**Minutes of a Finance Meeting of Usk Town Council (UTC) held in Sessions House**

**on Wednesday 5 March 2025 at 6.00 pm**

**Present:** Cllr A Ivin, Cllr K. Peacock, Cllr M. Howells, Cllr G Howells, Cllr D. Richards; Mr D Nash (RFO)

**Apologies:** Cllr B Thomas, Cllr D Harrison; Mrs A Morgan (Clerk)

1. **To receive apologies for absence**

Cllr B Thomas, Cllr D Harrison; Mrs A Morgan (Clerk)

1. **Declarations of interest in items on this Agenda**

None declared.

1. **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2025**

 The Minutes were approved as a true & accurate record.

1. **Matters arising from meeting held on 5 February 2025**

Thanks to Cllr K. Peacock, CADW monies received for reimbursement of monies spent on the Sessions House repairs and professional fees. £1,166 received. Further monies available. KP to review against costs with a view to submitting a further claim.

Thanks to Cllr M Howells, MCC had agreed to pay for the claim by Newport Bus for the Christmas on Bridge St lost income.

The 2025/26 request for Precept had been submitted to MCC.

The Clerk to update on the Usk Primary Defib Contribution.

Otherwise, none other than as listed on the agenda for this meeting.

1. **Authorisation of payments online/cheque – Bank Reconciliation.**

Members received copies of the payments & receipts for the month No queries - all agreed. RFO to change references to show company making payment.

No payments were made outside the normal monthly running costs or not previously agreed. All payments are being made by BACS and Direct Debit.

The Rialtas and Bank statements reconcile aside from the known differences of the £14.68 adjustment from year end. This would be adjusted to zero by month end.

1. **To approve the following payments:**
* A budget of £200 was approved for tidying the allotments (anticipated at one day work – one person and strimmer hire)- to be spent by month end. Cllr Richards to arrange.
1. **To receive an update on the Internal Audit and Annual Return 2023/24**

JDH Business Services Limited (Internal Auditor) had issued his report. This was circulated to Cllrs and reviewed and discussed in detail. The majority of the internal auditor’s comments had already been identified in advance of his report and appropriate action taken to remedy in this current year. Discussion followed on the Annual Return on those statements where UTC were self-reporting and the draft Annual Return was discussed and amended in the meeting. The RFO previously had previously circulated his comments on the Internal Audit. Those comments on the draft annual return were to be reviewed and recirculated for final approval at full Council due on the 10th March with a view to submission to audit Wales by the end of the week commencing 10th March.

Notice (of delay in publishing Annual Return 2023/24) to remain displayed on both the noticeboard and the website.

1. **Fidelity insurance**

The Internal Audit report has recommended an increase in fidelity. RFO to obtain quote from Zurich (our insurance provider for 2025/26.

1. **Matters of Information/ Any other business.**
* AI to review proposal for 2028 energy from UTC’s energy broker.
* Cllr allowances discussed and to be approved at full Council. Recommended: £900 for Chair, £500 for Deputy Chair, £500 for each of Chair of Finance and Chair of Events – in addition to the statutory expenses of £156 pa and £52 pa.
* The RFO asked if anyone was aware of debtors/creditors as at 31 March, to please share details as these would need to be included in the 2025 year end accounts.

There was no further business and the meeting formally concluded.