

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted

On Monday 19 June 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors S Bateman
 E Collins
 G Corry (substituting for Cllr G Stevens)
 J Jones
 B Newton
 I Reay (substituting for Cllr T Ritchie)
 G Yearwood

EX OFFICIO Mrs C Green, Town Mayor

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs J Mason – Town Clerk

OPENING MATTERS

FP 33/17 **Election of a chair** of the committee for the council year 2017/18

It was proposed by Cllr E Collins, seconded by Cllr I Reay and unanimously agreed that Cllr Newton be appointed chair for the council year 2017/18.

FP 34/17 **Apologies** for absence

These were received from Cllr G Stevens and Cllr T Ritchie.

FP 35/16 **Election of a vice chair** of the committee for the council year 2017/18

It was proposed by Cllr I Reay, seconded by Cllr E Collins and agreed unanimously that Cllr J Jones be appointed vice chair for the council year 2017/18.

FP 36/17 **Declarations of interest** regarding items on the agenda

None.

FP 37/17 Approval of the **minutes of the previous meeting** held on 10 April 2017

The minutes were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the chair.

FP 38/17 Chair's Communications

- (i) HAPTC bulletin 11 May 2017
(120517*)
- (ii) HAPTC bulletin 23 May 2017
(230517*)
- (iii) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin 20 – 26 May 2017
(300517*)
- (iv) NALC Newsletter 30 May 2017
(300517*)
- (v) HAPTC invitation to afternoon tea with the Chairman 13 July 2017
(020617*)

*Date circulated to Town Councillors

FP 39/17 Suspension of Standing Orders to allow public participation

Not applicable as no members of the public were present.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

FP 40 /17 Grant Application(s) – to consider the following application

Berkofest Music Festival: Application for £1,000 towards the cost of portaloos for this year's festival which is on 9 September 2017.

Following a discussion it was

RESOLVED

That a grant of £500 be paid towards the costs. The Town Clerk would ask the organisers to ensure that in future the previous year's accounts, i.e. the most recent, are ready to be submitted with any grant applications. It was also suggested that more than one quote could be sought for services such as portaloos.

FP 41/17 To receive and consider information from the Berkofest organisers about their sponsorship package.

This was noted. It was suggested that any surplus free tickets received as a result of the above grant might be given to the Swan Foyer.

FP42/17 Year End 2016/17

- i. It was noted that DCK Accounting Solutions visited the Town Council offices on 23 May 2017 to prepare the Financial Statements for 2016/17 and carry out the year end closedown. Copies of the Financial Statements which are scheduled to be approved at Full Council on 26 June 2017 were received;
- ii. Associated with the above visit, the Town Clerk updated the Town Council on a difference of opinion between the National Audit Office and DCK Accounting

Solutions regarding the treatment of CIL payments in Town and Parish Council accounts. Arising from this and subsequent to the 23 May visit, the accounting statements and associated Annual Return figures had had to be amended. Although this did not affect the “bottom line” it had led to a great deal of extra and unnecessary work. The internal auditor had been kept informed. It is unfortunate that DCK Accounting Solutions had not resolved this matter earlier. A meeting of the Joint Panel on Accounting Guidance is apparently scheduled for 26 June 2017 to discuss the treatment of CIL payments.

- iii. The internal auditor visited on 1 June 2017 and signed section 4 of the Annual Return. This had been circulated together the Governance Statement and Annual Accounting statements which will be tabled for approval at Full Council on 26 June 2017. The internal auditors report will also be received and discussed at that meeting.

FP 43/17 Income and Expenditure including Receipts and Payments Schedule

Current year input has not yet been concluded following the auditor’s visit and the extra workload created as a result of ii above. It was

RESOLVED

That an extraordinary meeting of the F & P Committee would be called as soon as the income and expenditure report and receipts and payments schedule for the current year are available. This would be held during office hours and the only item for discussion would be these matters. It was not felt appropriate, for reasons of openness and transparency, to delay their publication on the website until the 11 September 2017 meeting.

FP44/17 VAT reclaiming Lagley Meadow

It was **noted** that following an enquiry by the Town Clerk DCK Accounting Solutions has confirmed that VAT can be reclaimed in respect of Youth Centre and astro-turf area expenditure. Three previous years’ VAT can now be reclaimed.

FP 45/17 Bank Reconciliations

To **nominate** a member of the committee to verify quarter end bank reconciliations in accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2. (The nominee cannot be the Mayor or chair of F & P.)

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr J Jones should undertake this task.

FP 46/17 It was **RESOLVED that the chair of F & P should become a signatory to the Town Council’s accounts with NatWest Bank (Current Account and Business Reserve Account.)**

POLICY MATTERS

FP 47/17 Defibrillator outside Civic Centre

- i. To **receive** an update on discussions

As members were aware, permission had been received to install a publicly accessible defibrillator on the front of the Civic Centre and DBC were preparing the appropriate licence. Berkhamsted Lions Club are funding the project to mark their centenary.

- ii. It was **RESOLVED** that, as suggested by Berkhamsted Lions Club, the funds to purchase, install and provide maintenance for a period of up to 10 years should be donated to the Town Council by the Club. Training costs will also be included.

FP 48 /17 Festival of Light (this year 26 November 2017)

The notes of the “wash up” meeting held on 14 February 2017 were discussed. it was **RESOLVED** that representations should be made to Hertfordshire Police, at the highest level necessary, regarding arrangements for this year’s festival.

FP 49/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** 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 50/17 Alan Dickman Fund/Bequest

- i. The guidance documentation and application form were reviewed. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** that for future applications the amount awarded should be amended to read “up to £1,000”, that the award should be put towards text books and other essential course related expenditure and that receipts should be provided. The Town Clerk will revise the documentation as necessary and circulate it for final approval;
- ii. It was **noted** that one application has been received from a local sixth former who hoped to study pharmacology from autumn term 2017;
- iii. It was **RESOLVED** that on receipt of the applicant’s confirmation of the relevant university place the Town Clerk should notify Town Councillors prior to authorisation of the payment. Such action would then be reported to the next meeting of either F & P committee or Full Council. The Town Clerk in the meantime will make enquiries about prize giving and advise the school that the Town Mayor would be happy to attend and make a presentation to the successful applicant.

FP 51/17 Staffing matters – training

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should arrange for MCPC Systems UK to provide training for herself, Cllr B Newton, the Finance Officer and the Town Warden to be held in the Council Chamber. The total cost will be £1,574.

FP 52/17 The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....