

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 19:00 on **Monday 15 July 2019**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Eric Buckmaster
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster

Cllr Annelise Berendt Furnace
Cllr Spencer Richards
Cllr David Royle
Cllr John Burmicz

In attendance:

5 Members of the public
R Bowran – Town Clerk

J Sargant – Town Projects manager

F 19/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence

F 19/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest by Members

F 19/14 OAKRIDGE PREMISES

To receive an update from the Town Clerk on the circumstances surrounding and the consequences of the fire at Oakridge Nursery premises on Friday 05 July 2019.

The town council's rented 1,200 sq. ft. storage facility at Oakridge Nursery was totally destroyed by fire on Friday 05 July.

Financial implications

- Loss of equipment estimated at approximately £42,000
- Most can be replaced using funding from insurance claim

Logistical implications

- Loss of main storage space
- Trailers parked in open at Oakridge car park
- Need to find temporary solution
- Rent a shipping container
- Rent from a local landowner if possible
- Need to find long term solution
- Buy a shipping container and locate on our land.

Insurance position

- Met with RSA loss adjuster on 09 July
- Supplied all details to him
- RSA offered an interim payment of £10,000
- Liaised with landlord's insurer's (NFU) loss adjuster
- RHSO's equipment not insured by them

Legal position

- Served notice on landlord, copy his solicitor
- Cease paying rent as unit unfit for occupation
- Lease determined if not fit for occupation in six months
- Current lease ends on 31 March 2020 in any case

Event implications and need to replace equipment for

- Fun-on-the-Field.
 - Stage legs
 - Gazebos
 - Electric cabling and fittings
 - Safety fencing
 - Chairs and tables
- Christmas Lights event
 - Christmas lights
- Civic Dinner
 - Round tables
 - Table decorations
 - Room decorations

Equipment implications and need to replace items in common use

- Mowers
- Town signs & cones
- Small tools

Immediate actions

- Two unique account codes have been established so that we can keep track on insurance monies received and expenditure made to replace lost equipment.
- I have advised our internal auditor of the situation..
- **Resolved:** To suspend Financial Regulation 10(b)(i) on matters relating specifically to the Oakridge incident in order to ensure the ability to meet council commitments. Any such departure to be agreed with the chairman of the F&P committee. [*prop Cllr E Buckmaster; secd Cllr R Buckmaster*]
- **Resolved:** To give consent to draw down funds from General Reserve pending the receipt of insurance monies. [*prop Cllr E Buckmaster; secd Cllr R Buckmaster*]
- **Resolved:** To approve the purchase of a ride on mower and transportation trailer at a total cost of £5,061 to replace destroyed equipment and facilitate grass cutting while the cemetery mower is away for repair and thereafter provide a flexible solution for cutting minor areas. [*prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Furnace*]

Chairman commended the Clerk on the actions taken thus far to mitigate the consequences of the fire.

F 19/15 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

To consider items to be added to future agendas

Meeting Closed at 19:30

Eric A. Buckmaster
9-9-19.