

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 13th FEBRUARY 2019** at 9.30 a.m.

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

Councillor J. Bishop
Councillor C. Finch
Councillor G. Green
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor T. Morris
Councillor M. Whitwam

Also in attendance:-

Dr M. Ayres – Town Clerk (from 9.40 a.m.)
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.

3. **BUDGET REPORT – INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AND TREASURY REPORT 2018/19**

Consideration was given to a budget report detailing the Council’s income & expenditure to 31st December 2018, noting any significant variances. The Council’s position was noted as favourable.

Further to a recommendation made by the Personnel Committee held 30th August 2018 for a “grow your own” training programme, consideration was given to a request for a virement of £5,000 from the employee costs budget to the training budget within the Parks and Operations cost centre. It was also noted that due to personnel changes during the year training requirements had been assessed with further training needs being identified. As such approval of a virement of £10,000 in total from employee costs budget to the training budget was requested.

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

TO RECOMMEND to Council a virement of £10,000 from the employee costs budget to the training budget within the Parks and Operations cost centre.

Consideration was given to the unspent sum held on the budget for the Mayor’s Allowance, a discretionary sum set aside to finance expenses incurred by the Mayor. It was noted that the Mayor had not claimed any of the allowance during the current financial year, with a £1,500 budget for 2018/19 having been approved. During

discussion it was suggested that the sum of the unspent budget at year end be placed in an earmarked reserve to part finance any works required to the Mayoral chain in 2019/20.

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

TO RECOMMEND to Council that any sum of the Mayor's Allowance that is unspent at year end be appropriated to an earmarked reserve, to part-finance the refurbishment of the Mayoral chain in the next financial year.

Further discussion regarding the financing of the Mayoral chain took place, with some members suggesting that the Members allowance be put towards this cost. It was agreed that Officers would make further enquiries in this respect and report to a future meeting.

Further to Minute 106 of the Monthly Council Meeting held on 29th October 2018, and the approval of a budget of £250 to fund the purchase of trophies for an awards scheme, it was reported by the town Clerk that a further two trophies were to be awarded and also engraved. It was noted that this would incur additional costs of £129.

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

To approve the additional costs for the purchase and engraving of the additional awards and engraving.

4. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT**

The Capital Programme Monitoring Report was submitted for information. It was noted that six projects brought forward from 2017/18 had been completed. It was further noted that the status of the Purbeck Business Centre Roof project was uncertain due to Local Government Reorganisation.

The Town Clerk confirmed the ongoing status of the Bandstand and Fishermen's Slipway projects and the Capital Programme Monitoring Report was noted. Discussion arose regarding the need to ensure robust project management for all future capital projects, highlighting the need to learn from past experiences, particularly regarding third parties, external funding and the risks associated with the Council being the lead client. The importance of a risk register was noted in relation to major projects.

With regards to future capital projects the need to keep sight of the smaller projects amongst the larger projects such as the Spa stabilisation scheme and the Community Seafront Coastal Defence Project, was highlighted.

5. **POLICY ON DISCOUNTING RETAIL ITEMS**

Members considered a briefing note submitted by the Visitor Services Manager with regards to discounting prices on retail items across the visitor services department. It was noted that trading accounts were submitted quarterly and performance monitored at management level.

After a brief discussion it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Morris and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

To approve the discounts as set out in the briefing note and to delegate authority to the Visitor Services Manager to set retail prices and give discounts where appropriate, given regular monitoring at management level.

6. **LGPS- EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS POLICY: TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS FOLLOWING A CHANGE IN REGULATIONS**

The Finance Manager reported on amendments required to the Council's Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 Employer's Discretions Policy following the Amendment Regulations 2018.

During a brief discussion the importance of assessing the financial implications to the Council when applying any of the discretions was noted, together with the requirement for any flexible retirement applications to be approved by the Personnel Committee. It was proposed by Councillor Bishop, seconded by Councillor Finch, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

TO RECOMMEND to the Council meeting on 25th February 2019 that the Town Council's revised Statement of Policy On The Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 Discretions be approved and adopted.

7. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME-TO CONSIDER AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS**

Further to the Council meeting held on 28th January 2019, members discussed a briefing note that had been circulated prior to the meeting regarding a proposed revision to Standing Order 2. Public Participation Time.

During discussion some members stated that they felt that the standing order in its current format was too prescriptive. The Town Clerk reported that standing orders regarding public participation varied from Council to Council, with discretion being given to Councils to amend the NALC template.

It was noted that the draft revised Standing Order 2 would enable any issue directly relating to Swanage to be raised by a member of the public, although priority would be given to those speaking about agenda items and other matters within the Town Council's remit. Overall, it was felt that this struck a fair balance between open public participation and the ability of the Chairman to effectively manage council meetings.

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

TO RECOMMEND to the Council meeting on 25th February 2019 that the revisions to Standing Order 2 Public Participation Time, as stated in Appendix B to the briefing note, be adopted.

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

Councillor Finch requested that the production of an Annual Report be discussed at a future meeting, with the Communications Working Group being suggested as the appropriate forum.

Councillor Bishop requested that an update regarding DCC's Chapel Lane buildings be given at a future Council meeting.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Finch, 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 9 (in relation to legal and contractual matters).

9. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT-TO CONSIDER A DRAFT RETAIL CLIENT SUITABILITY REPORT ISSUED BY ARLINGCLOSE**

Members discussed a draft Retail Client Suitability Report that had been prepared by the Council's treasury advisors, Arlingclose. The requirement to produce the report was noted as a consequence of the reclassification of the Council as a retail client following the implementation of the second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive in January 2018, and to enable Arlingclose to continue to give investment advice to the Council on this basis. It was further noted that a strategy meeting had been held with Arlingclose on 30th January 2019 and a questionnaire completed in order to provide the information to give substance to the report.

During discussion it was noted that members understood that all investments carried a certain level of risk and that it was difficult, albeit necessary, for the report to quantify that risk.

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

That the contents of the draft Retail Client Suitability Report be approved.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee would be held at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 12th March 2019.

The meeting concluded at 10.50 a.m.
