

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 15th FEBRUARY 2017** at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor S. Poultney (Mayor) – Chairman.

Councillor J. Bishop
Councillor M. Bonfield
Councillor G. Green
Councillor M. Whitwam

Also in attendance:-

Councillor T. Morris
Councillor W. Trite

Dr M. Ayres – Town Clerk
Mrs L. Burgess – Senior Administration & Finance Officer
Miss A. Spencer – Finance Officer

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Finch and Harris.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 – 13 of the Council's Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

The dispensation granted to Councillor Green in respect of cemetery matters was noted.

3. **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Further to a meeting of the Communications Strategy Working Party held on 8th February 2017, at which a Presentation was given by Claire Lodge, Communications Officer, Purbeck District Council, a draft Social Media Policy was submitted for consideration.

During the ensuing discussion, a question was raised under the 'Personal use of social media by Swanage Town Council employees' section of the draft policy, and in light of several other matters highlighted, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bonfield, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND

That the draft Social Media Policy be adopted as an interim measure, subject to future consideration of any proposed amendments submitted to the Town Clerk.

4. **BUDGET REPORT – INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AND TREASURY REPORT 2016/17**

Consideration was given to a detailed report setting out the principal sources of the Town Council's income and expenditure.

Overall there was a surplus on the general fund of £420k against a budgeted surplus of £376k, resulting in a positive variance of £44k at the end of the 3rd quarter of the 2016/17 financial year. This was mainly attributable to the good results from the Council's car parks and a positive variance of £4k on staffing costs due to a staffing structure change. Cash collection and processing costs were expected to exceed budget by £3k, and it was noted that this service remained a priority to review during the next financial year.

Projecting forward to year-end, a surplus of £411k was anticipated against a budget of £372k, a positive variance of £39k.

The Budget Report and Council's financial activity was noted.

5. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Further to Minute No. 175 (a) of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 30th January 2017, consideration was given to the Capital Programme Monitoring Report that had been updated for the 3rd quarter of the financial year 2016/17.

The Capital Programme Monitoring Report was noted.

6. **REVIEW OF CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

In line with the requirements of paragraph 2.104 of the *Practitioners' Guide*, detailed consideration was given to the Council's Corporate Risk Register. The register summarised the most significant risks faced by the Council in relation to achieving its objectives and priorities. The register also set out the control procedures in place to mitigate the risks, and identified any further action needed to manage the risks effectively. The following additions and amendments were raised during the discussion.

Compliance section

Add reference to the forthcoming review of the Code of Conduct to consider bringing it in line with the District Council's Code.

Add a new risk relating to failure to comply with the Council's Social Media Policy.

Consideration was given to the level attributed to each of the risks recorded in the register and it was agreed that little change was necessary. However, given the success of recent recruitment to newly created job roles it was agreed that the strategic risk arising from lack of continuity planning leading to over reliance on key officers should be reduced from high to medium.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bonfield, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND

That the amended Corporate Risk Register 2017/18 be adopted.

The Town Clerk was requested to update the document and review the deadlines for actions prior to the next Council meeting.

7. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING**

AGENDAS

- (a) **Code of Conduct** – To be reviewed in comparison with the District Council’s Code.
- (b) **Investments** – It was reported that the opening of accounts with Investec Asset Management and M&G Investments with a view to investing in the Investec Diversified Income Fund and the M&G Corporate Bond Fund was progressing.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bonfield, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That, under Standing Order No. 1 c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda items 8 and 9 (in relation to legal and financial matters).

8. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS**

Further to Minute No.14 of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee meeting held on 9th November 2016, an updated schedule of Council Priorities and Projects was submitted, for information, including updates on ongoing legal matters.

In presenting the Report, the Town Clerk updated Members on outstanding issues, and also gave a brief summary of matters that had now been concluded.

During consideration of the Council’s significant capital projects it was agreed that a proposal to remove the uprights of the former bandstand should be taken to full Council, together with an outline of next steps in determining the future use of the site.

In light of the revised list of priority capital projects adopted as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process it was agreed that the Options Appraisal for Spa Bungalows should be removed from the Priorities and Projects Monitoring report.

9. **BAD DEBTS**

A schedule of outstanding accounts was submitted for consideration, together with verbal information relating to the Aged Debtors Analysis (Summary) and the format of the Report.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Whitwam, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That an aged debt in the sum of £415 be written off.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee would be held on Wednesday, 12th April 2017.

The meeting concluded at 5.30 p.m.
