

**LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL**

**POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**29 MARCH 2021 AT 1930 HOURS**

Present Councillors: S Jones (Chair)  
C Palmer  
R Berry  
A Dodwell (Vice Chair)  
J M Freeman  
F Kharawala  
S Owen  
T Morris  
G Perham  
R Goodchild  
D Scott

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)  
S Sandiford (Head of Democratic and Central Services)  
M Jahn (Committee Officer)  
S Barrett (Central Bedfordshire Council)  
D Maltby (Global MSC Security)

Members of the public: 0

**206/PF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**207/PF DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made and no dispensations were requested.

**208/PF QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public.

**209/PF CCTV DIGITAL UPGRADE PROJECT**

(a) By invitation Steve Barrett, Safer Neighbourhood Manager at Central Bedfordshire Council and Derek Maltby of Global SMC Security attended the meeting to provide an update on the area-wide CCTV Digital upgrade with anticipated costs and timescales.

A location for the control room had been confirmed and new operators recruited. The CCTV system would be upgraded to offer 24/7 digital imaging on a cloud-based system where images could be stored and made

immediately available to the police or camera owners. All cameras would be replaced and wireless transmission used where images would be relayed back to the control room. This would significantly reduce the current annual costs of using BT Fibre connection to transmit data and would give flexibility to add or take away cameras to the network. Some BT Fibre connection would still be needed but significantly less than at the present time.

Next steps anticipated were –

- (a) Appointment of installer in early April
- (b) Order key fibre connection from BT
- (c) Agree a plan for delivery late summer/autumn 2021
- (d) Upgrade of shop watch radios to digital from analogue

Members agreed the upgrade would be the best option to improve effectiveness of the CCTV system. The location of the cameras would be important as when using Wi-Fi a clear line of sight would be needed to enable images to be captured. Any foliage/trees would need to be managed effectively to enable an efficient operation of the system. There would be no adverse impact on the redeployable cameras which transmitted data via 3G/4G; transmission could be redirected to the new control room at no additional cost.

A question was raised as to whether the Town Council paid for monitoring and servicing the system. It was confirmed that only Astral Park and the redeployable cameras were a charged service.

A question was raised regarding the potential downtime whilst the system changed from analogue to digital. It was confirmed this would be minimal as the analogue system could still be used whilst the new digital system was being installed. The downtime for each camera would be a few hours.

Thanks were given to Steve Barrett and Derek Maltby for their informative update on the proposed CCTV digital update.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

(b) Members considered approving expenditure from the Future Projects earmarked reserve 9033/925 to fund the upgrade of 7 cameras in Town Council parks to digital, with associated costs for installation and transmission links.

**RESOLVED:**

**(a) That a maximum of £40,000 be committed from the Town Council Reserves 9033/925 with any anticipated shortfall made up from**

underspend within the Operation Dodford budget for the period 2020/21.

- (b) To ensure sufficient budget in the CCTV budget line (4400/410) for the ongoing annual fibre costs for the Astral Park cameras (anticipated at £1,460 per annum and expected to be offset by savings on current fibre costs from other sites following the change to Wi-Fi transmission).

#### **210/PF MINUTES OF SUB COMMITTEES**

- (a) The Committee received the minutes of the Standing Orders Task and Finish Group meeting held on 26 November 2020 and 11 January 2021.

**RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Standing Orders Task and Finish Group meeting held on 26 November 2020 and 11 January 2021.**

- (b) The Committee received the draft minutes of the Standing Orders Task and Finish Group meeting held on 26 February 2021.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Standing Orders Task and Finish Group meeting held on 26 February 2021 be approved as a correct record, to be signed at a later date when safe to do so.**

#### **211/PF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS**

The Committee received and considered draft amendments to Town Council Standing Orders. Thanks were given to Sarah Sandiford for her work in bringing together the amendments for the Task and Finish Group who agreed that the changes made gave a better model to follow. The review had been quite short but intense and all involved were thanked for their positive contributions to the process.

Once the Committee recommended approval of the changes to Council on 26 April, and once proposed and seconded, those changes should stand adjourned without discussion until the next ordinary meeting of the Council (currently scheduled for Monday 17 May but this date may be subject to change).

**RECOMMENDED to Council adoption of revisions to Town Council Standing Orders, particularly in respect of: public questions, councillor questions, ordinary Council meetings, delegated authority to the Town Clerk and political groups.**

#### **212/PF ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITIONS AND EQUALITIES STATEMENT ACTIONS**

The Committee received and considered a report to seek direction on which Town Council Committee is best placed to deliver the Town Council's Environmental Ambitions and Equality and Diversity Agenda.

**RESOLVED that Council takes ownership of the Town Council's Environmental Ambitions and Equality and Diversity Statement and in doing so, provides direction to the various standing committees and sub-committees who act on its behalf.**

#### **213/PF POLICY REVIEW**

The Committee received and considered a report to look at priorities for policy review during 2021-2022 and the addition of a Policy Index.

Some policies had not been reviewed for several years and committee approval was sought to prioritise these. The policies listed in the Index would be reviewed as some might no longer be relevant or their review could be directed to another committee or sub committee. The work involved in maintaining and reviewing the significant number of policies was acknowledged.

**RESOLVED to note the Policy Index and to agree priorities for review in 2021-2022 as set out in the report.**

#### **214/PF THIRD PARTY FUNDING/USE OF ASSETS PROTOCOL**

The Committee received and considered a draft Protocol in respect of funding to third parties (outside of established council grant schemes) and/or use of Council assets by third parties.

**RECOMMEND to Council for approval subject to the addition of the wording in red below.**

- (a) Point 2 - The funding request, of any amount, must be authorised by a committee with budget spending approval **or if a meeting cannot be held in a timely manner, authority delegated to the Proper Officer to approve the request and then report it back to committee retrospectively.**
- (b) Point 6 – The requestor must sign a user agreement on receipt of the asset. Such agreement will set out any terms and conditions applicable to the loan of the asset **and be drawn to the attention of the relevant Committee or Sub Committee.** For example, the loan of a mobile telephone may be subject to conditions regarding use of mobile data or downloading of applications. The loan of vehicle may be subject to a mileage limit or use within a geographical area. Other considerations may include: security, insurance, location stored, arrangements for running costs, arrangement for repairs.

#### **215/PF FEBRUARY PAYMENTS**

The Committee received schedules of payments for February 2021 which had previously been approved for payment by the Town Clerk and countersigned by two signatories. There were no anomalies or matters of concern to draw to the attention of the Committee.

The schedule for February 2021 dated 15 March 2021 included BACS payments amounting to £108,339.47 (page numbers 2860-2869). The monthly salaries listing for February 2021 amounting to £100,065.36 gross was received. A cash book report for February 2021, including details of all direct debit payments, was also received.

**RESOLVED to receive the schedules of payments for February 2021, which had been approved for payment by the Town Clerk and two councillor signatories.**

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

#### **216/PF BUDGET UNDERSPEND RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee received and considered a recommendation made by Cultural & Economic Services Committee on 1 March 2021 to carry forward underspend of £2000 to fund annual maintenance to the Children's Trail.

**RECOMMENDED to Council to carry forward underspend of £2,000 from Buzzard Trails (4509/101) to earmarked reserve (9018/970) to fund annual maintenance to the Children's Trail.**

#### **217/PF INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

The Committee received the final internal audit report for 2020-2021 and noted that no issues had been identified, with a robust and thorough report.

However, one concern was raised with the content of the report in the section 'Review of Petty Cash and Fuel Cards' as views of some councillors had not been taken into account regarding the processes used to log spend on Fuel Cards in the past. It was felt the report had not been rigorous enough on this particular point.

On being taken to a vote 7 voted for, 2 against with 2 abstentions.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**The meeting closed at 2121 hours.**

**I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 MARCH 2021.**