



MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Committee meeting) of a meeting of THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 13th JUNE 2016 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE

Present:

Jo Byrne

John Callinan

Paul Stephens

Pam Swain (Vice Chairman/Deputy Town Mayor)

Theresa Watt (Chairman/Town Mayor)

Also Present:

Gill Jennings 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.

K1/284 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

None received

K1/285 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 declarations of interest

K1/286 TO ELECT A COMMITTEE CONVENOR

Cllr Byrne was nominated by Cllr Swain, seconded by Cllr Stephens. All in favour.

K1/287 TO ELECT A DEPUTY COMMITTEE CONVENOR

Cllr Stephens was nominated by Cllr Watt, seconded by Cllr Byrne. All in favour.

K1/288 ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(Maximum of 15 minutes - Any member of the public may speak only once in respect of any business itemised on the Agenda for a maximum of 5 minutes)

No adjournment was necessary

K1/289 TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 2016

The Minutes were approved by majority vote. Cllr Callinan abstained.

K1/290 TO APPOINT A COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP AND CONFIRM REMIT (suggested wording below:)

To edit content of newsletter, website, facebook, Ensure compliance with the Transparency Act, Data Protection Act, Publication Scheme & Communications Policy. To examine new ways to promote council activities and provide a platform for community engagement.

K1/290 (continued)

Reporting to Finance & Strategy quarterly or more often as required.

No budget control.

Cllrs. Byrne, Watt together with the Deputy Clerk. Rob Waite would be invited to join the group with his expertise.

K1/291 TO REVIEW NEWSLETTER COSTS

To check current expenditure and consider quotations for printing.

The Committee agreed that expenditure was too high against income and printing costs needed to be reduced. Cllr Byrne will work with the Deputy Clerk in securing 3 quotations to reduce printing costs of next edition.

K1/292 TO APPOINT A YOUTH WORKING GROUP AND CONFIRM REMIT (suggested wording below:)

To act as a conduit for information between the various youth groups and the Town Council. To monitor service provision and report on performance.

To make quarterly checks on the condition of the youth centre and equipment, health and safety.

Reporting to Finance & Strategy quarterly or more often as required.

No budget control.

Cllrs. Swain, Callinan, Watt were appointed.

K1/293 TO APPOINT A TOWN HALL WORKING GROUP AND CONFIRM REMIT (suggested wording below:)

To check compliance with health and safety, monitor service provision and costs, make quarterly checks on the condition of the building and provide reports on recommended improvements/repairs/usage.

Reporting to Finance & Strategy quarterly or more often as required.

No budget control.

Cllrs. Stephens, Callinan, Gibbs, Jackson were appointed

K1/294 HEALTH & SAFETY TOWN HALL

To receive a report from the Clerk and discuss cost savings.

The Clerk advised that a qualified H & S inspection would cost in the region of £2000 whereas there was a DIY toolkit on the H & S Executive website which cost nothing. The Committee agreed this would be sufficient for the purposes of the Town Hall Working Group. Cllr Callinan could offer some expertise in H & S to assist.

K1/295 TO APPOINT A GENERAL POLICY WORKING GROUP AND CONFIRM REMIT (suggested wording below:)

To draw up draft policies, review and to consider changes in legislation which may affect current policies making timely adaptations for adoption by Council.

Reporting to Council

No budget control.

Cllrs Watt, Swain, Byrne were appointed.

K1/296 INVESTMENTS

To make a review of current investments and authorise alternative savings providers (report enclosed). The Committee will consider security, availability and gain issues.

The Committee made a review of investments and agreed to try and bring each account down to £75000 and spread investment over 3 further providers in the following order, Co-operative Bank, Nat West, Public Sector Deposit. The deposit maturing from the Cooperative in the sum of £43056 would be reinvested at £75000 reducing the balance on the Business Instant Access account. For Resolution

K1/297 FINANCE

1. To check and agree expenditure/receipts totals against budget headings April & May
April Expenditure £7178.01 Income £13386.69 were checked and agreed
May Expenditure £14227.46 Income £223312.10 were checked and agreed
2. To agree payments due to date in June - payments totalling £24505.64 to chq 8255 were agreed.
3. To consider grant applications - Two applications were deferred for a decision until the Committee had sight of the accounts. **Stonehouse Community Partnership had applied for £499 in respect of stalls for the Goodwill Event. Cllr Callinan proposed that the grant should be allowed with the proviso that the grant income and grant expenditure were clearly annotated in the Partnership 2016/17 accounts and that the balance was held for expenditure on stalls in the future. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Watt and all agreed.**
4. To consider training costs, needs and agree priorities
The Committee were provided with a breakdown of costs:

Clerk - Community Governance Level 5 Sept -Jan	£900
Committee Clerk - ILCA & CILCA	345
5 Councillors (Being a Better Councillor)	425
General Power of Competence (Chair & Clerk)	40
All councillors Code of Conduct	250

This would overstretch the budget, even in funds were used from ART Committee budget. It was agreed that all the training would be offered and funds would be vired from the Insurance budget to cover any shortfall. **For Resolution**

5. Update on insurance costs - final premium £6082.74 + £55.90 in respect of table tennis tables
This action was agreed by the Committee.

K1/298 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

25 JULY 2016

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. The Council will by resolution exclude the public from item K1/299 & K1/300 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest

K1/299 LEGAL MATTER

To consider current lease arrangement and discuss future of the town hall

The Committee were in receipt of correspondence from tenants and were provided with a SWOT analysis of the current and future situation. The Committee agreed that two valuations would be obtained at a cost of £1300 to advise the potential sale or lease of one or two parts of the town hall. In the meantime the Town Hall working group were tasked with looking at the way other town halls operate and to create costed proposals for the town council to consider. The working group were also tasked to meet with other public service providers to discuss joint working. The Town Clerk is to obtain legal advice on the lease and future fees. An application for use of the town hall was considered unsuitable.

K1/300 STAFF SALARIES & PENSION INSURANCE

1. To agree compliance with national pay award - The Committee were appraised of the national pay agreement which is to be applied backdated to 1st April 2016 and covers the current and next financial year. **The Committee agreed that the increases should be applied to staff salaries.**

K1/300 (continued)

2. To check compliance with pensions regulations and to consider paying a pension insurance premium of £585, to receive advice on the LGPS and consider the way forward - The Committee were advised that compliance needs to be proven by 1st July. The Committee were not satisfied with the Local Government Pension Scheme in that it was in deficit and exposed the Council to risk. Furthermore the Clerk's benefits were minimal in comparison to the amount being spent.

The Committee were annoyed that the deficit had not been explained at the outset and that Gloucestershire County Council had not advised that funds were being put into a separate parish fund which had been in debt at the outset. The Clerk to write to the Pensions Ombudsman and also to ascertain the cost of withdrawing from the scheme.

The Committee agreed to set up an alternative provider at the minimum contribution rates with NEST.

The Committee would revisit the matter of the pension insurance.

3. To agree the employment contract for the Committee Clerk - The standard contract was agreed for the Committee Clerk with the alteration in clause 19 of the pension scheme to NEST.
