

**LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY, 16 APRIL 2018 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Councillors            E Wallace (Chair)  
   S Jones (Vice-Chair)  
   R Berry  
   S Cotter  
   A Dodwell  
   K Ferguson  
   M Freeman  
   F Kharawala  
   C Palmer  
   G Perham

Also in attendance:            M Jahn, Committee Officer  
   M Saccoccio, Town Clerk  
   S Sandiford, Head of Democratic and Central  
   Services

Members of the public:        0  
Members of the press            0

**337/PF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K Cursons and Councillor S Cursons.

**338/PF DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any interests, including the nature of those interests, which they had in any of the items under consideration at this meeting. Councillor C Palmer declared a personal interest in the budget monitoring items as a member of the Friends of Leighton-Linslade in Bloom.

**339/PF QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 minutes per person; maximum 15 minutes)**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**340/PF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee received the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 16 April 2018 for consideration.

Minute reference 330/PF Community Emergency Plan Update. A question was raised regarding progress of the plan. It was noted that a meeting had been arranged for Thursday 10 May at 7.30 pm at The White House where

representatives from local groups and members of the public could attend. It was hoped that following that meeting, a small steering group could be formed to progress the Community Emergency Plan, which would be brought to committee later in the year.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 16 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.**

### **341/PF MINUTES OF SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 26 March 2018. No questions were raised.

**RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 26 March 2018.**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Police Liaison Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 April 2018.

A question was raised regarding the potential re-naming of the Police Liaison Sub-Committee to more clearly encompass all elements of community safety, which had been briefly discussed at the meeting. Officers would give this further consideration in advance of the Annual Council Meeting in May.

Councillor Dodwell proposed that as a result of receiving emails and many posts on social media, a public meeting be arranged with shopkeepers, residents and the police to discuss the level of anti-social behaviour and the response by the Police to these crimes. Councillor Dodwell would liaise with the Town Clerk to organise this meeting with Police.

**RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Police Liaison Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 April 2018.**

### **342/PF COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN**

The Committee received the work plan for the municipal year 2017-2018 for consideration and a proposed work plan for 2018-2019. A verbal update was given on the progress of Mod.gov and it was anticipated the system would go live in June 2018.

**RESOLVED to note the Committee Work Plan and Objectives for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.**

**343/PF CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL**

The Committee considered and discussed the recommendation made by the Cultural & Economic Services Committee on 10 January 2018 (minute ref 071/CE). Following the decision to continue with a three-day event, the recommendation had been made in order to ensure sufficient funding was available to provide an appropriate level of entertainment and stewarding for the weekend, given that anticipated income was always estimated and subject to many variable factors.

**RECOMMEND that £2000 be allocated from the Community Projects Earmarked Reserves to cover any shortfall in expected income for the Christmas Festival, to ensure the quality standard of the event would be maintained.**

**344/PF FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2018 PAYMENTS**

The Committee received one set of schedule of payments which had previously been approved for payment by the Town Clerk and countersigned by two account signatories.

The schedule for February dated 7 March 2018 included BACS payments amounting to £108,604.17 (page numbers 2292-2302) and cheque payments amounting to £14,177.08 (cheque numbers 17152-17163), including White House petty cash amounting to £113.22, Astral Park £174.65 and TACTIC £98.95.

The monthly salaries listing for February 2018 amounting to £91,886.52 gross was received. A cash book report for February 2018, including details of all direct debit payments, was also received.

The schedule for March dated 15 March 2018 included BACS payments amounting to £120,471.29 (page numbers 2303-2304 and 2308-2319) and cheque payments amounting to £26,378.78 (cheque numbers 17164-17178), including White House petty cash amounting to £85.31, Astral Park £104.27 and TACTIC £36.06.

The monthly salaries listing for March 2018 amounting to £93,728.94 gross was received. A cash book report for March 2018, including details of all direct debit payments, was also received.

**RESOLVED to note the schedules of accounts for February 2018 and March 2018.**

It was noted that all payments had been made within the budget and that there were no irregularities to be drawn to the attention of the Committee.

Several minor queries were raised, to which a response would be provided after the meeting.

**345/PF INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (FIRST INTERIM)**

The Committee received the first interim internal audit report for 2017-2018 and noted that no issues had been identified. It was recognised that the Council was continuing to operate a sound, pro-active approach to risk management and corporate governance issues, together with the development and management of effective internal controls and procedural documentation.

A question was raised on how frequently investments were reviewed and it was advised rates were checked on a six monthly basis. All recommendations in respect of investments were brought to Committee for decision.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**346/PF BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received a budget monitoring report for 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018.

A question was raised about expenditure at the Splash and Play and the repairs and maintenance at the Skate Park. Clarification on this would be sought from the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services.

**RESOLVED to receive the report.**

**347/PF ARRANGEMENTS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

The Committee received a report confirming arrangements with local authorities to consolidate processes and procedures to ensure operational efficiency.

A question was raised re 3.1 (a) Operation Dodford with Bedfordshire Police as to how many other Councils paid an equivalent amount for Community Policing and what they would expect from this service. The Town Clerk advised this would be researched and brought back to Committee.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**348/PF TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018**

The Committee received the draft Town Council Annual Report 2017-2018. This outlined the status of the Town Council's objectives as set out in the Three Year Plan for 2015-2018 and summarised the work of each committee and service area during the year.

This report would be available from The White House, the library and the Town Council website for the public to view. Thanks were given by the Committee for a thorough informative report.

It was noted that financial information would be finalised following completion of the year end accounts.

**RECOMMENDED to Council to approve the annual report for 2017-2018, subject to any requested amendments and completion of the remaining information.**

### **349/PF REVIEW OF FINANCE PROCEDURES AND SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

The Committee received and considered a report in respect of financial arrangements and the Town Council's system of internal control. A full review of governing financial documents had been undertaken and a number of action points identified. These included the replacement of the existing "Financial Internal Control" document, adopted in 2011, with a more wide-ranging "Risk Management and Financial Control Statement", which covered a number of elements of potential risk as well as financial procedures.

The Committee received a number of recommended changes to existing Financial Regulations, to better reflect current operational practices.

A question was raised regarding virements between budget lines. It was clarified that smaller amounts were within existing thresholds for officer authorisation and that any proposed virements of larger amounts would be brought to the relevant Committee for consideration.

#### **RESOLVED to:**

**1.1 note the report**

**1.2 endorse the draft document "Statement of Risk Management and Internal control" as a replacement for the existing document "Financial Internal Control (attached as Appendix B).**

**1.3 renew the existing resolution approving the continued use of Variable Direct debits, Standing Orders, BACS and CHAPS payments, as required by Financial Regulations 6.7 and 6.8.**

**1.4 renew the existing resolution delegating authority to the Town Clerk or vire unspent and available amounts to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve, as per Financial Regulation 4.1.**

**1.5 appoint a named Councillor (other than the Chairman or a cheque signatory) to verify bank reconciliations on a quarterly basis as required in Financial Regulation 2.2. (This would be determined at the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Council Meeting).**

**RECOMMENDED to Council to approve the proposed minor amendments to Town Council Financial Regulations as outlined in Appendix A.**

**350/PF ONLINE PAYMENTS, BOOKINGS AND TICKETING**

The Committee received and considered an update regarding online payments, bookings and ticketing for all Council services. It was noted that E-ticketing had been trialled for the Mayor's James Goff Concert and it would be envisaged this would be continued for other events in the future.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**351/PF EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED that, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. The public and press to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of detailed discussion regarding the following items.**

**352/PF GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION**

The Committee received and considered a report regarding actions taken to date and actions remaining outstanding in respect of preparation for new legislation coming into effect on 25 May 2018. The Committee was advised that as a public body, a Data Protection Officer must be appointed and considered options in respect of this.

It was noted that many of the remaining action items related to development or amendment of policies and it was anticipated that these would be brought to Committee for consideration in June 2018.

**RESOLVED to**

**1.1 note the report, progress made to date and project plan for the remaining actions in respect of the General data Protection Regulation.**

**1.2 Appoint the Local Council Public Advisory Service as the Town Council's Data Protection Officer for a period of one year, at a cost of £500 (to be funded from Professional Fees budget 20/4384).**

As a result of discussion regarding best practice in terms of data protection, it was proposed and seconded that elected Members of the Town Council should use an official Town Council email address via the council server for all official Town Council correspondence.

**RECOMMENDED to Council that it be mandatory for all elected Town Councillors to use an official Town Council email address for all Town Council official correspondence.**

**353/PF TOWN COUNCIL ACCOMMODATION**

The Committee received a verbal update on the Town Council premises informing them that the appointed Estate Surveyor was still in negotiations with the Landlord, but it was felt that this was moving closer to an agreement.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

**354/PF COMMUNITY SAFETY (OPERATION DODFORD AND CCTV)**

The Committee received a report on the re-deployable cameras and the future warranty arrangements regarding the two town-council owned re-deployable cameras. The Committee agreed that the high cost of renewing the warranty was not justified and if needed new equipment would be purchased.

**RESOLVED -**

**1.1 To note the report**

**1.2 in the event that a re-deployable camera is found to be faulty:-**

**i) a quotation in respect of a repair be firstly sought and if considered reasonable, be carried out within existing budgets and if not:-**

**ii) that delegated authority be afforded to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the relevant Committee to seek the purchase of a replacement unit up to the value of £7,000.**

The meeting closed at 9.03 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 16 APRIL 2018.

Chair

18 JUNE 2018