

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

Monday 4 December 2017 at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors B Newton (Chair)
S Bateman
E. Collins
J Jones
T Ritchie
G. Stevens
G. Yearwood

OFFICER Mrs J Mason, Town Clerk

FP 74/17 To receive apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

FP 75/17 Declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda

None.

FP 76/17 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 September 2017

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 September 2017 were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the Chair.

FP 77/17 Chair's Communications

(i) HAPTC: LAIS1402 Precept Consultation

(ii) Thank you letter from Barbara Bonwitt, Treasurer, Happy Wanderers Club for the Disabled, following the Town Council's donation of £650 to the Club's Broadening Horizons Project. (FP68/17 refers.)

FP 78/17 To suspend Standing Orders to allow public participation

No members of the public were present.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

FP 79/17 Grant Application – to consider the following application

Herts Vision Loss: Application for £1,000 towards funding for a home visiting service for older people in Berkhamsted.

It was noted that this application was originally submitted to F & P on 11 September 2017 (FP68/17 refers). A decision was deferred pending receipt of information requested in the Town Clerk's subsequent e-mail of 18 September 2017 and had received a response dated 21 September 2017 from Jo Carter, CEO, Herts Vision Loss.

Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should invite the Vision Loss Adviser and/or Chief Executive to review progress with her once the scheme had been running for a few months. In the light of those discussions the application might be reviewed and Herts Vision Loss staff asked to make a presentation to the Committee. This could include an explanation of the scheme in greater detail and how it complements the work of other vision loss charities in Berkhamsted.

FP 80/17 Income and Expenditure including Receipts and Payments Schedule

- (i) Following a discussion the Income and Expenditure and Variance Analysis at 31 October 2017 was **noted and approved**.

The accompanying notes to the analysis had been circulated with the agenda. These were reviewed and discussed. It was also noted that the licence for the installation of the defibrillator on the front of the Civic Centre had now been agreed. The funds to purchase, install and maintain the device had, as previously reported, been donated by the Lions. This generosity was much appreciated. At Cllr Stevens suggestion it was agreed that once the defibrillator had been installed there should be an opening ceremony with Lions representatives as the guests of honour.

The Town Clerk also reported that in November the insurance settlement in respect of the astro turf vandalism had been paid (£7,517) and Affinity Water had agreed to credit £2,088 in respect of the recently disputed water bill for Dellfield Allotments.

- (ii) The Receipts and Payments Schedule for the period 1 August – 31 October 2017 has been sent to Cllr Jones and G Stevens for scrutiny and they reported that this was in order and had been signed by them both.

FP 81/17 Budget Preparation 2018/19

It was **noted** that Cllrs D Collins and B Newton had met with the Town Clerk on Friday 1 December to discuss the budget. Further work would be undertaken in the coming weeks. The tax base data and precept form had still to be received from DBC. With reference to grant funding, it had been suggested that Cllrs D Collins and B Newton should meet with the Swan Youth Project Trustees. The Committee endorsed this proposal and a meeting will be arranged.

FP 82/17 Internal Audit Interim Report

- (i) The report from the Internal Auditor following his visit on 21 November 2017 was received and accepted.
- (ii) Recommendations arising were **noted**;
- (iii) It was **RESOLVED** that the following actions arising would be undertaken:
 - a) The report would be received at Full Council on 18 December 2017;
 - b) The Town Clerk would review the areas to be covered at the next audit to ensure preparedness;
 - c) Documentation requiring formal review (eg Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment and Standing Orders) would be put before Full Council in December and January;
 - d) The issue of the payment of London Allowance would continue to be investigated.

POLICY MATTERS

FP 83/17 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

- (i) To receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk following her attendance at the HAPTC seminar on 15 November 2017

The main provisions of the Regulations, which come into force on 25 May 2018, were outlined. The Town Council's policies, procedures and practices would require assessment and review to ensure compliance and the safeguarding of personally identifiable data. Staff and councillor training would be required. Penalties for breaches are potentially huge, the maximum being £20 million or 4% of global turnover, whichever is the higher. Organisations are required to appoint a Data Protection Officer who, on NALC's advice, should not be the Clerk.

Councillors discussed the detail of the Regulations. Whilst acknowledging the need to take the appropriate steps to comply with the Regulations they regretted the fact that legislation aimed at correcting the practices of large businesses and corporations swept small Local Councils into its ambit.

- (ii) The draft pro-forma report, prepared by HAPTC's County Officer, was reviewed. It was **RESOLVED** that this should form the basis of a paper to be put before Full Council on 18 December 2017. This would include the costs associated with the package negotiated by HAPTC with The DPO Centre for the assessment and review of processes together with on-going data protection officer services (see (iii) below);
- (iii) It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should make an expression of interest to The DPO Centre regarding the package negotiated by HAPTC for the review of current processes, the implementation of new systems and the provision of data protection officer services.
- (iv) It was further **RESOLVED** that representation should be made to NALC regarding the application of the Regulations to Town and Parish Councils.

The Town Clerk would also ask DBC if they were in a position to offer DPO services.

FP 84/17 Office closure Christmas and New Year

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council office should be closed to members of the public on Wednesday 27 December – 29 December 2017.

SUB COMMITTEES

FP 85/17 Festival of Light Working Group

To **review** the event held on 26 November 2017.

Cllr Newton reported that the event had gone extremely well. The weather had been bright and clear encouraging a large turn out throughout the afternoon. The entertainment had been exceptional with beautiful choral singing, culminating in a performance by the London Community Gospel Choir. The Committee expressed its thanks to all involved. Thank-you letters were being sent out to groups and individuals concerned. The police presence had been very helpful and reassuring. Officers had successfully helped the Town Warden secure the removal of vehicles left in the High Street despite the road closure notifications.

Turning to the 2018 event, it was noted that because the Lions were merging with the Tring group, there was a question mark over those elements of the event organised so well by Lions members in previous years. Alternative arrangements were being considered and it would be crucial to finalise these in the early part of 2018. The event “wash up” meeting would be held in February.

FP86/17 Lagley Meadow Sub Committee

- (i) The notes of the meeting held on site at Lagley Meadow on 10 November 2017 were received and approved;
- (ii) It was **RESOLVED** that the possibility of budget provision from CIL funds to renew the kitchenette facilities should be referred to the CIL Working Group for review alongside other possible projects;
- (iii) It was **RESOLVED** that the possibility of budget provision from CIL funds to be used towards the cost of turfing/landscaping the astro turf area should also be referred to the CIL Working Group for review alongside other possible projects. This would be a supplement if necessary to the funds received as a result of the recent insurance settlement (£7,517).

It was **noted** that quotations were being sought for both of the above.

FP87/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

To **RESOLVE** that under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting, because it is likely that publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business or for other special reasons stated in the resolution, arising from the nature of the business or proceedings.

FP 88/17 Staffing Matters

- (i) It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Warden should move from salary point 19 to salary point 20 with effect from 1 January 2018 which is the anniversary of his appointment to LC1 Substantive Benchmark range. The Town Clerk should write to the Town Warden confirming this change.
- (ii) It was **RESOLVED** that the Finance and Allotment Officer should move from salary point 31 to point 32 with effect from 1 November 2017 which is the anniversary of her appointment to the LC2 Substantive Benchmark range. The Town Clerk should write to the Finance and Allotment Officer confirming this change.

FP 89/17 The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....