their last repair. The legal need for the lift will also be established.

**d) Issues relating to the boiler in the bar including quotes for work from Ford Mainwaring.**

The Clerk updated that the hot water boiler in the bar isn't working and is also leaking water. Quotes are being obtained to both remove it and replace it. Unfortunately, the quotes haven't been obtained in time to put on the agenda, but the options will require evaluating.

**e) To receive a report from the Clerk on reopening the Victoria Hall and bookings.**

The Clerk reported that bookings are increasing, and the first larger commercial events have taken place.

The Clerk updated the committee regarding covid measures. She had received a call from the HSE earlier that week to check the processes in place and been sent advice. She is to receive a follow-up call.

Regarding Covid safety, venues are still expected to risk assess to ensure the safety of staff on site and customers during events. The government advice is especially to consider ventilation being adequate during an event and increased cleaning regimes. The committee heard that the 180 maximum figure has been applied since the hall reopened. This has led to one lost booking, where over 250 was requested. Otherwise, all events have fallen at or under the 180 level and hall hirers have been very understanding of the need for the Council to apply a duty of care.

One three-day event late November requested 150 of their booking form for each night but have since asked for this to be increased.

The committee considered the situation, especially around the difficulty in ventilating the hall without leaving fire doors open. It was agreed by all members present that the 180 maximum figure should continue to be applied to all bookings uniformly, including the three day booking who could increase their permitted numbers by 30 in line with this policy. It

was also requested that risk assessments put together by private hirers are passed to the Clerk to check for adequacy.

The Clerk discussed with the committee the booking diary which currently has little space and the need to ensure the increased cleaning regime could occur between bookings. It was felt by the committee that council business was suffering due to the Clerk working most evenings and many weekend days standing in. The Clerk reported that she had been on-site till after 12:30, and once till 1:30pm, four nights out of seven the previous week and put in many weekend hours overseeing events as well as trying to work her usual hours for her role. It was unanimously agreed by all present that whilst the Council is without a caretaker/facilities officer and still in pre-contract stage with the bar, that no further bookings should be taken from private hirers to allow the clerk and other officers to fulfil their roles for the Council. The situation would be reviewed if any change in circumstance occurs.

The Clerk raised a recent request from a hirer to place a bottle bar in the foyer with several variations suggested, and previously circulated to F&GP members. The committee resolved that this request should be refused for health and safety measures as emergency escape routes could be impeded and queuing in the foyer and corridor wasn't appropriate.

**FPG/21-22/4/9**

**To receive a report on the progress of the Quality Council Award and to agree any recommendations or actions.**

The Clerk informed that the necessary resolution would be taken to the next Full Council meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> November, to resolve that the Council has fulfilled the criteria.

**FPG/21-22/4/10**

**To receive and update of the telephone box and the result of the consultation with nearby residents. To agree any actions required.**

The Clerk informed that a recent consultation with nearby residents regarding the telephone box on Oldcott Drive had resulted in a majority being in favour of a planter. A defibrillator was also a popular suggestion but would require a power source being reinstalled. Up on request from the Clerk, it was agreed she could try and establish if a defibrillator is available for placement in the vicinity and, if not, to contact Stoke-on-Trent City Council to propose a jointly funded nearby provision.

**FPG/21-22/4/11**

**To receive and update on the progression of a policy relating to emergency measures that can be implemented at any time that the council becomes unable to meet.**

The Clerk advised this was still to be looked at with Cllr P Waring, Cllr A Cooper to discuss and will be brought to a subsequent meeting.

**FPG/21-22/4/12 To receive an update on the Kidsgrove Dementia Friendly Initiative and receive the minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021. (Appendix 9)**

A brief update was provided by Cllr Cooper and the clerk. It is proving difficult to schedule in a date for the information session at present which is the next step in the process.

**FPG/21-22/4/13 To receive an update of defibrillator provision in the Parish:**

**a) Mapping Exercise**

The Clerk reported that the mapping exercise is continuing.

**b) Town Hall Defibrillator**

It was agreed by the committee that a new defibrillator be purchased for the Victoria Hall exterior allowing the existing one to be retained inside for hall use. It was suggested that for events, it was placed in the care of the bar contractor for if required.

*Actions: The Clerk to pursue the licence for the exterior cabinet, to liaise with the bar contract holder and arrange the purchase of the cabinet (including fixing), the licence required and defibrillator with update reports brought back to committee.*

**c) Butt Lane One Sure defibrillator**

The Clerk reported that this action had not yet been progressed.

**d) Birchenwood defibrillator cabinet**

The Clerk reported that she would pursue this cabinet whilst arranging the cabinet for the Town Hall.

**FPG/21-22/4/14 To receive an update to the five-year plan required on the committee's projects.**

The five-year plan has still not been fully updated but will be available at the Full Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**FPG/21-22/4/15 Clerk and Chair's Reports.**

None

**FPG/21-22/4/16 To note the date and time of the next meeting: 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 19:00.**

**Matters to be considered with the Press and Public Excluded: Exclusion of press and public: To resolve under 1960 (Admission to meetings) Act to exclude the press and public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.**

**FPG/21-22/4/17 The To receive an update on the bar contract.**

The Clerk informed that she was liaising with the Town Council's solicitor to draw up a contract. She informed that a payment of £1000 was required on account, which was agreed.

**FPG/21-22/4/18      To progress a working group made up of councillors and appropriate community leaders to draft a London Bridge Policy to be brought back to the committee.**

The Clerk advised this group still needs pulling together to start to look at a policy.

Meeting Closed: 20:20