

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted

on Monday 22 December 2014 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors D Collins - Chair
 I Reay
 G Stevens
 P Matthews Town Mayor – Ex Officio

OFFICER: Gary Cox Town Clerk

No members of the public.

OPENING MATTERS

FP 91/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Green and Laws. Councillor Bateman was absent.

FP 92/14 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

Councillors Collins and Stevens declared a personal interest in Item FP 97/14 ii as the Treasurer of The Happy Wanderers Club is known to them.

Councillor Reay also declared a personal interest in Item FP 97/14 ii as he knew members of The Happy Wanderers Club.

Councillor Matthews declared a personal interest in Item FP 97/14 iii as he knew members of the Cricket Club and had discussed grant applications in general terms with them.

FP 93/14 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 20 October 2014 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

FP 94/14 Chair's Communications

New Community Notice Board

The Committee noted a letter of thanks from Berkhamsted Citizens Association for the grant for installation on the new community notice board at the junction of High Street and Swing Gate Lane.

FP 95/14 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

FP 96/14 Grant Awards Made

The Committee noted the latest report of grant awards made in 2014/15, with £2838.30 being awarded up to 30 November 2014.

FP 97/14 Grant Applications

- i The Committee considered a grant application from Northchurch United Charities for £450 towards funds for distribution to the elderly, residents of very limited means and local clubs.

Following discussion, the Committee deferred a decision and asked for more information from Northchurch United Charities in support of the grant application. **Action: Town Clerk**

- ii The Committee considered a grant application from The Happy Wanderers Club for the Disabled for a grant of £500 towards the hire of a wheelchair accessible coach for an outing.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £500 to The Happy Wanderers Club. **Action: Town Clerk**

- iii The Committee considered a grant application from Berkhamsted Cricket Club for £1,000 towards the cost of a replacement tractor.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £1,000 to Berkhamsted Cricket Club. **Action: Town Clerk**

FP 98/14 HAPTC and NALC subscriptions

The Committee noted the slight increase of £22.38 in Town Council subscriptions to HAPTC and NALC for 2015/16, to £1,894.33. The Town Clerk was asked to confirm how the proposed increase had been determined. **Action: Town Clerk**

FP 99/14 Internal Audit Interim Report

The Committee considered the interim internal audit report for 2014/15 and noted the conclusion that the Town Council has effective systems in place to ensure transactions are free from material misstatement.

FP 100/14 Income and Expenditure

The Committee noted that Councillors D Collins and Stevens had reviewed the detailed income and expenditure records for the period 1 October to 31 November 2014 and were satisfied that the Income and Expenditure and Variance Analysis was correct.

The Committee noted the Income and Expenditure report as at 31 November 2014 and that the forecast outturn was for a deficit of £43,697.

The Committee noted that this anticipated deficit was more than budgeted and was a result of additional approved expenditure: a contribution to the repair of Church Lane Cobbles, towards planned repairs to the canal towpath and Broadwater; and the costs of the West Ward by-election.

FP 101/14 Draft Budget Proposals

The Committee considered draft proposals the budget for 2015-16, with

- no change in the precept at £19.18 for Band D properties;
- £24,132 to be drawn from the general reserve to balance the budget; and
- a general reserve fund at March 2016 of £107,238, which is 67% of precept income.

The Committee agreed that the budget proposals should be put to Full Council for approval at its next meeting on 19 January 2015. **Action: Town Clerk**

POLICY MATTERS

FP 102/14 On-Line Ticket Booking Facility

Councillor Matthews outlined an opportunity for the Town Council to provide an on-line ticket booking system via its website, to be used by charities and groups to sell e-tickets for local events.

The Committee agreed in principle to the proposal to an on-line ticket booking system, but would be subject to a feasibility study being conducted and considered, including the likely demand for such a service from charities and groups in the town. **Action: Town Clerk**

WORKING PARTY REPORTS

FP 103/14 Festival of Light

The Committee noted the minutes of the Festival of Light Committee meeting held on 18 November 2014; and that a successful Festival of Light was held on Sunday 30 November 2104.

FP 104/14 Lagley Meadow Youth Centre Working Group

The Committee received and adopted the minutes of the Lagley Meadow Youth Centre Working Group held on 26 November 2014.

FP 105/14 Events Committee

The Committee received and adopted the minutes of the Events Committee held on 24 October 2014.

YOUTH MATTERS

FP 106/14 Youth Town Council

The Committee noted the minutes of the Youth Town Council meetings held on 12 November and 10 December 2014.

Part 2 Closed Session – Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was **RESOLVED**

That under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded during the items in Part II of the agenda for this 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 107/14 Salary Awards 2014-16

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve nationally agreed staff salary awards for 2014-16.

FP 108/14 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.