

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN BANSONS ON
THURSDAY 30th APRIL 2015 AT 8.30pm**

Present: B. Surtees (Chair) P. Gode* S. Jackman
 A. Kaye D. Roberts J. Rushton*

*Non committee members

Officers: A. Middlehurst (Town Clerk), E. Gough (Admin Assistant)

Other: One member of the public

74/14 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Gambardella.

ACTION

75/14 Declarations of personal and or prejudicial interest

None received.

76/14 Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda

None present.

77/14 To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th February were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

78/14 Matters arising

None received.

79/14 Clerk's report

Councillor Training – 18th May

A training session has been booked at Banson's with the EALC at a cost of £250.

Water Supply to Jubilee Pavilion

Has now been completed.

HR and Health and Safety Consultancy

The contract was due for renewal mid-April. The Clerk sourced two alternative providers and following agreement from the Chair and Vice Chair the contract was renewed with the existing provider which offered a discount. A health and safety review will take place in the coming weeks and the HR consultancy remains ongoing.

Jewson Building Better Communities Fund

The Council was not shortlisted for grant funding towards the upgrade of the Jubilee Pavilion. The Clerk will continue to source further grants.

The Public Contracts Regulations 2015

These Regulations came into force on 26th February 2015, revoking and replacing the Public Contract Regulations 2006. The Regulations require a contracting authority which includes a Parish Council to use one of the five permitted procurement procedures unless an exemption applies, such as where the value of the contract is below the relevant threshold. (The threshold is a contract with a value of £25,000 or more.) Under

the new Regulations, a contract may be awarded only after a call for competition has been published in accordance with the Public Procurement Directive and also on the Contracts Finder portal (<https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>).

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014: Commencement Orders

Although this Act is now in place, Parish Councils' existing external audit arrangements continue until the end of the financial year 2016/17. The majority of changes to external audit arrangements and appointments will take effect from 1st April 2017.

A new Audit Appointments body is currently being worked up by NALC and SLCC in association with other (small authorities) representative bodies. Local Councils will be contacted during 2016 to ask whether they wish to be part of central audit appointment arrangements or to opt out and make their own.

Local Councils with income or expenditure under £25,000 p.a. will be exempt from external audit but will still have an external auditor appointed for the purpose of the exercise of electors' rights.

CCLA Property Fund

A dividend has been received of £559.55 for Jan – March 2015.

80/14 Jubilee Park

The Chairman reported on the trading figures he and the Manager had produced from 10th February to 31st March which included a portion of the regular maintenance and utility bills.

Cllr Roberts enquired about what section fees were due to the Council for the trading period. After discussion, Cllr Surtees proposed that the Manager contact the Treasurer of the former OSSC to clarify the position before approaching the individual sections. Seconded Cllr Roberts. **AGREED.**

The Manager reported:-

- the existing bar staff have brought continuity since the Council resumed management and all are working well to keep high standards of service
- the potential Darts Super League returning to the Pavilion on a weekly basis
- function bookings continue to bring regular income
- catering staff have been employed on a fixed term contract. Catering sales are picking up on weekdays

The Clerk advised that Cllrs will be regularly updated of the costs and commitments of the Pavilion and this would be achievable once the new Jubilee Park Committee was created.

ECC Community Response Fund

The Clerk reported on the patio area at the club which was left half finished by the tenants. It was felt that improvements to the patio would be a good income stream if visitors could enjoy a pleasant outside area. Initial quotations were reviewed.

Cllr Surtees proposed that an application to ECC's Community Response fund be submitted with seed capital of up to a maximum of £1,500 depending on the final costing. The Manager and the Clerk to agree an acceptable proposal.

Seconded Cllr Kaye. **AGREED.**

81/14 Councillor Remuneration Scheme

Cllr Surtees proposed and Cllr Kaye seconded to continue with the current scheme and make a recommendation to Full Council. **AGREED.**

82/14 Preferred Contractors List

The draft list was reviewed. Cllr Surtees proposed to approve the updated list. Seconded Cllr Jackman. **AGREED.**

83/14 Finance Reporting

The Clerk reported on the 2014/15 end of year figures. Payments over £500 for the year were noted along with the final bank reconciliation.

84/14 Governance and Accountability Review

Internal Audit Report for 2014/15 year end.

The satisfactory report was noted. Cllr Surtees thanked the staff for their hard work during a busy year.

System of Internal Audit

The system was reviewed. Cllr Surtees proposed and Cllr Jackman seconded that this system be recommended to Full Council. **AGREED.**

Financial Risk Assessment and Management Report

The report was reviewed. The Clerk advised that this document is reviewed regularly. Cllr Roberts proposed and Cllr Surtees seconded that the report be recommended to Full Council. **AGREED.**

85/14 Bansons Hire Arrangements

The Clerk reported that the Council's insurers had raised concerns with regard to third parties holding keys for out-of-hours hires. There has also been issues of hirers disturbing the neighbouring properties and setting off the alarm upon entry which has resulted in charges from the security contractors.

Following discussion regarding the usage, Cllr Roberts proposed and Cllr Surtees seconded that bookings allowed are only those arranged by councillors (at which they will be present throughout). A councillor to act as key-holder to unlock and lock up. Hire charges to remain unchanged. **AGREED.**

Cllr Surtees also suggested that a paragraph be added to the hire agreement stating that when children are in the building, the Town Council's safe guarding policy would be in place. **AGREED.**

86/14 Scout Hut Lease

The advice from the Town Council's solicitor following the request from the Scouts to increase the term of the lease to 75 years was considered by the Committee. Cllr Surtees proposed and Cllr Kaye seconded that on advice from the Council's solicitor the Council do not extend the lease beyond 23 years. **AGREED.**

87/14 Financial Regulations

A report from the clerk was noted.

After considering the necessary amendments it was **AGREED** that the Clerk and Deputy Clerk review this document and present to Full Council for consideration.

88/14 The Council is asked to RESOLVE to exclude the press and public for this meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following items contain confidential information relating to contractual matters.

91/14 The Council is asked to resolve to permit the press and public to return to the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

The meeting closed at 10.15pm.

Signed

Chair

Date

PINK PAPER

89/14 To consider the recommendation from the HR Staffing Sub Committee

It was **AGREED** that a member of staff reduce to three days per week and an alternative be sourced for the other two days.

90/14 Outstanding legal matter

The committee received a report from the Clerk. Cllr Surtees proposed and Cllr Kaye seconded that the Clerk place any further alleged claims to the Council into the hands of the Council's solicitor and not deal direct with the Council's ex tenants.