

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held at the Council Offices, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 8.30 pm on **Monday 10 June 2013**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder	Cllr Barry Hodges
Cllr Eric Buckmaster	Cllr Peter Mitchell
Cllr Derek Filler	Cllr Andrew Wincott

In attendance:
R Bowran - Town Clerk

F 13/01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN & VICE CHAIRMAN

To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee

Resolved: That Cllr Eric Buckmaster is Chairman of the Committee for the year 2013/14. [*prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Filler*]

Resolved: That Cllr Barry Hodges is Vice Chairman of the Committee for the year 2013/14. [*prop Cllr Filler; secd Cllr Wincott*]

F 13/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence. There were none.

F 13/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest by Members. There were none

F 13/04 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 12 March 2013 (F06) [*prop Cllr Filler; secd Cllr Hodges*]

Minute F12/44, Town Action Plan 2014-18. Membership of the working party was discussed. Agreed that the Clerk should write to a number of organisations asking them to nominate a representative to participate in an initial meeting. A list of organisations was prepared.

F 13/05 STAFF MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.

- Admin Officer (Reception) – Clerk confirmed that Laura Carter was now working 22 hours per week.
- Admin Officer (Finance) – Clerk advised that Sue Adams has wished to reduce her hours by August 2013 from 12 to 7 hours per week and attend on Mondays only. Data entry support is being considered.
- Admin Officer (Planning) – Clerk advised that Gill Abbott had signed her new 19 hour a week contract and has now finished the two year data entry task she has been involved with. She has rejected the suggestion of reducing her hours and so she is now being introduced to tasks such as Farmers Market and allotments administration to give her a revised work load.

F 13/06 FINANCE MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to the finances and year end arrangements of the Council

- Clerk advised members of the visit of the Internal Auditor on 04 June for the end of year audit and, apart from a recommendation relating to Financial Regulations, that there were no comments made.
Clerk advised members of the annual accounts and Annual Return for 2012/13. Members questioned levels of reserves and their purpose. Clerk asked for and had approved application of £500 from capital reserve for the purchase of two further market stalls. [*prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Hodges*]
Recommended: that the Annual Return and the Annual Governance Statement be approved and adopted by Council. [*prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Wincott*]
- Clerk advised members of the changes to be imposed upon us by LloydsTSB and presented an alternative involving Unity Trust Bank. Clerk was asked to provide further details and assurances and also to investigate the alternatives available with Barclays and Nationwide.
- Clerk advised that the council's investment strategy needed to be reviewed and recommended that investment of up to £50,000 be made with NS&I Income Bonds at a rate of 1.75%.
Resolved: that the Clerk's recommendation should be adopted as Investment Strategy for 2013/14. [*prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Hodges*]

F 13/07 CIVIC CENTRE PROJECT

To receive the Clerks report on the progress of the construction of the new Civic Centre at Sayesbury Manor Cottage. Clerk reported that most work was now complete and a meeting with the electrical contractor had been arranged for 11 June to finalise rectification of outstanding issues.

F 13/08 MEMORIAL HALL PROJECT

To review the progress and financial report from the Trustees of the Memorial Hall relating to the refurbishment project.

Trustees committed to report monthly on progress. The last report had been received on 08 December 2012 although there had been little activity since.

Agreed to renew the delegated authority for the Clerk to sanction further expenditure on the project up to the limit of £150,000 originally set. The Clerk was instructed to write to the Trustees of the charity reminding them about the conditions of the grant being made and that these must be adhered to in order to ensure that this authority would not be rescinded.

F 13/09 POLICY MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to Policy for the future development of Town Council services to the community.

- Financial Regulations. Two changes to Financial Regulations are proposed.
 - As a result of external auditor's comments; revise reference to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 to be the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011
 - As a result of internal auditor's comments; revise limit above which multiple tenders for contracts must be sought to £5,000.

Resolved: that these amendments be made as stated.
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Wincott]

- Trading company. Clerk advised that financial activities not strictly related to council business should be discretely treated. In principle it was agreed that a trading company be established as is permitted under the General Power of Competence held by the council.
- Policy on TV Watching. Clerk advised that a Policy has been established that forbade the watching of TV on council equipment. This is to counter the current attentions of the Television Licensing Authority

Meeting Closed at 21.45

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is on Monday 30 September 2013.