

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 11 September 2017**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Roger Beeching

Cllr Eric Buckmaster
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
Cllr David Royle

In attendance:

R Bowran - Town Clerk

Joanne Sargant – Town Projects Manager

F 17/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence,

F 17/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest by Members.

F 17/14 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 05 June 2017 (F01)
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Beeching]

There were no matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda.

F 17/15 STAFF MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.

Job Evaluations

Update by the Appointments and Appraisals sub-committee on the Job Evaluation exercise carried out on 15 May 2017, and the subsequent report by the A&A sub-committee dated 17 July.

Cllr Alder gave an overview and said that she had not received a response to her further e-mail of 07 September. Some incremental awards had been recommended to be backdated to 01 April 2017. There was uncertainty about the period of future review which needs clarification. It was stated that the evaluation was not just about salaries but about whether staff roles were fit for purpose. Clerk had not yet had the opportunity to put these latest matters to staff.

Recruitment of Part Time Receptionist

Update by the Town Clerk on the process for the second round of recruitment of a receptionist to work on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Clerk reported 14 applications received and interviews set for Monday 18 September.

F 17/16 FINANCE MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to the finances of the Council

F 17/16.1

Annual Return

Clerk advised members that the Annual Return and supporting documents had been submitted to BDO, the external auditor, in due time and that the notice advising on the availability of accounts for inspection had been posted.

F 17/16.2

Management Report

Clerk presented a financial management report for the five months to 31 August 2017 to members for inspection and approval.

Resolved: After clarification of some items, to accept and approve the financial management report.

[prop Cllr Beeching; secd Cllr Royle]

F 17/16.3

Investments

Resolved: To authorise the Clerk to make a deposit of £50,000 with The Public Sector Deposit Fund managed by CCLA (Churches Charities and Local Authorities) Investment Management Limited.

[prop Cllr Beeching; secd Cllr Alder]

F 17/16.4

Card payments

Following an increasing demand for alternative methods of paying for allotment rent and event tickets, plus the ability to ensure deposits and damage excesses for equipment hire:

Resolved: To authorise the Clerk to establish a card merchant account and Chip and Pin mechanism.

[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Alder]

F 17/16.5

Budget

The general parameters and assumptions for the creation of a budget for 2018/19 were discussed.

Precept increase to be:

- 8% - £21,433

Major items of additional budgeted expenditure to be included in the first draft to be:

- CCTV enhancement - £20,000
- Sawbobs extension and support - £20,000
- Allotments improvements - £10,000
- Cemetery new roadway - £10,000
- Elmwood permissive rights footpath - £10,000
- Rights of Way maintenance - £10,000
- Hanging basket replacement – £5,000
- IT server replacement - £5,000
- Gazebo table replacement - £5,000
- War Memorial refurbishment - £5,000

Items to be provided at break-even or at minimal cost:

- Christmas Lights event
- Fun on the Field event
- Establishment of a new market

Draft budget to be prepared by the Clerk for review at the next meeting of the committee.

F 17/17

POLICY MATTERS

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

F 17/17.1

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Following recommendations in the report of the Internal Auditor.

Resolved: To approve changes to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations relating to details of content.

[prop Cllr Beeching; secd Cllr Alder]

F 17/17.2

Festive Lights Contract.

Following a Tender process conducted in August 2017;

Resolved: To authorise the Clerk to sign a further three year agreement at a cost of £8,850 per annum with Aylesford Electrical for the installation, testing, maintenance, de-installation and storage of the town council's festive lights.

[prop Cllr Beeching; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]

F 17/17.3

Health & Safety Support.

Following an evaluation of options carried out by the Clerk in August 2017.

Resolved: To authorise the Clerk to sign a further three year agreement at a cost of £2,700 per annum with ELAS for the provision of HR and Health & Safety advice and insurance against claims made upon the council.

[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]

F 17/17.4

Council Champions.

Following a submitted paper by Cllr Royle for a proposed Job Description for Members taking on the role of Champion.

It was agreed that Cllr Beeching should prepare a simplified version for consideration by Council.

F 17/17.5

Charges for Services

Following an increase in the requests from members of the public for photocopying and laminating services:

Resolved: To consider and approve charges to third parties for council provided reproduction and associated services

[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Royle]

F 17/17.6

Charges for the Hire of Council Assets

Following a number of requests for hiring council assets, and after deleting hire charges for the council's Land Rover Defender:

Resolved: To consider and approve charges to third parties for the hire and conditions of hire of council owned assets.

[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Alder]

F 17/17.7

Cemetery Regulations

Following a review of the provisions contained in published Regulations for the users of the Three Mile Pond Cemetery:

Resolved: To consider and approve the following changes in wording relating to the length of time floral tributes may be left on graves following an interment:

- Clause 29: delete "seven days" and insert "fourteen days"
- Clause 37: delete "seven days" and insert "fourteen days"

[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Royle]

F 17/18 COMMUNICATION MATTERS

To consider any matters, including a policy, relating to council communications.

Cllr Royle to present the results of the survey of members to determine:

- What should be contained on the council web-site?
- What are the ways the council should be communicating with the public?

Cllr Royle was asked to conduct the survey and present his findings to the next meeting of the committee.

It was agreed to enhance awareness of council meetings by posting them on Facebook.

F 17/19 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

To consider any items for inclusion on future agendas.

Meeting Closed at 22:00