



MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Committee meeting)
of a meeting of THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 14th NOVEMBER
2016 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE

Present:

Jo Byrne (Committee Convenor)
Paul Stephens (Deputy Convenor)
John Callinan
Pam Swain (Vice Chairman/Deputy Town Mayor)
Theresa Watt (Chairman/Town Mayor)

Also in attendance: Liz Lawrence, Deputy Town Clerk

Attendees are reminded that the Proceedings of this meeting may be recorded, filmed or photographed but that any person requiring such a record is asked to give polite notice at the start of the meeting.

K1/328 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Town Clerk

K1/329 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are reminded of their obligation within the requirements of the Adopted Model Code of Conduct to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests where applicable. There were no requests for declarations of interest to be recorded.

K1/330 ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

An adjournment of 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda (3 minutes per person max)
No adjournment was called.

K1/331 TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3rd October 2016

The Minutes were approved as a correct record.

K1/332 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE YOUTH WORKING GROUP AND TO ALSO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE ON YOUTH CENTRE SECURITY REPAIRS AND AGREE RENEWAL OF CONTRACT WITH GLEVUM SECURITY

- (1) Councillor Swain informed the Committee that a meeting between the Youth Working Group and Youth Workers was due to take place on 18th November 2016. However, in the interim Councillor Swain gave brief updates on the music project which is progressing extremely well-due to finish in March with an "open mic" competition. In-house fund raising was being organised and overall attendance numbers continue to increase to the point where the Stonehouse Youth Group is one of the best attended in Gloucestershire.

K1/332 (continued)

- (2) Following consideration it was agreed that the suggested Youth Centre security repairs were not necessary as no issues had been reported with the operation of the shutters.
- (3) The Committee agreed to renew the services provided by Glevum Security with the 2017 contract prices held at the 2016 rates.

K1/333 TO RECEIVE A PROGRESS REPORT FROM HIGH STREET EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Members were circulated with the Working Group's report which outlined discussions relating to possible events based around using Laburnum Walk Playing Field, the Town Greens, the Town Hall/former Post office, holding car boot sales, childrens' activities and a Sports Active Day.

The Working Group's proposal to the Committee to allow the use of the buildings, the Greens and Laburnum Walk Playing Field was unanimously agreed subject to ensuring that appropriate insurance cover is in place.

During the discussions it was also noted that a local school had been seen holding some of their physical exercise classes on two of the town's playing fields. Members agreed that the School should be contacted to ensure that they have the necessary insurance cover when taking the children off school grounds to use outside facilities as part of their curriculum.

K1/334 TO CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

Councillor Byrne gave a verbal report on the Working Group's recent discussions which included:

- (a) Stonehouse News - proposed that the 4th issue of the year be moved on to early January to allow for the busy pre-Christmas period. This move would also give Schools/organisations a better timescale to submit articles and give the Town Council an opportunity to set out their initial plans for 2017.
It was noted that the newly appointed printer had successfully met the required specification set for the latest issue.
The Committee agreed that this proposal be approved.
- (b) Social Media - this was being successfully used and had recently assisted with providing credible information about vandalism at Oldends Lane facilities.
- (c) Promotion of the Pavilion - the current information available was being updated and photos taken so that these can be put onto the Town Council and Venue Hire websites.
- (d) Due to timescales the placing of a temporary banner highlighting the success of Stonehouse In Bloom 2016 has had to be shelved. However, with the necessary permission having been given arrangements will be made to promote the 2017 Award.

K1/335 TO CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE GENERAL POLICY WORKING GROUP

A report of the Working Group's current reviews was circulated to Members and Councillor Watt summarised the suggested minor amendments to the Code of Conduct and Co-option Policy. With regard to the Communications Policy the Working Group proposed (A) an amendment to the wording relating to the use of media - this should be changed to "staff and/or a nominated Councillor (Champion) for media" and (B) a Councillor is nominated to be "media Champion".

Councillor Callinan expressed his particular concerns about the wording within the Code of Conduct based on advice given by a Stroud District Council Monitoring Officer at a Councillor training evening. Councillor Callinan felt the advice was relevant and requested that the Working Group revisit the Policy. Following a lengthy discussion Councillor Callinan was invited to submit his suggested amendments to the Working Group for consideration.

K1/335 (continued)

With regard to the Co-option Policy, it was agreed that the fully amended Policy would be submitted to the full Town Council meeting for approval.

Whilst the Committee agreed that the Working Group's Proposal (A) should be approved Councillor Callinan felt that there is a need to ensure the Policy safeguards the Town Council in the future and therefore Proposal (B) should be given further consideration.

K1/336 FINANCE

1. To check and agree expenditure/receipts totals against budget headings September & October and bank reconciliations
September payments £21749.10 and Receipts £12987.60 were agreed against budget. October payments £92925.35 and Receipts £127783.90 were agreed against budget.
2. To agree payments due November - **payments of £98,911.98 were agreed**
3. Update on investments and required action - To authorise an investment of £75000 in the Nationwide Building Society Fixed Term Deposit and note change of interest rates for Cambridge Building Society and Co-operative Bank.
The Committee agreed to authorise the investment to the Nationwide Building Society. The changes in interest rates were noted
4. To receive feedback from External Auditor to queries raised - They have advised notice referred to was 2014-15. Clerk needs to check but fairly sure they have not taken account of Wednesday office closure.
In the absence of the Clerk it was not possible to report on this item.
5. To consider a draft budget for 17-18
The first draft budget was considered and noted - requested to reduce the Website allocation and clarification requested on the Feed-In tariff amount listed.
6. To discuss implications of allowing the tenancy of the Post Office to void, discuss possible temporary usage. -
Following discussion it was agreed that as the Town Hall Working Group are due to meet on 21st November 2016 any further consideration on temporary usage of the vacant premise should be deferred until the full Town Council meeting.
7. To authorise election costs approx. £4500 to come out of general reserve.
Councillor Byrne expressed concern that Town Council was faced with having find additional funding for the recently notified election. This comes on top of the May election costs. The closing date for nominations of this current vacancy close on 18th November and it was therefore agreed to defer any decision relating to the amount to come out of Reserves until the next F & S meeting.
8. To note additional legal costs £150 were anticipated as bailiff costs in case of non payment by ARK.
The Committee were informed that the matter has now been resolved and the additional legal cost was no longer necessary.

K1/337 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16th January 2017

Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960. The Committee will pass a resolution excluding the public from Item K1/338 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest

K1/338 To receive Minutes from the Staffing Committee Meeting of the 7th November and consider any recommendations

The Minutes were noted which included reporting on discussions relating to staffing strategy, the budget for 2017/18 and the approval of expenditure for the Admin staff to attend a Clerk's networking day and for the Town Clerk's continued training costs. It was recommended that this expenditure be funded from the Finance & Strategy current Admin budget allocation.

The Staffing Committee will be continuing to consider staffing strategy for 2017/18 at their next meeting.

The Committee noted and approved the recommended expenditure for the networking day and Town Clerk training.
