

Minutes of the Meeting of the **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 13th NOVEMBER 2013** at 3.45 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor Mrs. A. Patrick (Town Mayor) – Chairman.

Councillor M. Bonfield
Councillor M.W. Pratt
Councillor M. Whitwam

Public Participation Time

There was one member of the public present at the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Brown, Poultney and Trite.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interest under the Code of Conduct as defined by regulations made under section 30 (3) of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3. **INCOME AND EXPENDITURE – BUDGET REPORT**

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

It was noted that car parking revenue was £19,788 below budget, the negative variance being identified as £16k from Broad Road car park and £10k from the market. It was noted that the reduced income from Broad Road car park could in part be attributable to the works being undertaken by the Sea Rowing Club in the construction of the Gig Shed. It was also noted that employee costs had remained under budget by £34k, largely due to the non-appointment of several budgeted posts.

Overall there was a surplus of £470,938 for the first half of the 2013/14 financial year. This was £91,361 greater than budgeted for the period, and was mainly attributable to variances in employee costs and other significant variances on departmental net expenditure being realised in Publicity & Tourism, Beach Huts, Beaches & Foreshore, Investment Income, Central Services and Parks & Operations.

An outturn on the general fund balance of £82,772 for the year was now projected against an original estimate of £11,050.

Members noted the Council's overall financial position, with approval.

4. **TREASURY REPORT 2013/14**

In accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice, a summary report of the treasury management activity during the first half of 2013/14 was submitted, for information.

It was noted that, once again, a prudent approach had been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

5. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the 2nd Quarter Monitoring Report of the Capital Programme 2013/14.

In accepting the Report, Members noted that the deadline for submission of tenders for the Downs and Seafront Stabilisation Schemes had been extended until 14th November 2013. Revised estimated costs of the schemes were approximately £2.4m, which included £175,000 landscaping costs.

6. **COUNCIL PRIORITIES MONITORING REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 7 of the Finance and Performance Management Committee meeting held on 29th July 2013, an updated schedule of Council Priority Projects was submitted, for information.

In presenting the Report, the Town Clerk made reference to some legal issues which were progressing, but had yet still to be concluded.

7. **REVIEW OF CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

Further to Minute No. 7 of the Finance & Performance Management Committee meeting held on 28th March 2013, 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, and set out the control procedures in place to mitigate the risks.

It was reported that, due to the current workload, progress in addressing the priorities identified in the Register had been limited.

Members again acknowledged the need to prioritise the progression of the Seafront Stabilisation Scheme, and it was RESOLVED:-

That the Corporate Risk Register be reviewed within a six months timescale.

8. **EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT 2012/13**

Consideration was given to a recommendation arising from the BDO LLP External Auditor's Report 2012/13 regarding the level of the Council's fidelity guarantee cover in light of the bank balances held at 31st March 2013.

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

That the Council's fidelity guarantee cover be increased to £5,000,000.

9. **INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2014/15**

Further to Minute No. 8 (b) of the Finance & Performance Management Committee meeting held on 28th March 2013 and the impending retirement of Mr. Henry Lovegrove, the Council's Internal Auditor, in June 2014, consideration was given to the procurement exercise to be undertaken prior to the award of a contract for internal audit services for future years.

The Clerk reported on a proposal by Dorchester Town Council that an advertisement be placed inviting expressions of interest for the provision of the internal audit services, following which an interview panel would be co-ordinated from interested parish and town councils.

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

To support the proposal to seek expressions of interest for the provision of internal audit services for parish and town councils.

10. **OPERATION OF SWANAGE MARKET**

Further to the meeting of the Tourism and Environmental Committee held on 4th November 2013, and a subsequent letter received from Ensors, consideration was again given to the future operation of the Swanage Market.

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

That expressions of interest be invited for the operation of the market in Swanage in 2014.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

That, under Standing Orders Nos. 67 and 68, by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following matters.

11. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT ADVICE**

The Clerk updated Members on the specialist treasury management services provided to the Council by Arlingclose.

In view of the specialist services provided and the professional working relationship with the Town Council, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Whitwam, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Arlingclose be re-appointed as the Town Council's Treasury Management Advisors for a three year period.

12. **SEA BREEZE RESTAURANT**

Further to Minute No. 9 of the Finance & Performance Management Committee meeting held on 29th July 2013, consideration was again given to a request received from the lessee of Sea Breeze Restaurant seeking a rent reduction.

During the ensuing discussion, it was noted that in accordance with the terms of the current lease, a rent review was scheduled to be undertaken in 2015, and it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bonfield, and RESOLVED with ONE ABSTENTION:-

That no further action be taken in the matter at the present time, and that a rent review be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the lease in 2015.

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

There were no additional matters to report at the present time.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Monday, 9th December 2013 at 9.30 a.m.

The meeting concluded at 4.30 p.m.
