

HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held at the Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon on Thursday 14th June 2018 at 7.00pm.

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: A Beevor; A Blackwell; P Brown; V Hufford; P Kadewere; P Kennington; B Luckham; S McAdam; P Pearce; T Sanderson; T Shrapnel and K Webb

Absent: Councillors: J Cole and C Doyle

Clerk's Note: Before the meeting commenced the Chairman thanked the committee for their support and some special thanks was extended to the previous Chairman of this committee, Brett Morrell. The Chairman assured the committee that each Member has a voice and should raise their hand if they wished to comment on items on the agenda.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors: A Diaz; S Gifford; S Sweek and C Wayment

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED that Councillor P Kadewere be appointed Vice Chairman to the Finance Committee for the local government year 2018/19.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

4. PUBLIC ADDRESS

There was none.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 5th April 2018 (M8) were presented to Members. The Chairman asked Members if there were any comments, there were none. It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to approve the minutes, which were duly signed by the Chairman.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS OF SUBCOMMITTEES.

Members had before them minutes of the following Sub Committee meeting:

(i) Grants Sub Committee – 19th April 2018 (M3)

The Chairman noted that the previous Grants Sub Committee 29th March 2018 (M3) made decisions that breached the eligibility matrix and highlighted that Members should attend training when opportunities present themselves.

The Chairman asked Members if they were happy to accept the recommendations contained within the minutes and it was

RESOLVED to accept recommendations contained within the Grants Sub Committee – 19th April 2018 (M3) minutes.

6a. APPOINTMENT OF SUB COMMITTEES

Members were asked to appoint Sub-Committees for the ensuing local government year 2018-19, together with their membership. It was noted that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor would be ex-officio Members of all Committees and Sub-Committees. With this being taken into consideration, the following were proposed:

(i) Finance Sub- Committee (9)

Councillors: Beevor, Blackwell, Kadewere, Kennington and Luckham, Pearce and Sanderson.

(ii) Grants Sub- Committee (9)

Councillors: Beevor, Blackwell, Brown, Kadewere, Pearce, Sedgwick and Shrapnel.

(iii) Lettings Sub- Committee (9)

Councillors: Brown, Kadewere, Luckham, Pearce, Sanderson, Shrapnel and Webb.

(iv) Staffing Sub- Committee (10)

Councillors: Beevor, Blackwell, Brown, Kadewere, Kennington, Luckham, Pearce, Shrapnel and Sanderson.

(v) Twinning Sub- Committee (9)

Councillors: Beevor, Blackwell, Kadewere, Sedgwick and Webb.

It was noted that there were three remaining vacancies for the Twinning Sub Committee and the Chairman requested that those Members not in attendance at the meeting be contacted via email and asked whether they would like to join the Twinning Sub Committee.

(vi) Devolution Sub Committee (9)

The Town Clerk outlined the purpose of the Devolution Sub Committee. A Member queried whether this committee would be a platform to comment on proposed changes in government structures. It was confirmed that big changes would go to Town Council meetings, which may then be delegated to the Devolution Sub Committee.

Councillors: Brown, Hufford, Kadewere, Kennington, Luckham, Pearce and Shrapnel.

7. MONTHLY EXPENDITURE

Members had before them a copy of the monthly expenditure of Huntingdon Town

Council for March, April and May 2018. The Chairman went through the expenditure report month by month.

Members questioned a few entries to the expenditure list, which were explained by the Finance Manager:

- It was noted that the pension contribution was substantial and was not in line with the national average. The Finance Manager responded that the employer's contribution was high as there is deficit in the LGSS pension scheme and all employers are contributing more. It was explained to Members that it would be extremely costly to leave the scheme. Also, pensions are being paid out to staff members who have left the Town Council.
- The mileage & cable item on 16th March for £50.20 was queried. It was advised that this was a reimbursement to staff. It was noted that Members could inspect the receipts before the meeting if they had a query.
- The table & chairs item on 3rd April for £250.00 was raised. The Town Clerk advised that Landbeach Parish Council sold Huntingdon Town Council (HTC) a meeting table and chairs which are now in the Salon room on the ground floor of the Town Hall.
- A Member queried the Zurich Insurance & Inspection item on 6th April for £17355.51. It was advised that Zurich Insurance Co provided all the insurance for the Town Hall, including: play areas, public liability, staff and more. The inspection covered play area inspections. It was noted that the Property & Estates Manager had negotiated a deal with the provider and made a saving of £10,000 on a three-year agreement.
- A Member asked for clarification on the training item from ICCM (Institute of Crematorium and Cemetery Management) for £5160.00 on 23rd April. It was advised this was grave digging training.
- The TH light repair item from Kershaw Mechanical Services Ltd for £796.20 on 23rd April was queried. The Finance Manager advised that the invoice would be found and presented to the Chairman.
- It was confirmed that 10 Alba tablets were purchased to ensure one would be available for every Councillor.
- The payment to Interaction Recruitment for the Caretaker on 24th May for £775.80 was raised. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Caretaker had now been hired. It was previously decided that it was more cost effective to hire the Caretaker as an agency worker to avoid paying a finder's fee.

The Chairman thanked Members for their questions and it was then proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to approve the monthly expenditure for March, April and May 2018 and the reports were signed by the Chairman.

8. BANK RECONCILIATION

Members received a copy of the bank reconciliation for months ending 31st March, 30th April and 31st May 2018.

The Chairman asked Members whether there were any questions. There were none.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations for month ending 31st March, 30th

April and 31st May 2018, and copies of the bank reports were signed by the Chairman.

9. BUDGET VS ACTUALS

Members were presented with the Budget vs Actuals up to 31st May 2018.

The Chairman asked Members whether there were any questions.

A Member asked for clarification on the income for item 100 (General Administration). It was advised this was the precept.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to note the budget vs actual up to 31st May 2018.

10. ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR YEAR END 31ST MARCH

Members were presented with a copy of Huntingdon Town Council's Annual Report and Financial Statements for year-end 31st March 2018. The Finance Manager advised that amendments had been added after the agenda packs had been circulated, so Members had a paper copy before them.

The Finance Manager presented the External Auditor Sheet to Members for their information. Members were advised that this form would be signed off at the next Town Council. This document would then be made available to the public and the external auditor.

The Chairman asked Members whether there were any questions.

A Member raised a concern regarding the funds for the Sports Hub and Crematorium. The Town Clerk advised that this would be a long-term project, a public works loan would cover the costs and the loan repayments would be spread across 50 years.

The Chairman raised concerns on the cost of the legal and planning fees for the new Community Centre and Crematorium. The Town Clerk advised that burial sites require a large amount of detailed surveys. The cost for creating the building plan was higher as the Crematorium building is a hybrid building with multiple uses. Members were advised that the project had been funded by CIL contributions. The Town Clerk advised that six businesses had been lined up for the tender process, once approval had been given this process would start promptly.

A Member queried personnel fees. The Town Clerk responded that due to Data Protection individual salaries were not published. Staffing costs were outlined in page 10 of the report.

A Member raised the Huntingdon Leisure Centre & Medway Centre lease. The Town Clerk outlined the agreement that had been negotiated with Huntingdon District Council for both the Leisure Centre and the Medway Centre.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the annual report and financial statements for year-end 31st March 2018.

11. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members had before them copies of the amended Financial Regulations for Huntingdon Town Council. The following amendments were highlighted:

- Petty cash was now included on page 12 under item 1.63.a.
- The bank reconciliation on page 9 had been updated.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the updated Financial Regulations.

12. BANK MANDATE

Members were asked to review the current Bank Mandate, which outlined the Members who were signatories on the Bank Account. The list of nominated signatories was as follows:

Councillors: Blackwell, Beevor, Brown, Gifford, Kadewere, Luckham and Pearce.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to appoint these Members as signatories on the Bank Account.

13. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members received the Internal Audit Report from 21st-22nd March 2018.

The Chairman asked Members whether there were any questions. There were none.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to note the Internal Audit Report from 21st – 22nd March 2018.

14. INTERNAL ACCOUNTS

The Chairman invited the Finance Manager to address the meeting. The Finance Manager explained that it was good practice for Members to inspect the internal accounts on a monthly basis. It was advised that a rota would be set up for two Members per month to visit the office and inspect the accounts.

The Finance Manager requested permission from Members to contact the Finance Sub Committee to create the rota.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to approve that the Members of Finance Sub Committee would be appointed to a rota to inspect internal accounts.

15. EVACUATION CHAIR

Members were presented with a report from the Properties and Estates Manager regarding the IBEX 5 Trans Evacuation seat.

The Chairman asked Members whether there were any questions.

A Member noted that the benefits of the Evacuation Chair was worth the cost. It was appreciated that a demonstration was organised to determine the functionality of the equipment.

A Member queried who carried out the demonstration. It was confirmed that the equipment provider visited the Town Hall to test the equipment on the main staircase. It was advised that the IBEX 5 Trans Evacuation seat was adaptable to any staircase, including the main stair case with turning points on each landing.

A Member raised concerns that the Fire Brigade had not been contacted to approve the equipment or complete an inspection of the Town Hall. The Town Clerk advised there was a risk that the Fire Brigade would deem that the Town Hall had a high health & safety risk and would be advised to cancel all bookings in the Assembly Room and Chamber. There are numerous bookings planned for the following months and this would have a significant impact.

It was agreed that approval would be given to purchase the Evacuation Chair subject to endorsement from the Fire Brigade.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to do so.

16. DATE & AGENDA OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was noted as Thursday 19th July 2018, Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon.

Chairman