

REPORT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 15th JULY 2014

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * T Edwards

Councillors: H Davies
* Mrs B Green
* R Khiroya
* R Kipps
M Trevett
* S Watkins
Mrs J White
* Mrs J Worrall

*Denotes members present

Officers Present: Mrs Y Merritt – Clerk to the Council
Mrs C James – Deputy Clerk

RECOMMENDATION

REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Clerk advised Members that it was a requirement to review standing Orders every two years and they need to reflect current legislation. The last review had been in 2012. Members agreed with the recommendation to setup a small working group to review the Council's Standing Orders and Financial regulations but felt that volunteers for this should be sought from the wider Council.

The Committee

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

To seek volunteers to review the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations with a view of recommending changes and alterations to the next P&R Committee meeting.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Mrs Green and carried unanimously.

14/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Davies, Trevett and White

14/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was one declaration of interest from Cllr Mrs Green as a member of U3A with respect to Agenda Item 9 – Application for Grant Funding from U3A.

14/03 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting dated 1st April 2014 which had been taken at Full Council on the 8th April 2014 be approved as a true and correct record.

14/04 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

13/53 HR & H&S Contract: Members were advised that the Clerk and Cllr Morris had met with Peninsular but had no success in reducing the six contract notice period, which would expire in December 2014.

13/54 Quarterly Cashbook report: members were advised that account signatories were being changed as part of the new Council and that the National Savings and Investment Account would be included in this change.

13/57 Repeal of s.150(5) of the LGA 1972 – Implementation (England): Members were advised that it was not possible to progress this until Standing Orders were reviewed. The Clerk advised that she was attending a HAPTC workshop the following Friday at which Clerks across Hertfordshire would be attending and that one of the items for discussion was Banking. It was agreed that other Banking options would be explored by the Clerk who would report back at the next meeting.

14/05 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT

Members were advised that Village Day receipts and invoices were still coming in so the final position of the budgets was not yet known and a more comprehensive report would be put to the next P&R Committee. It was explained that with respect to the Income and Expenditure for Village Day the aim was to break even with any profit being used for the purchase of something for long term use, this year had been the purchase of the Parish Council Feather Flags. Next year the cost of new banners advertising Village Day would need to be looked at. The Clerk advised that there had been a lot of positive feedback from participants with some learning points to take on board for next year.

Expenditure Line 136 Hanging Baskets was confirmed to cover the planting and maintenance of the Hanging Baskets in the Village for one season only.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

14/06 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

See Recommendation

14/07 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CODE FOR PARISH COUNCILS WITH GROSS ANNUAL INCOME OR EXPENDITURE EXCEEDING £200,00

Members were advised that as a Financial Comparison report was taken at every Committee and the list of cheques raised for the previous quarter at each Full Council meeting, these effectively covered the elements of the Transparency Code. It was suggested that the Working Group that will be set up to look at Standing Orders and Financial Regulations considers the Transparency Code as part of that review.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

14/08 THE FINAL INTERNAL AUDIT

Members complimented the Officers on the Final Internal Audit report. The Clerk advised that despite the good report the Council will receive a Qualified Audit report this year due to the legislation that meant that the Council had to approve the End of Year Accounts by the 30th June. When the Government had moved the date of the elections this requirement had not been considered and therefore it had not been possible to approve the finances by the due date.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Final Internal Audit report be approved.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Edwards and unanimously approved.

14/09 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the application for grant funding to the amount of £250 from U3A be approved to research backgrounds to individuals recorded on the WWI War memorial under Local Government Act S111 – Subsidiary powers of Local Authorities.

This was proposed from the Chair by Cllr Edwards and carried with one abstention due to a declaration of interest.

14/10 PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE

Members considered the cover offered by Came & Company, the Council's current insurers and raised queries on two aspects:

- i) Cover for Office Equipment @ £5,000 seemed low. The Clerk believed this to be per item but would get this clarified
- ii) There was no cover for Gates and Fences. The Clerk was asked to confirm whether the Cemetery Gates were included under the category Street Furniture.

The Clerk advised that the Fidelity Guarantee had been increased to cover the increase in the precept. It was confirmed that if the contract was extended to 2017 in order to receive the discount in contract price, that this did not preclude any element of cover being changed as necessary during that period.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the extra two years be agreed subject to suitable answers being received on the queries raised.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Khiroya and carried unanimously.

14/11 OFFICE TELECOMS

Members discussed the offer from the Council's existing supplier to replace and upgrade the current office telecoms. This had first been raised in 2011 when a second quote from another company had been received and the existing Supplier had been chosen. The work had however been put on hold at that time due to potential office moves. As there were now no additional costs to be incurred under this current offer for moving accommodation within the building it could now be progressed. With respect to the Halls it was agreed that availability of Wi-Fi at the Halls would be a selling point. The Clerk confirmed that a contract would be signed to ensure that all aspects of supply were covered.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Council agree the contract for renewal and replacement of the telecoms system as outlined in the report with the existing Telecoms supplier and it would be reviewed again in two years time at the end of the proposed contract.

This was proposed from the Chair by Cllr Edwards and carried unanimously.

14/12 CILCA UPDATE

The Clerk advised that she would be attending her final training session the following day and had five more modules to undertake and was on target to complete the qualification by Christmas this year.

14/13 CLOSURE

The meeting having started at 8.00 pm, finished at 9.35 pm

These minutes have been checked by the Chairman.

Signature Date.....

These minutes were agreed as a true and correct record at the Policy & Resources meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Signature Date