

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on Tuesday 14th February 2017 at 14.00 in The Eckford Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem

Present: - Cllr C J Mellings (Chairman), Cllrs Mrs R Dodd, P Moyse and Mrs P Dee. Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

1 Apologies - To receive any apologies and reasons for absence.

Resolved:- to accept the following apologies for absence Cllr Granger, Cllr Murray.

Absent Cllr E Towers.

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

a) Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting and which is not included in the register of interests – none declared.

b) To consider any applications for dispensation - none received

3 Committee minutes - To approve as a correct record the minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on 6th December 2016.

Resolved:- that the minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on 6th December 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Progress Report – to receive a progress report on items raised at previous meetings.

Resolved:- to note the report.

5 Financial Reserves

a) Management of financial reserves – to consider draft reserves strategy. A discussion took place on this policy and it was agreed to amend the last paragraph of the policy to state;
“This review of the Council’s reserves position which will be further assessed during 2017-18”

Resolved:- to recommend that once the aforementioned amendment has been implemented the Town Council adopts the policy.

b) Investment Policy - for review.

The policy was reviewed in detail and a number of changes made to bring the policy into line with the reserves policy and give more flexibility over future investments that the Town Council may wish to make.

Resolved:- to defer final decision on the adoption of the policy until the next meeting to allow time to update the policy and include reserves year-end figures for 2017.

c) CCLA investment – to consider quote received for financial advice. It was reported that at the time of the meeting only one quote had been submitted. Following a discussion it was;

Resolved:- to defer a decision on this item until a 2nd quote for independent financial advice can be obtained.

- 6 **Internal Auditor** – to appoint the Town Council’s internal auditor for 2017-18.

Resolved:- to recommend the appointment of JDH Business Services as the Town Council’s internal auditor for the year 2017-18.

- 7 **Policy Review** - to discuss undertaking a review of staffing policies.

It was reported that all staffing policies need reviewing as they were in need of updated. It was suggested that it may be better to amalgamate all the policies into a staff handbook. The Clerk was asked to contact Shropshire Council HR department to see if they would quote for the development of a staff handbook.

Resolved:- that due to work pressures and the need for specialist advice that a deadline for completion of the staffing policy review be set at 31.3.18

- 8 **Staffing** – to receive the resignation of the Assistant Groundsman and consider the recruitment process of a replacement Assistant Groundsman.

Appreciation of the committee was formally recorded for all the work undertaken by Brian Humphreys for the Town Council over a number of years.

Resolved:- to recommend that the committee accept the resignation of Brian Humphreys and that the Town Clerk be tasked with advertising the vacancy.

Further Resolved:- to recommend That Cllr Dodd, Cllr Towers and Cllr Mellings be given delegated powers to oversee the selection and recruitment of an Assistant Groundsman.

- 9 **Health and Safety**

a) **Lone working** – to discuss lone working procedures for all staff. It was reported that a call in system has been developed with the groundsman whereby he contacted the office via email every lunch time. A discussion took place with regard to staff based in Edinburgh House who were often lone working.

Resolved:- to recommend that staff based in Edinburgh House be instructed to sign in and sign out of the building when lone working in a book to be held at reception.

Further Resolved to recommend:- that no staff member is allowed to hold a meeting with a member of the public away from Edinburgh House without another staff member or councillor being present.

b) **Staff training** – to discuss manual handling and ladder safety training for Groundsman.

It was reported that the Groundsman’s manual handling training and Ladder Safety training were in need of updating and that these courses could be completed by Shropshire Council for £50 per session.

Resolved to recommend:- approval of this training

- 10 **Code of Conduct** - for discussion

A discussion took place on this issue and it was agreed that as part of post election training in the code of conduct would be required.

Resolved:- to recommend that Code of Conduct training be organized for all councillors following May 2017 elections.

11 Date and time of next meeting –

Resolved:- to note that the next meeting will be on Tuesday April 18th at 2pm

Meeting ended at 15.30.

Chairman.....