

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 8.06PM 6th APRIL 2017 AT BANSONS**

Present: C. Feetham (chair) S. Cole* J. Devonald
B. Freeman B. Vaz J. Reynolds

*Non committee members

Officers: A Middlehurst (Town Clerk), E Gough (Administrative Assistant)
Public: One member of the public & one member of the press

122/16 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Browning, Bicknell, Birch and Bolden.

123/16 Declaration of Interests

Cllrs Reynolds and Cole both declared a pecuniary interest in Item 131/16 as allotment plot holders and Cllr Cole being Chairman of the Ongar Allotment and Gardening Association.

124/16 Public participation session with respect to items previously notified to the Clerk.

None received.

Cllr Vaz joined the meeting

125/16 To agree the minutes of the Finance and Human Resources committee meeting held on 9th February 2017.

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**126/16 Clerk's Report
Essex Pension Fund**

The Actuaries recommendation paper in regard to the changes in contribution rates were reported.

127/16 Finance Reporting

- The bank reconciliation for February 2017 was noted.
- The payments over £100 for February 2017 were noted.

128/16 Mini Bus

- The budget as at 28th February 2017 was received and noted.
- To receive an update on the commercial strategy and agree any necessary action

The Clerk reported that a meeting had taken place with the Head of Chipping Ongar Primary School following her address to the Committee at the previous meeting. The school would be in a position to pay £1.50 per mile for use of the mini bus. The Clerk is arranging consultation with other user groups.

129/16 Training record

- Received and noted - the training budget for 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- Received and noted - the information on the training records for Councillors and staff for 2017.

The Clerk reported that the Open Spaces Supervisor was booked on a Routine Playground Inspection training course on 25th May at the EALC. A PSS Certificate would be received and the OS Supervisor could then go on and complete the RPII examination and practical test.

130/16 Internal Audit Report

- The report dated 1st March was noted. The Clerk reported that all the recommendations below had been addressed:-

Review of Expenditure and Tendering Process

- The Game Machine owner should be requested to empty the Games Machine and issue the appropriate Games Duty Statement

Review of Income

- Staff manning the bar should be reminded of the need to ensure that the true closing cash holding in the till (including the respective float) is recorded on the cash up sheet, thereby identifying any possible errors in change issued.
- The balance of cash held at Jubilee Park should be independently checked by a member of office staff on a regular basis.
- Stock takers to be asked to explain the 'other wastage' figures on the stocktake sheets.

Petty Cash Accounts and Credit Card Controls

- VAT should be reclaimed on Petty Cash expenditure and the Finance Manager should backdate any claim to the beginning of the current financial year.

131/16 Recommendations from Open Spaces Committee Meeting 23rd February

- To consider the recommendation to increase the Allotment fees by 6% with effect from 1st November 2018 and make recommendation to Full Council

The Clerk reported that new information had been received regarding allotment fees and the terms and conditions currently in place. Following discussion with the Chairmen of Open Spaces and Finance and HR prior to the meeting, it was recommended that this item should be referred back to the Open Spaces Committee.

Item deferred back to Open Spaces Committee.

As the item was not discussed, Cllrs that had declared a pecuniary interest did not leave the meeting.

- To consider the recommendation to increase the cemetery fees by 5% and make recommendation to Full Council

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Reynolds and seconded by Cllr Freeman to increase the cemetery fees by 5% and recommend to Full Council.

Vote:

Unanimous

132/16 Recommendation from the Planning, Environment and PR Committee

- To agree the virement of funds - £50 from Coffee Morning funds (which currently stand at £50) and £130 from Media Services & Advertising funds (which currently stand at £610).

The Clerk reported that due to increased guests at the Twinning Reception on Good Friday, the budget set was not sufficient to cover the hall hire and refreshments required. An

amendment would be made to the Financial Regulations to allow Committees to via monies between budgets and taken to the Annual Council meeting for consideration.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Feetham and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to agree the virement of funds.

Vote:

Unanimous

133/16 CCLA Local Government Property Fund

- To agree a response to the suitability audit

Cllr Cole suggested that a standard portfolio with investment preferences based on risk type should have been provided by the CCLA.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to defer this item until the CCLA had been asked to provide a standard portfolio with investment preferences based on the Town Council's risk type.

Vote:

Unanimous

134/16 Virement of Funds

- To agree the recommendation for the Open Spaces Committee to vire between budgets to provide monies for the Memorial Testing

The Clerk reported that the budget of £1500 for the testing had been missed in error from the 2017/18 budget but that the Open Spaces Committee may be able to vire monies during the financial year to compensate.

Cllr Reynolds stated that this items was incomplete as he recalled that the Memorial Testing budget bid had been deferred by the Open Spaces Committee.

The agenda item was deferred back to the Open Spaces Committee.

135/16 Old Council Building

- To consider the requests from the potential new tenant:-

➤ To add additional CCTV and lighting (can the Council's equipment be used)

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds that additional CCTV and lighting can be installed but the Council's equipment could not be used.

Vote:

Unanimous.

➤ To add a partition to separate the kitchen from the main area and create a separate office

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to grant permission to add an additional partition to separate the kitchen from the main area and create a separate office. Cllr Cole suggested that the Council ensure the partition does not compromise the fire regulations.

Vote:

5 for

1 abstention

- To erect signage outside the building with the company name

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds that signage be permitted to a maximum of 1m x 1m square.

Vote:

Unanimous.

- To continue the fencing around the building to separate the area from the Sports Field
- To clear the space to the side of the building and create a parking space next to the building (to be used weather permitting)

The two items above were considered together.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to defer these requests until a site plan had been received regarding the area to be fenced along with details on the additional parking were received. The Clerk to ascertain what hours the parking would be required and by how many vehicles.

Vote:

Unanimous.

136/16 Council buildings

- To consider commissioning the Council's preferred contractor to carry out surveys for all Council owned buildings. Item deferred from 24th March 2016.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Reynolds and seconded by Cllr Freeman to defer this item for a further year. The Open Spaces Supervisor was capable of highlighting any major defects.

Vote:

5 for

1 abstention

137/16 Health and Safety

- To receive a report on the visit by the Council's appointed contractor

The Clerk reported on the report dated 13th January.

Cllr Cole gave his review of the report and felt it was an inadequate report on the health and safety risk of the Town Council.

Page: 4 – Include 'Chapel' to the list of Council responsibilities.

Page: 8 – COSHH – Query.

Page: 8 - Grounds Maintenance – Refuelling operations should be carried out down wind of any potential ignitions sources. Add 'Spill Kit'.

Page: 9 – PPE – Query.

Page: 11 – Include slips, trips, falls, cut risk, needle stick injury, safety visors, ear defenders, dust, safety boots, hi viz jackets.

Page: 12 – Include asbestos.

Page: 22 – Fire Safety Overview – Fire Extinguishers – Query correct extinguishers for each room.

Page: 27 – Moving Machinery – Grounds staff to wear hi viz jackets.

Page: 35 – Outside working – weather. Include staff to wear gloves.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to refer back to Ellis Wittham with Cllr Cole's concerns.

Vote:

Unanimous.

- To receive an update on the current health and safety action point list
- To consider and agree any actions necessary

The above items were not considered.

138/16 Risk Assessment and Council Policy Review

- To consider a procedure to review and maintain the Council's Risk Assessments and Policies

The Clerk reported that the initial report had been completed on the LCRS system but that a large amount of administrative work was required.

Cllr Cole offered to assist the Clerk with the initial review.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to allow the Clerk to work with Cllr Cole and report to a future meeting.

Vote:

Unanimous

139/16 Recording of Meetings

- To consider purchasing recording equipment and make recommendation to Full Council

Cllr Reynolds reported that this item has previously been considered at various meetings in the past but had not been progressed.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Freeman and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to purchase a dictaphone and megaphone and make recommendation to Full Council.

Vote:

Unanimous

The meeting closed at 9.27pm

Signed

Date