

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held at the Council Offices, 49-51 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 8.45 pm on **Monday 24 September 2012**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Eric Buckmaster - Chair

Cllr Peter Mitchell
Cllr Andrew Wincott

In attendance:

R Bowran - Town Clerk

J Kenny – Admin Officer

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Wincott to the committee.

F 12/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Filler – unwell and Cllr Hodges – on holiday.

F 12/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

F 12/12 PUBLIC FORUM

There were none

F 12/13 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 11 June 2012 (F01)
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Mitchell]

F 12/14 STAFF MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.
There were none to raise.

F 12/15 FINANCE MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to the finances of the Council

- Notice of conclusion of Audit for 2011/12. Clerk confirmed that BDO had signed off an unqualified audit and that the required notices had been displayed. Full Council had resolved to adopt the accounts.
- Items arising from audit for noting. Clerk reported that there were two items for noting.
 - Recommendation that the power to make expenditure for every item should be recorded. Clerk commented that it was a “recommendation” relating to matters past. The issue becomes irrelevant as the council has adopted the General Power of Competence for the future.
 - Recommendation that the council’s Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be updated in 2012/13 to include reference to the 2011 Accounts and Audit Regulations. Clerk commented that the 2011 regulations were not published when the SO’s and FR’s were last endorsed by the council, but the issue was noted.

F 12/16 CAR PARK PROJECT

To receive the Clerks report on the financial consequences of the "First Hour Free" project in the Bell Street car park.

Statistics received from EHDC indicate that the shortfall in revenue to the parking authority is running at about £1,500 per month. This is within the budget for the trial.

Nearly double the number of pay and display tickets have been issued indicating greater usage. This is supported by a visual impression of how full the car parks are. Shopkeepers report longer dwell time which is a positive result.

PCNs issued in Bell Street have also fallen indicating perhaps that people are parking in the car park and not on the yellow lines in Bell Street.

F 12/17 CIVIC CENTRE PROJECT

To receive the Clerks report on the progress of the construction of the new Civic Centre at Sayesbury Manor Cottage.

The project is running about three weeks behind schedule. It is likely that the move to the new location will not now be possible before January 2013.

A new lease has been signed with Forebury Estates to enable the council office to remain in Bell Street for up to a further year. A three month rolling notice period has been provided for. The additional cost of each month's delay after December 2012 is approximately £1,250. This may be mitigated by the penalty clause in the construction contract.

F 12/18 MEMORIAL HALL PROJECT

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

It is evident that progress has been made. No financial report had been received in time for this meeting. Council's own records show expenditure and commitments made to be £97,000. This agreed with the estimate made by Cllr Wincott, trustee representative.

Agreed to renew the delegated authority for the Clerk to sanction further expenditure on the project to the limits set.

F 12/19 POLICY MATTERS

To review the Policy Statement for the future development of Town Council services to the community.

- Council Constitution. Clerk said that a start had been made on the sections for the Constitution.
- General Insurance. Clerk reported that a renewal had been made and that sums insured had been updated as appropriate.
- Community Transport. Clerk reported discussions with Herts CC on future developments. Clerk was investigating opportunities. Agreed that general policy was to extent our community transport offering. Clerk to present a proposal to the committee at the next meeting.

Meeting Closed at 22:15

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is on Monday 10 December 2012.