

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE,
THETFORD, ON TUESDAY 21ST MARCH 2017

The Mayor, Councillor T J Jermy

Councillors:

R F W Brame
C P R Burnett
R G Kybird (Chairman)

M P Brindle (Vice Chairman)
C Harvey
J Newton

Officers in attendance:

Sarah Lewis
Chris Crimmen

Deputy Town Clerk
Committee Secretary

Minutes

- 788/16 DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS
None.
- 789/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Councillor Mrs J James.
- 790/16 MINUTES
Resolved the minutes of the committee meeting held on the 21st February 2017, received by Full Council on the 28th February 2017, as a true record and signed/initialled by the Chairman.
- 791/16 REVIEW OF ACTION POINTS
The Chairman reviewed the last meetings action points:
- Procurement register – the procurement register notice yielded 10 applicants. The Council will keep the register open and add contractors as they are used for jobs and supply the necessary paperwork. The Deputy Town Clerk will re-release the public notices to encourage further interest.
 - Civic list – the Mayor's Secretary is arranging a meeting with the outgoing and incoming Mayor to discuss this in the near future.
- 792/16 HEALTH & SAFETY
The Deputy Town Clerk reported in view of the recent storm damage suffered by the Guildhall it brought to the forefront the precarious position of the clock tower. So while the Council are employing a surveyor to assess the damage for insurance purposes caused by Storm Doris the Council will also get the roof and clock tower surveyed for required repair work. It is expected that the Council may have to make provision for about £50,000. There is approximately £50,000 expected to be left in the Guildhall reserve at the year end but this will need to be enhanced if possible for contingencies. During the storm it was apparent that the Council did not have general procedures in place for emergencies. This matter is being addressed by the ALP Officer who has arranged a meeting to take place with an NCC Officer who will offer guidance on this matter.
- 793/16 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR MONTH 11
The Deputy Town Clerk reported that once this report is approved by Full Council this will be published on the Council website, together with the list of payments, in order to further fulfil the Council's transparency requirements. The Chairman and the Deputy Town reviewed the report and the schedule of payments answering any Councillor queries raised. The following transfers from the Barclays deposit account into the Barclays current account were noted:

- 21st February 2017 = £70,000
- 8th March 2017 = £65,000
- 16th March 2017 = £100,000

Councillor C Burnett proposed and Councillor C Harvey seconded:

RECOMMENDATION: To adopt the financial report for the eleven months ending 28th February 2017 and the schedule of payments for February 2017 included therein.

794/16

CORPORATE PLAN

The Chairman opened a discussion on the Finance Objectives for 2017/18. Various objectives were suggested by Committee members and Councillor R Kybird proposed and Councillor R Brame seconded:

RESOLVED: To adopt the following objectives for inclusion in the corporate plan:

- **FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO COMMITTEES**
Provide financial support to committees in the form of grant application, loan applications and liaising with other local authorities/government bodies.
- **BUDGET PLANNING AND REVIEW**
Continually review budgets to justify need, increase efficiency and to provide services as economically as possible, review the effective use of assets and forward planning.
- **GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**
To review governance and accountability and maintain effective communication with the public in the interests of openness and transparency.

795/16

INVESTMENT POLICY REVIEW

The Chairman opened a discussion on the review of the Investment Policy that had been circulated to Councillors. It was proposed that the final sentence of the opening paragraph C: Investments should read:

The Town Council Property Investment Strategy must be adhered to and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) should be consulted to obtain up to date advice prior to any purchase.

Councillor R Brame proposed and Councillor C Burnett seconded:

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council adopt the Investment Policy for 2017 subject to the change in the final paragraph shown above.

796/16

REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Chairman reported that he and Councillor M Brindle were charged with carrying out a review of the Council's system of internal review over the financial year 2016/17. This had been partially completed but would be finalised by the April committee meeting and after a discussion it was agreed that the June committee meeting would include an item for the new committee to consider how they wish to review the effectiveness of internal control in the future.

797/16

RECOMMENDATION FROM CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The Deputy Town Clerk informed the committee that the Cemetery Committee had requested funding from reserves for Cemetery Cottage to complete repairs that included:

- Internal repairs and decoration
- 5 windows replaced
- Carpets
- Repairs to the wood burner
- Chimney swept

She reported that £4,225 was available from Cemetery reserve with the balance of £2,525 requested from a building repair reserve. After a discussion it was agreed

that further consideration would be given to the wood burner on whether it should be repaired or taken out of the Cottage.

Councillor T Jermy proposed and Councillor R Brame seconded:

RESOLVED: That the Council progress with the repairs to the Cemetery Cottage with funding being agreed from the Building Repair Reserves of £2,525.

798/16

RECOMMENDATION FROM CIVIC COMMITTEE

The Chairman reported the Committee had been asked by the Civic Committee to identify a budget to cover the costs of a twinning visit by Councillor Mrs B Canham when she had accompanied the Deputy Mayor on a visit to Skavina. After a discussion Councillor R Brame proposed and Councillor C Harvey seconded:

RESOLVED: That the amount of £200 be refunded to Councillor Mrs B Canham to cover the cost of travel to Skavina with the money to come from Civic Miscellaneous (nominal code 7180).

799/16

CONTRACTS UPDATE

The Deputy Town Clerk reported the following new contracts that have gone to tender:

- Land management (£6,000)
- Cemetery chapel (£42,000)
- Toilet refurbishment (£120,000)

The total is £270,000 is expected to be paid out on projects in the coming months however the Council will be getting the first half precept in within a month which will ease cash flow but we may find that towards the end of the first precept payment period that cash may be running low and investments may need to be liquified.

Other projects in early stages:

- Guildhall roof area and clock tower refurbishment: £50k circa
- St Peters arch £20k

These were noted by Councillors.

800/16

REVIEW OF DEBTORS AND POTENTIAL WRITE OFF ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that there was an item of £180 still outstanding and now 6 months old. This is actively being chased.

801/16

ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

802/16

PRESS RELEASES

None.

Chairman.

ACTION POINTS	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
In June the new committee to consider how they wish to review the effectiveness of internal control in the future.	Committee Chairman.	June Finance Committee meeting.