

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors E Wallace (Chair)
 S Jones (Vice-Chair)
 S Cotter
 K Cursons
 S Ward
 A Dodwell
 K Ferguson
 F Kharawala
 C Palmer
 G Perham

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

Members of the public: 0
Members of the press 0

394/PF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J M Freeman and R Berry.

395/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 7 (Payments) as the list of payments included a payment relating to Leighton-Linslade in Bloom, of which his wife was a committee member.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

397/PF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee received the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee

meeting held on 30 July 2018 for consideration.

Minute reference 385/PF: a question was raised regarding the remaining £2,500 grant funding for Friends of Leighton-Linslade in Bloom and whether this had now been received.

Minute reference 383/PF: Committee Objectives and Work Plan – the Community Emergency Plan project had been delayed due to ill health but it was hoped this would resume in the near future.

Minute reference 393/PF: Land East of Leighton Linslade – it was confirmed the Town Clerk had written to Eggington and Stanbridge Parish Councils and copied in Central Bedfordshire Council. No response had been received yet but it was noted consultation would be taking place in January 2019.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 30 July 2018 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

398/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 External Auditor's report 2017-18 had not been received and it was hoped it would be available within the next week.

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

399/PF **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) The Committee received a recommendation from the Market Sub-Committee of 16 August 2018 in respect of re-profiling the market budget (Minute reference 113/MK).

RESOLVED to endorse the reprofiled Street Market budget (cost centre (412) in order to address the shortfall in allocated budget to cover the cost of security.

- (ii) The Committee received a recommendation from the Grounds & Environmental Services Committee on 10 September 2018 in respect of a draft policy for Unauthorised Encampment Management (Minute reference 137/GE).

RECOMMENDED to Council to endorse the Unauthorised Encampment Management Policy as follows:

- i) **The Town Council will by way of appropriate and measured target**

hardening take all reasonable steps to avoid the potential for future unauthorised encampments to take place on Town council land.

- ii) **That delegated powers be afforded to the Town Clerk in respects of dealing with unauthorised encampments should and when they occur.**

400/PF **JULY 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 July, dated 19 July 2018, included BACS payments amounting to £158,510.97 (page number 2399, 2403-2416) and cheque payments amounting to £2756.24 (cheque numbers 17258-17270), including White House petty cash amounting to £33.00, Astral Park £92.39 and TACTIC £63.56.

The monthly salaries listing for July 2018 amounting to £96,775.23 gross was received. A cash book report for July 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.

RESOLVED to note the schedule of accounts for July 2018.

401/PF **COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report and work plan in respect of communications, including the Town Council website, social media channels and overall communications strategy. All websites were being reviewed with development plans being produced in conjunction with officers involved.

It was noted that Data Dashboards had now been implemented for all four websites and Members agreed this was an important tool to measure social media interaction.

It was suggested that an on-line form be introduced to allow members of the public to raise any concerns they may have. This would be given consideration as part of the website development plan. Future proposals relating to the websites management would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting.

RESOLVED to note the report.

402/PF **RISK REGISTER ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Committee received a report giving a mid-year update on the risk register action plan for 2018-2019.

RESOLVED to note the report.

403/PF **EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT 2017-2018**

The Committee was advised that the report had not yet been received but it was anticipated that this would be presented to Council at its next meeting.

404/PF **MOD.GOV - REVIEW OF FIRST THREE MONTHS**

The Committee received a verbal update regarding the first three months use of the Mod.gov management software. A few issues had been identified but Members agreed the transition to using Mod.gov had been smooth and any problems would be addressed.

RESOLVED to note the report.

405/PF **CENTRAL SERVICES BUDGETS**

The Committee received and considered a report which proposed the re-profiling of several central services budget lines for 2019-20.

RESOLVED to:

- i) **note the report.**
- ii) **endorse the proposed budget reprofiling for a number of central services for 2019-2020, as outlined at 4.1 in the report (total to remain unchanged at £39,500).**
- iii) **endorse an increase in the IT support budget by £756 from 2019-2020, to reflect the additional email licensing costs.**

406/PF **STANDING ORDERS**

The Committee received a report to consider forming a Task & Finish Group to review potential amendments to Standing Orders, as a result of revised Model Standing Orders issued in April 2018 by NALC.

Councillors E Wallace, C Palmer and S Jones expressed an interest in being part of the Task and Finish group.

RESOLVED to establish a Task & Finish Group of no less than 4 Councillors to review existing Standing Orders and the revised NALC model Standing Orders, with a view to recommendations being made to the Policy and Finance Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2019.

407/PF **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Committee received and considered a report to endorse the revised

Community Engagement Strategy which would set out the range of ways in which the Town Council communicated with the public.

RESOLVED to endorse the revised Community Engagement Strategy.

408/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:

- i. **Telecomms provider**
- ii. **Professional fees**

409/PF **TELECOMMS PROVIDER**

The Committee received and considered a report in respect of telecoms provider for Council owned premises.

RESOLVED to -

- 1.1 **note the report**
- 1.2 **endorse the renewal of our current contract to include the two additional sites (Astral Park and TACTIC) telephone lines and internet services.**
- 1.3 **note the upfront cost of £340.88 and monthly cost of £326.80 to be funded within the existing telephone budget.**

410/PF **PROFESSIONAL FEES**

The Committee received a report regarding legal matters and was asked to consider recommending to Council, subject to its decision on 24 September 2018 regarding legal matters, to draw down funds from reserves to supplement the existing Professional Fees earmarked reserve (which presently stood at £10,000).

RECOMMENDED to Council that, subject to its decision regarding legal matters on 24 September 2018, up to £20,000 be drawn down from Town Council reserves to meet a likely shortfall in the Professional Fees Earmarked reserve.

The meeting closed at 9.02 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2018.

Chair

19 NOVEMBER 2018