

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

25 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 1930 HOURS

Present Councillors: S Cotter
S Jones
C Palmer
G Perham
A Dodwell
K Ferguson
R Berry
J M Freeman
E Wallace
S Cursons

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

Members of the public: 0

451/PF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F Kharawala and K Cursons.

452/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. No declarations were made.

453/PF QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

454/PF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee received the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 21 January 2019 for consideration.

Minute reference 434/PF Minutes of the last meeting (Land East of Leighton-Linslade). It was confirmed a letter had been written to Brian Dunleavy of Central Bedfordshire Council and a consultation exercise for a boundary review was anticipated to begin in April/May 2019 once a number of houses were occupied.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 21 January 2019 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

455/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 lease on Town Council accommodation was expected to be finalised shortly.

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

456/PF FEBRUARY 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. No written questions had been received prior to the meeting.

The schedule for February dated 8 February 2019, included BACS payments amounting to £192,080.07 (page numbers 2489 - 2499) and cheque payments amounting to £1,653.86 (cheque numbers 17314 17322), including White House petty cash amounting to £73.89, Astral Park £48.46 and TACTIC £55.56.

The monthly salaries listing for February 2019 amounting to £90,823.16 gross was received. A cash book report for February 2019, including details of all direct debit payments, was also received.

The Committee discussed and considered the payments made for the Judicial Review and agreed to draw down a further approximate £8,000 from general funds to cover legal costs accrued during the review process. Further to the cost capping order made by the Court, subject to any appeal, it was anticipated that £20,000 would be recovered from the claimant and returned to general funds.

RESOLVED to draw down £8,000 from general funds to cover the shortfall of costs incurred from the Judicial Review.

RESOLVED to note the schedule of accounts for February 2019.

RESOLVED to note the report.

457/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. The Committee agreed the website would be a useful resource and other social media platforms could be accessed from the website.

A question was raised asking whether the future plans and current projects of the Council would be included on the website making the information easily accessible to the public. The Committee agreed this would be a positive addition to the website.

RESOLVED to note the report.

458/PF I. T. UPDATE

The Committee received a report in respect of I.T. matters and budget allocated to this. It was agreed that on-going costs relating to I. T. would continue to increase over time and adequate provision for this would need to be given within the annual revenue budget and/or five year financial plan from 2020 onwards.

RESOLVED to –

1.1 note the report

1.2 support the principle of continued investment into Information Technology through the five year financial plan.

459/PF REVIEW OF TOWN COUNCIL/EMPLOYEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Committee received a list advising of all current memberships of other bodies, for the Town Council and/or employees.

RESOLVED to note the report.

460/PF EARMARKED RESERVES

The Committee received a recommendation from the Cultural & Economic Services Committee at its meeting held 10 December 2018 (minute reference 153/CE).

RESOLVED to:

1.1 carry forward into earmarked reserves unspent monies from financial year 2018/2019 from budget codes 4412, 4509 and 4554 for reasons set out in para 2.3

1.2 carry forward existing earmarked reserves for reasons set out in para 2.4.2, in APPENDIX B, for budget codes 9018, 9020, 9022, 9026, 9028, 9055.

461/PF INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Committee received an interim internal audit report for 2018-2019 and that no issues had been identified.

It was noted that a Task and Finish Group had been set up to review operations at Astral Park as highlighted in this report.

RESOLVED to note the report.

462/PF FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND

The Committee received and considered correspondence dated 5 February 2019 from Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of the Future High Street Fund.

The Committee agreed they were totally supportive of the scheme for Future High Street Funding and to move forward with an expression of interest to Central Bedfordshire Council.

RESOLVED to note the information and to submit an expression of interest to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of the Future High Street Fund.

463/PF POLICE CRIME COMMISSIONER CORRESPONDENCE

The Committee received correspondence dated 11 February 2019 from the Police Crime Commissioner.

A number of points were made and the Committee was in agreement that the Town Clerk compose a reply to the Police Crime Commissioner in consultation with Councillor Dodwell and Councillor Wallace.

RESOLVED to delegate to the Town Clerk authority to draft a response to the Police Crime Commissioner.

The meeting closed at 20.37 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2019.