

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 6.00pm By Video Conference Call.

Present: Councillors:

Cllr J Phillips (Chair), V Monk, V Elkins, A Windsor, J Carter, L York, J Coates, V Nel (Vice-Chair) & G Marchewka.

Also in attendance:

Mr Robert Ward (Town Clerk),

S Petters (Assistant Town Clerk)

Members of the Public:0

**53. Apologies for absence**

None received.

**54. Dispensations and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Cllrs J Phillips & L York as members of North Devon District Council, have a dispensation under SO66 to discuss and vote on any item on the agenda unless the item refers to a financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

**55. Minutes of the last meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021, are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (NC)

**56. Absence of press and public**

**RESOLVED:** That the following matter shall be taken in the absence of the press and public, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, as the item contains exempt information as defined by Standing Order 82a. (NC)

**57. Procurement of equipment to support the grounds maintenance of highway verges.**

The Town Clerk explained that the reason for the exclusion of the press and public is because discussions with suppliers was still ongoing.

The report (appendix one) was presented to the committee.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the purchase of equipment as per the report presented up to the value of £16,500 (NC)

The Town Clerk brought to the attention of the committee that options for an asset management system are currently being investigated. For the management of play areas but also for the other Town Council assets including heritage artefacts.

Meeting closed at 6.16pm.

Chairman.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

## APPENDIX ONE

**Report to:** FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**Date:** 25th February 2021

**Subject:** PROCUREMENT OF EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT THE GROUNDS  
MAINTENANCE OF HIGHWAY VERGES

**Report by:** Town Clerk

### 1. Introduction:

- 1.1. Following the decision to bring the grass cutting of highway verges in house it has been necessary to review the equipment needed to undertake this work.
- 1.2. New equipment was purchased to undertake the grass cutting in Rock Park, but this is not sufficient for the works across the rest of the town.

### 2. Recommendation:

- 2.1. Members to agree to the purchase of additional grounds maintenance equipment to enable the grass cutting of highway verges.
- 2.2. Subject to 2.1 being approved, members to approve a revenue budget of up to £16,500 to be funded from the General Properties Reserve (Nominal Code 9000)

### 3. Reason for Recommendation:

- 3.1. Due to the quantity of work, nature of some of the verges (steep banks and confined spaces) it is necessary to procure a second walk behind mower.
- 3.2. To transport the mowers and equipment to the different areas of the town we need a trailer, our current vehicle is suitable for pulling a trailer, with two mowers on board.
- 3.3. Additional hand power tools will also be needed to enable the clearance of detritus created in the grass cutting process.

### 4. Report:

- 4.1. The previous grounds maintenance contracts for Rock Park and the Highways grass cutting cost in the region of £94,500 per year.
- 4.2. The estimated annual cost for the in-house delivery arrangement is expected to be in the region of £64,000 per year, made up of:

Staff	£52,000
Fuel	£1,000
vehicle & equipment servicing	£5,000
Replacement vehicle (see paragraph 5.1.5)	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£68,000</b>

<b>One off costs (committed)</b>		
Compound (includes security)	£19,201	
Ride on mower	£17,668	
Walk behind mower 1	£6,490	
Strimmers, etc	£2,067	
Shredder for chipping branches, etc	£2,350	
Football pitch line marker	£540	
		<b>£48,316</b>
<b>One off costs (proposed)</b>		
Walk behind mower 2	£10,000	
Trailer	£5,000	
Extra blower etc	£1,500	
		<b>£16,500</b>
<b>Equipment and compound costs</b>		<b>£64,816</b>

## 5. Implications

### 5.1. Financial

**5.1.1.** The initial impact of the change to the delivery model for grounds maintenance will have an impact on the Town Council budget that requires the use of the General Reserve.

**5.1.2.** It is expected that the extra costs will be absorbed within 36 months.

**5.1.3.** The additional One Off Costs are estimated and the maximum expected purchase price.

**5.1.4.** The current Highway Verge Shrub Bed contract will be retained and be reviewed in 2021-2022. The contract cost is £1125 per month, £13,500 per year. There is an inflation increase expected this year.

**5.1.5.** The current Mitsubishi L200 pick up lease expires in June 2021 (current cost £241 per month), options are being explored to either purchase the current vehicle at the end of the lease, take out a lease on a new vehicle or purchase outright another vehicle.

#### 5.1.6. Future Considerations

- Options are being considered for an asset management software. The primary purpose would be to manage play area inspections, but it would also potentially support premises, vehicles and the heritage artefacts.
- There may be a need for an additional vehicle depending on future work developments but at this point we are unsure about what requirements we have.

### 5.2. Legal

**5.2.1.** Legislation for working on the highway applies, risk assessments are in place and additional training for staff will be undertaken where necessary.

### 5.3. Environmental / Climate

**5.3.1.** Where possible electric /rechargeable equipment will be purchased