

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held in the Skyrm Room, Public Hall on Tuesday 19th November 2019 at 7.00pm.

438 PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Page (Chairman), Cllr Beswarick, Cllr Drinnan, Cllr Langridge, Cllr Monks, Cllr Turner; also Mrs Bright (Town Clerk).

439 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Cheeseman.

440 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN
Cllr Body proposed Cllr Drinnan, seconded by Cllr Turner, there being no other nominations Cllr Drinnan was duly elected Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

441 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9TH JULY 2019
The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 9th July 2019 having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

442 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
The Town Clerk confirmed Councillors requests for a dispensation to discuss matters relating to the Precept 2020/21 had been granted with the exception of Cllr Mrs Cooke.

443 GRANT APPLICATIONS
(a) **St John Ambulance** – the Town Clerk advised of an application received for grant funding to support the work they did in Dorset. The Town Clerk was asked to seek further information, particularly relevant to Beaminster, to aid discussion at a future meeting.

(b) **Yarn Barton Community Centre** – member **RESOLVED** to release the budgeted grant of £2,000.

444 BANKING SERVICES

(a) **Bank Charges**
The Town Clerk advised of correspondence received from HSBC bank which advised they had undertaken a review of account activity to ensure the best tariff of charges. With the Council's intention to move towards Business Internet Banking members had previously felt it would be an opportune time to undertake a bank charge comparison. The Town Clerk advised that she had carried out an online comparison and HSBC appeared to be in line with three other major banks, members **RESOLVED** to remain with HSBC and move towards online banking in order to reduce the current bank charges.

(b) **Bank Mandate**
Having **RESOLVED** to remain with HSBC the Town Clerk would update the mandate.

(c) Business Online Banking

The Town Clerk advised in order to progress the ability to access online banking the Council were required to agree daily payment limits in respect of the overall daily payment limit and the single transaction daily limit. Following much debate the Town Clerk was asked to provide further information for a decision at the Council meeting following a discussion with the internal auditor.

445 AUDIT SERVICES

The Town Clerk advised she had received correspondence from a company introducing their internal audit services. Members **AGREED** to seek a quotation for comparison.

446 PROVISION OF PUBLIC TOILET IN MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELD

Cllr Beswarick advised of a meeting with a representative from the Lottery Fund in connection with the Council's application for funding for the Skate Park during which the question of accessibility to public toilets had been raised. He suggested members consider the provision of toilet facilities in the playing field for inclusion in the funding bid if possible.

Following discussion members **AGREED** to explore the options available as a matter of urgency.

447 BUDGET ISSUES

(a) Budget Comparision – actual against budget

Members had previously been circulated with a copy of the budget and **NOTED** the actual against budget.

The Chairman took members through the budget, page by page, no significant issues were raised.

(b) Budget forecast 2020/21

Members had previously been circulated with a copy of the budget forecast for 2020/21, the Chairman took members through the forecast page by page.

In considering the budget forecast members also bore in mind the items highlighted in the accompanying report –

- **Town Crier** – **AGREED** to include a sum for a replacement Town Crier in the sum of £150
- **Future development of 'Discover Beaminster'** – members acknowledged the importance of the long term need to develop the website and were in agreement with the budget sum
- **Welcome to Beaminster signs** – a provisional sum had been included pending the outcome of sponsorship discussions
- **Yarn Barton Community Centre** – the Town Clerk advised that a response had been received from the solicitor for further discussion therefore provisional sums had been included
- **Staffing** – a sum had been included for cleaning of the new public toilets whether that be in house or contract. Discussion ensued with regard to the viability of employing a Dog Warden, a provisional sum of £10,000 was **AGREED**.
- **Climate Change/Resilience** – **AGREED** to include £500.

Following due consideration members **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** a precept levy of £181,770 which represented a 10% increase.

448 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting **NOTED** as Tuesday 17th March 2020.

449 MEETING

The meeting which started at 7.00pm closed at 9.30pm.

Chairman