



MINUTES FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE meeting held 16th June 2020 at 1pm by Zoom

FIN REP 06.20

Present – Cllr Betts, Cllr Bradbury, Cllr Flunder, Cllr Jordan and Cllr Ladd.
Also present – Town Clerk, and 2 members of the public.

1. **Election of Chairman 2020/2021**

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Ladd it was resolved by all to appoint Cllr Betts as Chairman of the cttee for 2020/2021

2. **Apologies:** To receive apologies for absence.

There were no apologies for absence.

3. **Declarations of interest:**

- a) To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda. Nil
- b) To receive any declarations of Pecuniary Interest regarding the agenda. Nil
- c) To receive any request for dispensations regarding the agenda. Nil
- d) Lobbying to members – Cllr Flunder advised that he had been approached regarding the museum.

4. **Matters from the public**

The purpose of the meeting is for Councillors to discuss Town Council business and whilst the attendance of electors is welcomed, they are not allowed to join in the discussions of the Councillors. During each meeting the Council will adjourn for a period for public questions. During this time, electors can put questions to the Chairman regarding matters on the agenda. Where possible, the Chairman will respond but the matter may have to be deferred and placed on a later month's agenda for discussion.

A member of the public asked about the station Road redevelopment plans and specifically ; the risk related to Station Yard redevelopment, confirmation about the availability of the grant funds, the structural survey for the Hurren Terrace properties, the risk to tenants at Hurren Terrace, the decontamination risks, and the risk of the project providing office space that may not be required.

5. **Minutes of the last meeting** - the minutes of the REP 5.2020 meeting were approved and signed and had been noted at the previous Town Council meeting.

6. **Statement of Accounts/ Audit 2019 / 20**

The cttee considered the recommendation made in the internal report regarding the allocation of some reserves for staff resources. The Town Clerk provided a recommendation as to how this could be achieved as below.

It is Recommended that £10,000 of the Strategy Reserve of £160,000, be transferred to a new Staff Resources Earmarked reserve for 2020/2021.

General Reserve of £141,038 is over 1 year's precept (precept £120k). It is Recommended that £20,000 of the general reserve be transferred to the new Staff Resources Earmarked Reserve for 2020/21. Staff Earmarked Reserve will then be at an appropriate level of £30,000.

It was agreed by all that this was an appropriate way forward and will be recommended to full council.

There were no other recommendations to consider from the audit report. The cttee will consider the report on a regular basis to ensure best practice is being implemented.

7 **Management accounts 2020/21.**

The management accounts to end May 2020 were presented by the RFO and discussed on a line by line basis with analysis against budget code for each individual account code. The actual spend for each account code was considered against agreed budget – noting that this was only for a short period and that quarterly rental income had therefore not yet been received.

After discussion, there were no matters of concern to highlight noted by the Finance cttee within the 2-month accounts relating to expenditure.

With regards to income due, the cttee noted the decision of Town Council with regards to rents due and outstanding, and those rent/ lease reviews awaiting completion.

The month end management accounts and bank reconciliations for May 2020 were reviewed and approved by the Chair of the cttee and signed off as required.

Discussion regarding the Town Manager budget. **On the proposal of Cllr Jordan seconded by Cllr Betts it was agreed by all to provide a budget of £5k to enable immediate actions/ events etc to be initiated whilst awaiting the budget request for the full year.** Subsequent to the meeting the annual budget was received together with the specific budget for the draft proposal of the open-air cinema – which in turn has subsequently been reconsidered in the light of revised gov legislation. The finance cttee will review the annual budget at their next meeting and provide recommendations to full council.

Follow up on queries raised regarding Boating Lake feasibility study monies, solicitor fees and website master fees.

Boating Lake feasibility study monies remain to enable grants to be submitted for the recommendations arising from the report – James Mellish actioning.

Solicitor fees – hourly breakdown of costs received. Review of solicitors to take place in 2021.

Website master/ hosting – see below.

8 **Donations** to receive requests.

Request had been received from Southwold Museum. Standard application form for a donation from the Town Council has been sent out and the request will be considered at the next meeting once the application has been returned.

9. **Annual Investment Policy and Strategy 2020/21 –**

This has been updated and is recommended for acceptance by full council.

Risk Assessment 2020/21 – This has been reviewed as per full council request – with additions made relating to contamination risks, Town Hall disability audit, and grant receipts.

Recommended for acceptance by full council.

10. **Website accessibility Guidelines**

Website master/ hosting fees were compared to those of other providers and against budgets from other towns. The fees paid by STC cover design, hosting, loading of information and redesign throughout the year as required and are therefore not comparable to those who just charge a hosting fee. Transparency regulations apply to the Town Council and it is therefore imperative to have a site that provides more than a hosting service. It was considered by all members of the cttee to continue with the present provider at this time but to review the provision of information on the site to ensure that it complies with the requirements also of the website accessibility guidelines. The webmaster also looks after the site for Framlingham Town Council who will need to make the same arrangements. Framlingham won SALC website of the year and have a part time employee to look after their site in addition to the webmaster. It was also noted that the Town Manager will be commissioning a site for tourism and business.

11. **Workplace risk assessments – Town Hall and Market re Covid 19**

The Town Clerk confirmed that risk assessments had been carried out and that changes had been put in place as required to reduce risks.

12. **Annual Leave Entitlement**

The Town Clerk advised that both herself and the secretary had worked through holiday during the Covid lockdown and had been unable to take all holiday due before year end March 2020. However this may have a knock on effect for 2020/21 and it was therefore suggested that both staff members consider whether they would wish to be paid for any of the holiday accrual rather than take the time off and if so for the request to be considered by the employment group.

13. **Procurement Regulations**

These have been updated as at May 2020 and a new Legal Topic Note produced by Nalc confirming the new requirements. Noted.

Chair.....

Dated

Recommendations

It is Recommended that £10,000 of the Strategy Reserve of £160,000, be transferred to a new Staff Resources Earmarked reserve for 2020/2021.

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Town Manager budget. On the proposal of Cllr Jordan seconded by Cllr Betts it was agreed by all to provide a budget of £5k to enable immediate actions/ events etc to be initiated whilst awaiting the budget request for the full year.

Annual Investment Policy and Risk Assessment Document – These have been updated and are recommended for acceptance by full council.