

Minutes of the Meeting of the **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **MONDAY, 29th JULY 2013** at 9.45 a.m.

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

Councillor M. Bonfield
Councillor I. Brown
Councillor S. Poultney
Councillor M.W. Pratt
Councillor W.S. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

Also in attendance:-

Councillor Mrs. G.A. Marsh

Public Participation Time

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

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

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. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2012/13**

Further to Minute No. 7 of the Policy and Planning Meeting held on 15th July 2013, Members were invited to make comments and observations on the Internal Auditor's Report 2012/13.

Members were pleased to note that no significant control weaknesses had been identified, and that the audit objectives had been fully, or substantially met. They had no further observations to make and fully endorsed acceptance of the Report.

4. **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 £11,620 below budget, the negative variance being identified as £7k from Broad Road car park and £5k from the market. Concerns were expressed that the reduced income from Broad Road car park could be attributable to the letting of six spaces to contractors building the Sea Rowing Club Gig Shed, although this loss of income could be partially mitigated by £3.5k received for the letting of these spaces. It was also noted that employee costs had remained under budget by £12k for the first quarter of the year after making provision for the expected 1% cost of living increase. This was largely due to the non-appointment of several budgeted posts.

Overall there was a surplus of £106,745 for the first quarter of the 2013/14 financial year. This was £24,873 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 and Parks & Operations. In general, the majority of service areas were performing within budget.

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

5. **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 quarter 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.

6. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

In view of the extensive changes that had taken place to the Capital Programme since the Estimates were agreed in January 2013, consideration was given to the financing of the revisions and the impact on the Reserves and Balances held. During the ensuing discussion, Members were reminded that the initial budget had been set given a policy of retaining 85% or £5.78m of the capital receipt from the disposal of the caravan park. Members acknowledged that this was no longer a viable option, and it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bonfield, and RESOLVED:-

To recommend that the policy be formally revised during the setting of a new Medium Term Financial Strategy to be agreed as part of the Budget setting for 2014/15.

(a) **Downs Stabilisation Scheme**

A budget estimate for the Downs stabilisation scheme, totalling £210,000, was submitted, for information.

In accepting the estimated costing of the scheme, Members acknowledged that the work would not cure the stabilisation problem, but would 'hold back' the slippage for some considerable time, and it was agreed that detailed proposals be referred to the relevant Working Party for further consideration.

(b) **Forres Field Changing Facilities**

A brief report from the Project Development Officer had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting, and the contents were noted.

(c) **Depot Relocation**

The Clerk updated those present on recent discussions held with officers from Purbeck District Council regarding an option for the future relocation of the Town Council depot.

(d) **Prospect Nursery**

Further to Minute No. 4 (d) of the Finance & Performance Management Meeting held on 12th December 2012, the Clerk reported on information required to enable the full consideration of future options for the Propsect Nursery site.

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

That advice be obtained from Purbeck District Council Planning Department regarding the possible future use of the Prospect Nursery site.

7. **COUNCIL PRIORITIES MONITORING REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 9 of the Finance and Performance Management Committee meeting held on 28th March 2013, an updated schedule of Council Priority Projects was submitted, for information.

In presenting the Report, the Town Clerk was hopeful that some legal issues were reaching a conclusion and should be resolved before the next meeting of the Committee.

8. **OPERATION OF SWANAGE MARKET**

The Town Clerk reported on a recent meeting held with Ensors, the operators of the Swanage Market, to address administrative inefficiencies that had been regularly highlighted by the Council's Internal Auditor.

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

That an annual licence be drawn up with Ensors for 2013, and that the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Brown consider the future operation of the market in Swanage.

9. **SEA BREEZE RESTAURANT**

Following a request received from the lessee of Sea Breeze Restaurant for a rent reduction, and a subsequent meeting of the Seafront Concessions Working Party on 9th July 2013, the Clerk updated those present on the current position and the recommendations of the Working Party.

Discussion ensued, following which, it was proposed by Councillor Trite, seconded by Councillor Bonfield, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To endorse the recommendation of the Seafront Concessions Working Party that consideration of the matter be deferred until mid/late September 2013.

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

(a) **Items of Information**

- i) Members wished to record their appreciation of the sterling work undertaken by the Town Council's workforce in clearing the rubbish during the extremely busy Carnival weekend.
- ii) Reference was made to an article that had been published in the Daily Echo regarding the public toilets in Bournemouth.

(b) **Matter for a Forthcoming Agenda**

Donation to 2185 (Swanage) Detached Flight.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Finance and Performance Management Committee would be held on 28th October 2013.

The meeting concluded at 11.00 a.m.