

Minutes of the meeting of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE held on-line (Zoom) on Wednesday 17th November 2020 at 7.30pm

Present - Cllr C Collier (Chair of Committee), Cllr C Cheta, Cllr J Harris, Cllr A Milliner, Cllr A Goble, Cllr S Griffiths, Cllr D Seabrook, Cllr I Sharkey, Cllr C Gallagher, Cllr A Milliner, Cllr L Duhigg, Cllr L Mills. Town Clerk T Allen, Finance Officer Z Malone, Sen. Projects Officer M Edser, Parks Officer K Bray.

PF553 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone and admitted Cllr L Duhigg & Cllr L Mills to the meeting.

PF554 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No members of the public were present.

PF555 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS

All Members were present.

PF556 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

There were no declarations of interests.

PF557 TO ADOPT THE MINUTES OF 21st OCTOBER 2020

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

PF558 TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE COMMITTEE

It was resolved that Cllr Goble should become the Vice-Chairman of the Committee; proposed by Cllr Milliner, seconded by Cllr Sharkey and resolved unanimously.

PF559 TO REVIEW THE 2020/21 FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL YEAR TO-DATE: -

1. Finance Officer's report

Received and noted.

2. Bank account summary

Received and noted.

3. Bank Reconciliation statements (for signing)

Received and resolved to sign.

4. Income & Expenditure report

The Finance Officer's reports were received and noted.

The Chairman reported on income loss vs. expenditure savings, noting contingency reserves set aside for Covid-19 related impacts.

The Clerk noted that the Interim Internal Audit Report for 2020/21 had just been received. It was resolved to present this at the next Council meeting to be formally received and noted.

5. Balance Sheet

Received and noted.

6. CIL report

Received and noted.

7. List of payments (for approval)

It was resolved to approve the October 2020 payments amounting to £48,905.33 and November 2020 payments to-date amounting to £24,001.33, as scheduled in the meeting papers.

8. Review of external contracts & their ongoing authorisations

The Chairman introduced this new standard Agenda item, designed to regularly review contracts and their ongoing authorisations.

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The ongoing authorisation for L&N Consultancy NDP work, payments and budgetary provision was discussed in detail.

The Clerk reported that, at its meeting in June 2020, Council had formally authorised two-months engagement and that, whilst at the Council meeting in September 2020 it had been reported that this engagement would be continuing, no formal authorisation by Council had been formally recorded. It was resolved to propose to Council that this engagement is authorised until the Council meeting in January 2020, where a further review will be carried out.

PF560 TO DEVELOP THE 2021/22 BUDGET & PRECEPT REQUIREMENT

The Finance Officer reported that she is building the Draft 2021/22 budget and is meeting with Councillors and Officers for input.

It was noted that, under current circumstances, it is hard to predict income, but that all sources were being looked at including S.106, CIL and capital reserves receipts.

PF561 TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT NEEDS RELATING TO WORKING FROM HOME

The Clerk's paper was noted.

It was agreed that the listed items were valid requirements and it was resolved that they are purchased; cost £468.25.

PF562 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS FROM THE LEISURE AMENITIES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The process and method of presenting project proposals to the Committee was discussed.

The Chairman noted a number of factors that must be covered, including:-

- Use of capital.
- Replacement of asset.
- Reduced expenditure.
- Increased income.
- Carbon footprint.
- Social value.

The Chairman stated that it was quite in order for the Committee to be approached for advice on developing projects, but this must be clearly expressed on the meeting Agenda.

1. To approve the resurfacing of the Centenary Park car park as part of a future CIL/S.106 project.

The Parks Officer's paper was noted and discussed.

It was noted that it is intended that funding will be sought from the LDC CIL 'pot' and would probably form part of a larger bid.

It was resolved to refer this matter to be developed by the CIL Working Party (WP).

2. To approve the replacement of a vehicle & machinery over two years using capital reserves funding

The Parks Officer's paper and vehicle/items redundancy plan was noted and discussed in detail. Cllr Seabrook reported that he had provided a detailed report for the LA&E Committee, covering costs, cost savings, climate and other benefits/impacts and noted that it was essential to start the replacement of vehicles and other items now, otherwise the financial burden would just accumulate.

It was resolved that the LA&E Committee will present a fully detailed and costed proposal, with options and different quotes.

3. To approve sand pit & retaining wall works at The Dell using PTC CIL funding

The Parks Officer's paper was noted and discussed.

It was noted that there was no budgeted provision for this project, hence the request for the use of PTC CIL monies.

It was resolved that the LA&E Committee will present a fully detailed and costed proposal, with options and different quotes.

4. To approve the purchase of a new shredder & new gates for the outdoor gym using capital reserves funding

The Parks Officer's paper was noted and discussed in detail.

It was noted that this matter had been discussed by the LA&E Committee, including costs, cost savings, fuel savings, climate and other benefits/impacts.

Cllr Seabrook noted that, based on estimated savings, the payback period for the shredder would be relatively short.

It was resolved that the LA&E Committee will present a fully detailed and costed proposal, with options and different quotes.

Regarding the urgent requirement for new gates for the outdoor gym, it was resolved that the Senior Projects Officer will explore the possible use of S.106 funds for this purpose.

PF563 GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE:-

1. To note the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 11th November 2020

The minutes were noted.

2. To approve recommended grants for Round 2 2020/21

Cllr Griffiths reported on identified improvements in the grants application and assessment process.

It was resolved to recommend to Council that an allocation of £3930.00 is made for the Round 2 2020/21 grants provision, as set out in spreadsheet circulated with the meeting papers.

[The Parks Officer and the Senior Projects Officer left the meeting]

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.

PF564 AGED DEBT ANALYSIS

The Finance Officer's report was noted and discussed.

The Chairman reported that the Council's exposure to debt had reduced over the last month.

PF565 TO REVIEW LESSEES/HIRERS STATEMENT OF CREDITS/DEBITS & ONGOING SUPPORT

The Clerk's reports were noted and discussed in detail.

Levels of support provided to-date and ongoing options for support were reviewed.

PF566 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – MONDAY 18th January 2021 at 7.30pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:04.

