

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> AUGUST 2016** at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor S. Poultney (Mayor) – Chairman.  
Councillor J. Bishop  
Councillor M. Bonfield  
Councillor C. Finch  
Councillor G. Green  
Councillor A. Harris  
Councillor M. Whitwam (until 5.25 p.m.)

Also in attendance:-

Councillor A. Lejeune  
Councillor T. Morris  
Councillor W. Trite

Dr M. Ayres – Town Clerk  
Mrs L. Burgess – Senior Administration & Finance Officer  
Mr G. Brookes – Operations Manager  
Miss A. Spencer – Finance Officer

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, two members of the public attended the Meeting.

### **Public Participation Time**

The following matter was raised during Public Participation Time:-

- Street traders on carnival day.

The Committee meeting commenced at 4.35 p.m.

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies received for inability to attend the Meeting.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interests and 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. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2015/16**

Further to Minute No. 23 of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016, the Clerk presented Internal Audit Reports for 2015/16 prepared by Darkin-

Miller – Chartered Accountants in respect of visits 3, 4 and 5. The proposed recommendations and suggested actions to be taken had been incorporated within the Internal Audit Annual Report 2015/16, which had been approved and accepted at the Special Meeting of the Council referred to above.

It was noted that some of the low level recommendations would be implemented as and when staff resources allowed.

4. **BUDGET REPORT – INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

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 £179k at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the 2016/17 financial year. This was £36k greater than budgeted for the period, with the main contributing factor being due to the continued vacancies of several budgeted staffing posts.

At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter an annual net deficit on the general fund of £248k was being projected, against a budgeted deficit of £254k - a positive variance of £6k. A greater than anticipated general fund balance was also brought forward from 2015/16, £806k against an estimate of £621k. At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the financial year, a projected GFB of £557k was projected for the end of the financial year.

Arising from the Budget Report, attention was drawn to a negative variance at Beach Gardens which was attributable to putting, and it was agreed that future consideration should be given to the performance of this facility.

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

5. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Monitoring Report of the Capital Programme 2016/17 was submitted for information.

In noting the Report, concerns were again expressed at the suitability of the PA system recently installed in the Council Chamber.

6. **TREASURY REPORT 2016/17**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Treasury Report 2016/17 was submitted for information.

Members noted the Report, including the investment activity, and re-affirmed that security of capital had remained the Council's main investment objective. This had been maintained by following the Council's counterparty policy as set out in its Treasury Management Strategy for 2016/17.

During the ensuing discussion, a question was raised regarding the amount of liquidity funds held and whether a higher return could be achieved through longer term investment. It was agreed to discuss this matter with the Council's Treasury Management Advisers.

7. **RELOCATION OF DEPOT**

The Clerk updated those present on matters relating to the proposed relocation of the Town Council's depot from the Kings Road site to the Purbeck Business Centre.

Following discussion, it was AGREED:-

That a meeting of the Depot Relocation Working Party be convened to consider the matter.

8. **GRANT APPLICATION POLICY**

Consideration was given to a draft Application Form and Guidance Notes for Small Grant Applications.

Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Finch, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

**TO RECOMMEND:**

That the draft Application Form and Guidance Notes for Small Grant Applications be approved and adopted.

Councillor Whitwam left the Meeting at 5.25 p.m.

9. **REVIEW OF PRAYERS PRIOR TO COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The present practice of holding a short prayer prior to the commencement of monthly Council meetings had been called into question (this matter was last discussed in 2010), and consideration was given as to whether this practice be continued.

Following discussion, and in order that the matter be given further consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Finch, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

**TO RECOMMEND:**

That the practice of holding a short, appropriate prayer prior to the commencement of the monthly Council meeting be continued.

10. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS**

**Items of Information**

- (a) An incident relating to an inflatable childrens' ride on Sandpit Field had resulted in three children requiring medical attention.

**Items for Forthcoming Agendas**

- (a) Code of Conduct.
- (b) Local Government Pension Scheme.
- (c) Debtors Policy.

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Green, 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 item 11 (regarding legal matters and financial interests of third parties).

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

Further to Minute No. 10 of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016, an updated schedule of Council Priorities and Projects was submitted, for information.

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.

It was noted that the introduction of artificial surfacing at Beach Gardens should be added to the list of priority Council projects.

12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee be held on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016.

The meeting concluded at 6.35 p.m.

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