

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **MONDAY, 15th JANUARY 2018** at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor M.P. Bonfield (Mayor) – Chairman.

Councillor J. Bishop (from 9.35 a.m.)
Councillor C. Finch
Councillor G. Green
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor T. Morris
Councillor M. Whitwam

Also in attendance:-

Dr M. Ayres – Town Clerk
Miss A. Spencer – Finance Manager

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

1. **APOLOGIES**
None.

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. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2017/18 - VISIT 2 OF 6**

The Clerk presented the second interim Internal Audit Report for the year 2017/18 prepared by Darkin-Miller – Chartered Accountants.

The following areas had been reviewed during the audit visit:-

- Payments
- Risk Management
- Income, with specific focus on:
 - (a) Allotments
 - (b) Car parks
 - (c) Lease and concession income
- Bank Reconciliation

Members noted that four medium and six low recommendations had been made. With regards to the medium recommendations made relating to leases, the Clerk highlighted that progress reports were regularly provided to the Committee.

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

That the second interim Internal Audit Report for the 2017/18 financial year be accepted.

4. **DRAFT RESERVES AND BALANCES POLICY**

The Finance Manager outlined the amendments that had been made to the Reserves and Balances Policy adopted 23rd January 2017, following the recommendations made at the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee meeting held on 13th December 2017. It was noted that these were:

- the renaming of the Repairs & Renewals Reserve to the Seafront Enhancement Reserve; and
- the Use of the Insurance & Contingency Reserve to be amended to read, “ to hold funds to cover one-off costs that may result from Local Government Re-organisation.”

It was proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Morris, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates Meeting on 22nd January 2018 that the updated Policy on Reserves and Balances be approved and adopted.

5. **DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2018/19 TO 2020/21**

Consideration was given to the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21. It was noted that there had not been any significant changes made to the Council’s investment strategy from the previous year.

It was proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Green, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates Meeting on 22nd January 2018 that the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2018/19 to 2020/21 and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19 be approved and adopted.

6. **REVISED DRAFT ESTIMATES AND PRECEPT 2018/19**

Further to the draft capital and revenue budgets approved by the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee meeting held on 13th December 2017, consideration was given to a briefing note highlighting revisions to the budgets following working party meetings and supplementary budget requests from Departmental Managers.

The items considered for revision to the capital programme were:

- (a) The removal of a proposed £100,000 budget for capital works to the Burlington Chine toilets. This recommendation was made by the Public Conveniences Working Party, further to a discussion highlighting the need for the Council to consider a long-term plan for this asset.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor and seconded by Councillor Bishop:

That the Burlington Chine toilet refurbishment be not included in the capital programme for 2018/19.

Upon being put to the Meeting SIX Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition and there was ONE ABSTENTION, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

- (b) The removal of a proposed £25,000 budget for turnstile installation at the Heritage toilets. Again this was a recommendation from the Public Conveniences Working Group, which further recommended that the current turnstiles be removed.

It was proposed by Councillor Green, seconded by Councillor Bishop and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the replacement of the turnstiles at the Heritage
Toilets be permanently removed from the Council's
capital programme.

- (c) An increase in the budget for improvements to the fishermen's facilities at Peveril Point Boat Park to £125,000, including re-building of the fishermen's huts. This recommendation was made by the Boat Park Working Party. It was noted that this comprised 25% of the estimated costs, with 75% being funded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

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

That the budget for improvements to the fishermen's
facilities at Peveril Point Boat Park be increased to
£125,000 and included in the 2018/19 capital
programme.

- (d) The addition of a £60,000 grant to Dorset County Council (DCC) for capital works to Institute Road, to be made under the General Power of Competence. This followed recent discussions at the Traffic Flow Working Party, and correspondence with officers at Dorset County Council. It was noted that the entire scheme was projected to cost £470,000 and was subject to approval by the County Council as the Highway Authority.

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

That a grant to Dorset County Council of £60,000 be
included in the 2018/19 capital programme.

- (e) Further to minute 165 of the Council Meeting held on 27th November 2017, it was agreed that a revised total of £112,250 be allocated to the artificial Bowling Green project at Beach Gardens.

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

That the project to install an artificial surface Bowling
Green at Beach Gardens be allocated a total of
£112,250 in the 2018/19 capital programme.

It was noted that a number of amendments had also been incorporated in the draft 2018/19 revenue budget, as follows:

- The removal of income from the Heritage and North Beach toilets (£10,300) following the recommendation from the Public Conveniences Working Party to have free access to all Council toilets.
- The addition of works to create a single toilet in North Beach car park (£9,500).
- The addition of £2,250 to purchase tables and chairs for the upper tier of the Shore Road beach huts.
- The removal of £30,000 of expenditure to replace the doors of the Shore Road beach huts.
- The inclusion of an £8,000 budget to install new access systems at the Town Hall and TIC (£6,000 and £2,000 respectively).
- An increase of £5,000 to the budget for weeding.

It was further noted that there would be a movement on the current year's budget from the draft submitted, with additional costs arising from the proposed installation of blinds/curtains in the Town Council Chamber and a revised layout in the Town Hall Annexe reception being required, totalling approximately £17,000.

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

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates Meeting the draft revenue budget, with the inclusion of the above budget amendments.

The Proposed Scale of Fees and Charges were discussed, incorporating amendments which had been agreed at the last meeting of the Committee. The matter of interments in the children's section of the cemetery was again discussed.

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

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates Meeting that the Scale of Fees and Charges for 2018/19 be accepted as amended, incorporating the separation of the children's section into its own category within the scale of charges, noting the waiving of fees for interment therein and a reduction in the cost of purchase of exclusive rights to a grave in that section to £10.

Consideration was given to the precept to be set for 2018/19, following the recommendation made at the meeting held on 13th December 2017, to levy a precept of £718,030. During the discussion, some concern was raised regarding the projected depletion of the Council's reserves over the medium term. It was agreed that the Council's long term strategic plan and strategy on reserves would be discussed at a meeting later in the year.

It was reported by the Town Clerk that the confirmed tax base had reduced by 0.32 from the previous year, a 0.01% reduction. Consequently, it was noted that the proposed Precept of £718,030 would result in a 2.01% increase, or £2.92, on a Band D council tax bill for 2018/19.

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

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates meeting on 22nd January 2018 that the Estimates Book, with any required revisions, be approved and the level of precept to be levied for 2018/19 be increased by 2% to £718,030.

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

None.

6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee was scheduled to be held at 9.30 a.m. on Monday, 14th February 2018.

The meeting concluded at 11.00 a.m.