

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

**MONDAY, 30 JULY 2018 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Councillors            E Wallace (Chair)  
   S Jones (Vice-Chair)  
   R Berry  
   S Cotter  
   K Cursons  
   S Ward  
   M Freeman  
   C Palmer  
   G Perham

Also in attendance:            M Saccoccio, Town Clerk  
   C Cummins, Finance Officer  
   S Sandiford, Head of Democratic and Central  
   Services

Members of the public:        1 (part meeting)

**376/PF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Dodwell, K Ferguson and F Kharawala.

**377/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 agenda item 9 (Payments) as the list of payments included a payment relating to Leighton-Linslade in Bloom, of which his wife was a committee member.

Councillors C Palmer and G Perham declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Town Twinning) as members of/representatives to the Town Twinning Forum.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

**379/PF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee received the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 18 June 2018 for consideration.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 18 June 2018 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.**

#### 380/PF **MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

(a) The Committee received the draft minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 2 July 2018. It was noted that the recommendations would be considered later in the meeting as a separate agenda item.

**RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 2 July 2018.**

(b) The Committee received the draft minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 July 2018.

Minute reference 07/CS: the Committee considered the recommendation to endorse that the Town Council enter into a new Framework Agreement with Bedfordshire Police for the financial year 2018-2019. It was noted that without the framework agreement being in place, the Town Council would be unable to engage with the Police to the same extent and the Police would be unable to share as much information with the Council. The recommendation was in respect of the agreement itself rather than endorsing expenditure within the Operation Dodford framework.

**RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 July 2018.**

**RESOLVED to endorse that the Town Council enter into a new framework agreement with Bedfordshire Police for the financial year 2018-2019.**

#### 381/PF **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received a report to consider amending the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Sub Committee to ensure they remained fit for purpose, following discussion at the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 2 July 2018. The following proposed amendments to the existing Terms of Reference were given consideration:

1. Overview of staffing structure and staffing budget, ensuring that it is commensurate with objectives of the Council.
2. Review staff sickness absence **at least once per year.**
3. ~~Review staff training and identify and agree training needs for the Town Clerk and other senior members of staff.~~ **To form a panel comprising three Councillors to undertake the Town Clerk's annual performance**

appraisal, including target setting and identifying training needs.

4. Ensure Council employees are working in a safe environment.
5. ~~Produce Code of Conduct for staff.~~
6. Review all new and revised policies and procedures affecting employees **and make recommendations to the Policy and Finance Committee.**
7. Review Job Description and Statement of Main Terms and Conditions of Town Clerk.
8. **Where appropriate, to consider matters relating to the Town Clerk's employment including training, overtime, annual leave and sickness absence.** ~~Receive notification of the Town Clerk's annual leave and matters relating to overtime working and sickness.~~
9. Informally hear any grievances raised by the Town Clerk.
10. Informally advise the Town Clerk on any disciplinary matters.
11. **Support the Town Clerk in** succession planning for key **senior** staff ~~who may wish to retire.~~
12. Recruitment and/or termination of contract for the Town Clerk and other senior members of staff.
13. **To consider and where appropriate, approve proposed minor amendments in staffing structure, where proposed changes are within existing salary budgets and will not have any adverse impact upon existing employees.**
14. **To monitor and make decisions regarding contracts & service level agreements relating to employment matters, where these are within existing budgets.**

**RESOLVED to accept the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Sub-Committee as outlined above.**

It was agreed that only changes which fell within the parameters of point 13 above would have delegated authority but all other proposed staffing changes would continue to be recommended to the Policy and Finance Committee, or where appropriate to Council, for endorsement, in order to safeguard both individual employees and the Council as a corporate body.

### 382/PF **TOWN TWINNING**

The Committee received and considered a verbal update from Anne Guess, the Chair of the Town Twinning Forum regarding exploring the potential to twin with a town in Italy. The proposal had been put forward by a local employee and it was noted that forging twinning links brought many potential benefits to each town, including encouraging language learning and links with not only schools, clubs and organisations but possibly also with businesses.

The Twinning Forum had written to contacts in Italy and awaited a response. The Forum did not anticipate that an additional twinning agreement would require any additional funding, as the group was already undertaking voluntary fundraising to supplement their grant funding.

It was noted that any formal twinning agreement would need to be approved

by the councils of both towns.

The Committee thanked Anne Guess for attending the meeting and advised they would await a further update in due course.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

**383/PF COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN**

The Committee received a report summarising the key responsibilities of the Committee, as well as the objectives within the Town Council's Three Year Plan 2015-2018 which fell within the remit of the Committee. It was noted that the budget setting process would shortly begin for 2019-2020.

The Committee was advised that there was likely to be a delay in the development of a Community Emergency Plan due to ill health of a key volunteer.

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

**384/PF JUNE 2018 PAYMENTS**

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

The schedule for June, dated 26 June 2018, included BACS payments amounting to £226,020.25 (page numbers 2369-2383) and cheque payments amounting to £4,697.70 (cheque numbers 17235-17257), including White House petty cash amounting to £144.94, Astral Park £154.68 and TACTIC £61.88.

The monthly salaries listing for June 2018 amounting to £101,019.64 gross was received. A cash book report for June 2018, including details of all direct debit payments, was also received.

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.

A question was raised and answered regarding the annual budget for cleaning of the public conveniences.

The Committee noted the payments in respect of the Linslade Canal Festival and thanked all those involved in the event, which had been very successful and much enjoyed by members of the public.

It was suggested that for future payments reports, Members should email officers in advance with any queries relating to payments, in order that an answer could be given at the meeting.

**RESOLVED to note the schedule of accounts for June 2018.**

**385/PF THREE MONTH BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received a budget monitoring report for the period April to June 2018. A query was raised regarding costs compared to budget for the market security barrier. It was noted that although £10,000 had been awarded in grant funding to the Friends of Leighton-Linslade in Bloom, only £7,500 had been received to date.

A question was raised regarding the phasing of payments and whether the report took this into account. It was suggested that for future budget monitoring reports, officers highlight any expenditure which was not in line with anticipated phasing.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**386/PF BUDGET PROCESS**

The Committee received a report setting out the proposed timescale for the 2018-2019 budget setting process.

**RESOLVED to note the proposed timetable for the 2018-2019 budget setting process.**

**387/PF ASSET REGISTER**

The Committee received the asset register for consideration, including land and buildings, infrastructure assets, community assets and equipment. It was noted that a process had been started of migrating the asset register information to different software, which would allow mapping and photographing of assets. This was a significant piece of work which would take some time to complete.

A question was raised regarding depreciation and it was agreed that answer would be provided after the meeting.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**388/PF INSURANCE CLAIMS 2017-2018**

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Committee received a report outlining insurance claims for the period July 2017 – June 2018.

**RESOLVED to note the report regarding the Town Council insurance policy and claims for 2017-18.**

**389/PF DATA PROTECTION UPDATE**

The Committee received an update regarding Data Protection and was asked to consider recommending approval to Council of a Document Retention Policy, which had been developed in accordance with guidelines issued by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**RECOMMENDED to Council to approve the proposed Document Retention Policy.**

390/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 consultation with residents on objectives, staffing matters and land east of Leighton-Linslade.**

391/PF **RESIDENT CONSULTATION ON TOWN COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

The Committee received and considered a report regarding the undertaking of a public consultation exercise in respect of future Town Council objectives. Following completion of the majority of objectives within the current three year plan 2015-2018, it was anticipated that a five year plan for 2019-2023 would be developed alongside the relevant financial plans to support projects.

In order to understand residents' views and priorities, it was proposed that face-to-face consultation be undertaken during September/October at various locations within the town. Discussion took place regarding the different potential methods of consultation and the possibility of online consultation, but it was agreed that it was crucial to obtain feedback from a valid cross-section of residents and that this could only be ensured through direct contact. In addition, it was recognised that there were many subtle complexities involved and a face to face conversation was the best way in which to be able to explain the different roles of the two councils and to ensure that views captured were relevant to the services the town council was able to provide.

It was anticipated that 500 people would be interviewed and the results would be presented to Committee in November 2018.

Specific questions would be developed in consultation with the appointed professional consultant and would be circulated to Committee Chairs for consideration.

The view was expressed that the discussion ideas document was fairly

detailed and it was hoped that consultation would be on broader themes to allow room to incorporate feedback from residents.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) to note the report.
- (ii) To endorse the proposed draft Five Year Plan objectives.
- (iii) To endorse, in principle, the broad-brush themes to support the public engagement exercise.
- (iv) To appoint Consultant A (Howdo Research) to carry out the public engagement exercise within a £10,000 budget (Professional Fees earmarked reserve 9035/920).

392/PF **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee considered the recommendations made by the Personnel Sub-Committee on 2 July 2018 (Minute Reference 145/PR Staffing Matters). The first recommendation was in respect of the Cultural and Economic Services team.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (i) Approve the restructure in the Cultural and Economic Services team, as proposed to the Personnel Sub-Committee on 8 January 2018.
- (ii) To approve a voluntary redundancy application to the sum equal to contractual entitlement by the individual concerned.

The second recommendation was in respect of the Grounds and Environmental Services team.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) To endorse the contractual entitlement to the individual concerned.
- (ii) To provide an agreed-form reference to any prospective employers.
- (iii) That a contribution be made to meet legal costs as well as meeting the costs of creation of a settlement agreement.

393/PF **LAND EAST OF LEIGHTON LINSLADE**

The Committee received a verbal update regarding housing development on land east of Leighton-Linslade.

The Committee agreed that in principle, it held no objections to working collaboratively with Central Bedfordshire Council and the developer consortium in the successful delivery of the Leighton-Linslade Urban Extension.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) To request the Town Clerk to write to Central Bedfordshire Council (officers and councillors) to confirm the above.

**(ii) To consider representation/attendance at the Central Bedfordshire General Purposes Committee meeting to be held on 23 August 2018.**

The meeting closed at 9.01 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 30 JULY 2018.

Chair

17 SEPTEMBER 2018