

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 Eric Buckmaster
Cllr Derek Filler

Cllr Barry Hodges
Cllr Peter Mitchell
Cllr Tom Reeks
Cllr Andrew Wincott

In attendance:
R Bowran - Town Clerk

F 14/01 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 2014/15. [*prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Filler*]

Resolved: That Cllr Barry Hodges is Vice Chairman of the Committee for the year 2014/15. [*prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Wincott*]

F 14/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence. There were none.

F 14/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest by Members. There were none

F 14/04 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 10 March 2014 (F05) [*prop Cllr Filler; secd Cllr Wincott*]

F 14/05 STAFF MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.

- Administration Officers. Clerk advised on progress towards the restructuring of staffing. Members asked that they be advised of the conclusion of the process before it was put into action.
- First Aid Course. Clerk sought consent to employ Red Cross to run an in-house Emergency First Aid at Work training course at a cost of £675. Two places on the course to be offered to officers of RHSO. This was approved.
- Unite the Union. Clerk advised that the union had declared there was a dispute between them and the council over a pay award to the one member of staff who belonged to the union. Clerk had established this was part of a nationwide action by the union and recommended no specific action. This was agreed.

- Casual Labour. Clerk advised that instead of employing a junior Ranger, as had been provided for in the budget, A review of work load suggested that employment of a vacation student, 3 days a week, for July through to September would be the appropriate extra labour required to assist the Town Ranger.

F 14/06 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 02 June 2014 and presented her Audit Letter together with the Clerk's recommendations on four points.

Resolved: That these be accepted and the Clerk was minuted to action them. [*Prop Cllr Hodges; Secd Cllr Alder*]

- Clerk advised members of the annual accounts for 2013/14.

Recommended: that they be adopted by full council. [*Prop Cllr Filler; Secd Cllr Wincott*]

- To consider future banking arrangements. Clerk advised that counter facilities at the Sawbridgeworth branch of TSB were to be withdrawn from the end of July. He advised that he was to meet with the new Lloyds Bank relationship manager to discuss alternatives.
- To advise members of investments made since March 2014 and to consider investment policy for 2014/15. Clerk advised that a sum of £75,000 has been invested with Saffron Building Society in three further tracker bonds. Members confirmed that this investment policy was ratified.
- Clerk advised that one minibus had been disposed of and two others had been purchased. The overall effect of the transaction is neutral, the council having obtained a grant from Herts CC and received a trade in value for the minibus disposed of.
- To consider the implications of the Local Government Transparency Code for parish and town councils (*s2(2) local Government Planning and Land Act 1980.*) Clerk advised that although not mandatory, the recommendation was for Councils with a gross annual income or expenditure exceeding £200,000 was to publish expenditure on items exceeding £500 quarterly on the council's website.

Resolved: that this should become council policy. [*Prop Cllr Reeks; Secd Cllr Mitchell*]

F 14/07 POLICY MATTERS

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

- Financial Regulations. One change to Financial Regulations is proposed.
 - As a result of internal auditor's comments; for the sake of consistency revise paragraph 10(g) to read £5,000 thus being compatible with paragraphs 10(b)(i) and 10(b)(ii).
- Standing Orders. One change to Standing Orders is proposed:
 - As a result of internal auditor's comments: amend SO55(1) to read "council to approve the budget at the end of January"

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

- Perception of Councillors. The question of the public perception of the role and achievements of Councillors was raised as the result of remarks made at the Fun-on-the-Field event. Specifically that Members were not visible and hard to contact. Clerk asked to make this an agenda item for the next council meeting.

Meeting Closed at 21.15

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is on Monday 15 September 2014.