WHALEY BRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

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CLERK'S REPORT

To:	All Town Councillors	Date:	7 November 2024
From:	Andrew Fox Town Clerk	Subject:	Town Council Meeting to be held on 14 November 2024

Dear Councillor,

Please find attached background papers for the Town Council meeting.

7.15pm Cheque signing

7.30pm Town Council Meeting

Mechanics Institute Refurbishment Project

A report on progress for the Mechanics Institute Refurbishment Project will be considered at the meeting. Our Project Manager is still in the process of preparing their report and I will send it Clirs as soon as it is prepared. I have placed an item to consider any tenders under the exempt section.

Holiday Request

I would be most grateful if I could take the 22nd of November as a holiday.

Budget 2024/25

I will provide a draft budget before the meeting once it is prepared. Just to note there is likely to be a substantial increase in the salary budget due to the rise in National Insurance contributions via the lowering of the threshold.

Internal Audit

I have received a quote from Emma Smith who did the internal audit last year. The quote for this year is £171.00 plus millage is applicable.

Grants and Donations

We have received a lot of applications for consideration at the meeting. Due to the quantity of applications, I have prepared them in a separate document which I will not be sending out with the meeting papers as it would create a significant postage cost. If Cllrs would like a paper copy of the applications, please let me know.

Sexual and General Harassment Policy

Under new legislation the Council has to provide and approve an update Sexual and General Harassment Policy. This requires an input from Staff and the Council and I will consult staff on the draft policy before presenting it at the meeting next week. All Cllrs need to be aware of the policy and acknowledge they have read and understood it once approved. I will send the policy after consultation early next week.

Photocopier Provision

I have received two quotes for the provision of the photocopier which I will present to the meeting for consideration.

SLCC Membership

My SLCC Membership has expired so I am asking if the Council will consider agreeing the cost to renew my membership at a total of £253.00 which is an increase on previous years.

Sunnybank Allotment Site

A site inspection was carried out on the 1st of November. A significant amount of plots were identified as needing work and I am now in the process of contacting the holders of the plots to highlight the issues that were noticed during our site inspection. It is expected that significant work will be done before the rents are due for renewal in April or the plots will have to be surrendered.

Christmas Tree Brackets

Earlier this year the Council agreed to provide 7 Christmas tree brackets for Horwich End and I was to get quotes for the work. I have been struggling to get someone to quote for this with Whaley Smith stating they were unable to do the work early on. I did eventually get a cost from Drinkwaters to build the 7 brackets like the existing for a total of £494.60 plus VAT. I have the power under the financial regulations to approve this cost and as the matter is urgent to get them up for Christmas this year and the price is competitive I agreed this cost and instructed Drinkwaters to make the brackets. I am happy to report that they have been completed and installed by Steve Gregory with some assistance from W4W. Steve Gregory has put in an invoice of £160.00 for his work which includes reinforcing one of our hanging basket brackets in Furness Vale.

Shallcross Incline Trees and Leaf Blowing

First of all a number of trees have been identified as needed work as per the previous tree report. We did have a large branch fall from a tree which was sitting on the incline which has now been taken away by SNS trees who attended to provide a quote for the tree work on the Incline. The log was removed at a cost of £150.00 plus VAT which I authorised under the financial regulations as an emergency expenditure. I am waiting for the quote for the tree work which I should get before the meeting. I also had a meeting with Gill Millward this Monday about the Incline and some concerns were raised about the sheer number of leaves on the path. I am aware Cllrs are also concerned about this and I have discussed this with the contractor briefly who did suggest they can do additional visits in the autumn to account for the leaf fall. There is also the possibility of agreeing more than 12 visits with additional ones scheduled for autumn when a monthly visit is not enough to clear the sheer quantity of leaves.

Town Clerk, 7 November 2024