

Minutes of the meeting of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE held in the Anzac Room, Community House, Meridian Centre, Peacehaven on Tuesday 19th November 2019 at 7.30pm

Present - Cllr C Collier (Chair of Committee), Cllr L Duhigg (Vice-Chair of Committee), Cllr C Cheta, Cllr J Harris, Cllr A Goble, Cllr S Griffiths, Cllr A Seabrook, Cllr I Sharkey, Cllr A Milliner, Cllr C Gallagher. Town Clerk T Allen, Finance Administrator Z Malone.
One member of the public was also present.

PF425 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and read out the safety and housekeeping notices.

PF426 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

One member of the public was present to observe the meeting.

PF427 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apology received from Mr Andy Beams.

PF428 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

There were no declarations of interests.

PF429 TO ADOPT THE MINUTES OF 17th SEPTEMBER 2019

It was resolved to adopt the minutes as a true record.

PF430 TO REVIEW THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL YEAR TO-DATE

The reports produced for the meeting were noted and reviewed.

The Chairman reported on the Council's financial performance at Month 7, noting outline income, expenditure and outturn projections for the full year.

Cllr Seabrook noted that these figures are affected by projected income that may/will not be received.

PF431 TO NOTE REQUIRED OVER-EXPENDITURE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSE MAINTENANCE

It was resolved to ratify the expenditure authorized by the Clerk, under his emergency powers, relating to boiler and emergency lighting repairs at Community House.

PF432 GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE:

1. Minutes of the meeting held on the 13th NOVEMBER 2019

These draft minutes were received, subject to their adoption by the Sub-Committee at its next meeting.

2. Approval of grants for Round 1 2019/20 for recommendation to Council

Cllr Seabrook presented his spreadsheet, detailing the Sub-Committee's recommendations for grants in the current financial year. It was resolved to approve these grants, as proposed, for recommendation to Council.

PF433 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) – Proposal by Cllr Gallagher for the formation of a Working Party

Cllr Gallagher outlined her proposal. It was noted that this relates to the CIL monies held by Lewes District Council; not those held by PTC.

It was noted that support and training is available from LDC.

It was resolved that a CIL Working Party should be created; membership comprising of Cllr Gallagher, Cllr Sharkey, Cllr Harris, Cllr Cheta, the Clerk, the Finance Administrator and the Head Groundsman.

PF434 TO CONSIDER A PEACEHAVEN/TELSCOMBE JOINT PROJECT FOR INCREASED YOUTH SERVICES PROVISION

Cllr Collier's briefing paper was noted and discussed. Cllr Collier briefed the meeting about this joint proposal for an additional youth session at The Joff, which would include the cost of two youth workers, starting in the next financial year. Estimated costs for inclusion in the draft budget were noted.

Cllr Griffiths noted that ring-fenced JAG youth funding of £4,000 is held by PTC

It was resolved to support this project and recommend it to Council.

PF435 TO APPROVE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE BUSINESS PLAN & E-COMMS COMMITTEE FOR SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL

The draft Terms-of-Reference were noted and discussed.

It was noted that 'Redeveloping The Hub' would be progressed by the Working Party set up by the Leisure, Amenities & Environment Committee, which would then feed into the Business Plan Committee.

It was resolved to approve the draft Terms-of-Reference, with the addition of text to clarify that all Committees will feed into the Business Plan Committee, whose objective is to produce an overarching Business Plan and strategy for Council.

PF436 TO AGREE THE PURCHASE OF A REPLACEMENT RIDE-ON MOWER

The briefing papers from the Head Groundsman were noted and discussed in detail, including the various options and costs for acquiring a replacement mower.

The impact on the Council's finances and draft budget were considered.

It was resolved by majority to retain the current mower and make provision in the draft budget to have it fully serviced, plus an allowance for any parts required during the year and provision for hiring a replacement in case of breakdowns.

PF437 TO APPROVE TREE POLLARDING WORKS

The briefing paper from the Head Groundsman was noted and discussed in detail.

It was noted that the Leisure, Amenities & Environment Committee had approved this work, but had referred the matter as there is no budget for this.

It was resolved not to fund these works from an alternative budget.

PF438 TO APPROVE A 2% INCREASE IN HIRE CHARGES FOR COMMUNITY HOUSE & SPORTS PARK FACILITIES IN 2020/21

It was resolved to approve this 2% increase in hire charges, from April 2020, and that the 'Coffee mornings' pricing structure should be brought into line with the other hire categories and allow for the same level of differentiation between 'Voluntary/Charity groups', 'Private' and 'Commercial' hirers.

PF439 COUNCIL'S & COMMITTEES' BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS FOR 2020/21 – PASS 1

The Chairman stated that he and the Clerk will populate the Committee's section of the draft budget.

It was resolved that an additional meeting of the Committee would be held on the 6th December 2019 to finalise the 2020/21 draft budget, precept requirement and reserves level, for presentation to Council at its meeting in January 2020.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 3(d) and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the rest of the meeting.

PF440 AGED DEBT ANALYSIS

The Finance Administrator's report was noted and discussed.

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It was noted that outstanding balances had slightly increased in the last two reported months and that a number of debts continuously in the over three months category were not proving easy to recover. The Finance Administrator and the Information Officer were commended for their hard work in this matter. It was noted that invoicing improvements are in-hand.

PF441 TO APPROVE AN OFFICE IT UPGRADE REQUIRED IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR

Cllr Collier related the background to this item, noting that the dealings with the preferred supplier during the bidding process had been very professional and that this company had come highly recommended by a neighbouring Council.

It was noted that the proposed financial package was the best fit with the Council's financial position. It was resolved to appoint the preferred supplier as the Council's provider of IT equipment and support, as per the tender specification dated 14th October 2019, for an initial contractual period of five-years.

PF442 TO APPROVE THE NEW EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK FOR SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL

Cllr Seabrook related the background to this item.

It was resolved to recommend adoption by Council.

PF443 TO APPROVE THE NEW EMPLOYEE CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT FOR SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL

Cllr Collier related the background to this item.

It was resolved to recommend adoption by Council.

PF444 TO CONSIDER THE RETENTION OF THE COUNCILS FINANCE & CLEANING CONTRACTORS

This matter was discussed in detail.

It was resolved to retain the Council's Locum Finance Officer for an additional three months, i.e. until the end of April 2020, under current terms.

Clerk to produce a timeline plan for the work required, to include the following: -

- Finalising the 2020/21 budget/precept requirements.
- Remaining training for the Finance Administrator.
- RBS and related training for the Clerk.
- End-of year requirements, submissions, reports, etc.

It was resolved to retain the Council's Cleaning Contractor for an additional three months, i.e. until the end of April 2020, under current terms.

PF445 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 6th December 2019 at 6.30pm to finalise the 2020/21 draft budget, precept requirement and reserves level, for presentation to Council.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:10