

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 14.00 in the Eckford Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem

Present: - Cllr R Dodd (Chairman), P Glover, C Granger, P Moyse, E Towers.  
Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

1 **Apologies** - to receive any apologies and reasons for absence.

**Resolved:-to receive the following apology for absence**

J Murray  
Absent Cllr Dee

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 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

**Resolved:- that the minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Corporate Governance Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

4 **Accounts**

a) **2017-18 year end accounts** - for review.

**Resolved:- to note the 2017-18 year end accounts.**

**b) 2017-18 Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)** – to review in advance of the May meeting of the Town Council. The AGAR including the Annual Governance Statement was reviewed and noted.

**c) Earmarking Reserves** – to review Reserves Strategy and consider reserves for earmarking.

**Resolved:- to recommend adoption of the updated Reserves Strategy and to add the following items to earmarked reserves;**

**Elections - £5000**

**CCTV grant - £2259**

**Transformation Fund – to be reviewed after January 2019.**

**Neighbourhood Fund £2760.49**

**d) Insurance** - to review the Town Council's insurance levels and consider quotes received. The Clerk reported that no quotes had been received in time for the meeting and it was

**Resolved:- to defer to the May Council meeting .**

**e) Internal Audit report – for consideration**

The internal audit report was considered along with action points raised. The Clerk reported she had queried the need to restate the 2016-17 accounts as the incorrect accrual of salaries had taken place every year for a number of years. She explained that only one month of staff salaries was accrued each year when in reality it should have been two due to the fact that payroll payments for February and March are invoiced by Shropshire Council in April and May. Unfortunately a response had not been received from the internal auditors in time for the meeting but she would report back to the Town Council as soon as she had received a response.

The second action point relating to alternative methods of payment of the Mayor's allowance were discussed under agenda item 8.

**Resolved:- to note the report and await response from internal auditor in relation to the need to restate the 2016-17 accounts.**

**5 Health and Safety – for update on any outstanding issues.**

Cllr Granger requested guidance on what to do if the Groundsman did not call in at his agreed time as per the lone working procedure. She stated that this was especially important for Councillors to have if they were providing contact cover when the Clerk was not available

**Resolved:- to seek advice from Shropshire Council Health and Safety Team to develop a cascade plan.**

**6 Policy Review – to review the following policies**

**a) Investment Policy.**

**Resolved:- to recommend adoption of the updated policy.**

**b) Business Continuity Plan.**

**Resolved:- to recommend adoption of the plan.**

**c) Data Retention Policy.**

It was reported that in preparation for the start date of the General Data Protection Regulations the Town Council's Data Retention Policy had been reviewed and updated. The Clerk reported that the policy would reviewed from time to time.

It was agreed that shredding would be a sufficient method of disposal of confidential waste.

**Resolved:- that once amendments were made to disposal methods to recommend adoption of the updated policy.**

**d) Mayoral Policy – to consider drafting of**

A discussion took place on the need to draft a Mayoral Policy to act as a guide for incoming Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's as well as staff members.

**Resolved:- to recommend drafting of a Mayoral Policy.**

**e) Standing Orders - to consider NALC briefing on changes to model standing orders.**

**Resolved:- to recommend that the updated standing orders are considered at the May meeting of the council.**

## **7 General Data Protection Regulations**

### **a) Officer report – for consideration**

The Town Council's Action Plan along with its progress along the 12 steps to Compliance as outlined by the Information Commissioners Office were considered.

**Resolved:- to recommend the following;**

**That the Council addresses the appointment of a Data Protection Officer once options are further clarified. In the interim the Council appoint the Town Clerk as Interim Data Protection Officer for the Council and to review this arrangement once new guidance is produced.**

**The Clerk is appointed Data Protection Compliance Officer for The Town Council.**

### **b) Data audit – for consideration.**

The Clerk presented the data audit and explained that this was a dynamic document and that new information was to be added to it as when needed

**Resolved:- to recommend adoption of the data audit.**

### **c) Draft Policies – for consideration.**

**Resolved:- to recommend adoption of the following policies and forms;**

**Data Breach reporting form**

**Subject access policy and form**

**Privacy notice**

**Information and data protection policy**

## **8 Mayor's allowance – to consider policy for payment of.**

Cllr Glover left the meeting at 3.20

The Clerk reported that the internal auditor's had recommended that the Town Council manages the Mayor's allowance in a different way to suggested in the report with the bulk of the allowance being reimbursed following presentation of receipts. A discussion took place on the need for transparency across the Council and that the Mayor's allowance was no exception to this. Councillors considered that the reimbursement method of payment would provide a level of transparency for the public whilst at the same time ensuring that the Mayor is properly reimbursed for the work carried out whilst undertaking civic duties. A question was raised about the complexities of keeping receipts when Mayor's had very busy lives and that this could also add to the workload of Town Council staff.

**Resolved:- to recommend the following conditions for the management of the Mayor's Allowance**

**That the Mayors Allowance is retained by the Town Council and the Mayor reimbursed for reasonable receipted expenditure incurred specifically as a result of the office of Town Mayor e.g.**

- **Cost of tickets to civic events within Shropshire and close neighbouring local authorities.**
- **Reasonable travel expenses to civic events within Shropshire and close neighbouring local authorities.**

- Postage and stationary.
- Expenditure on civic events.
- Where the Deputy Town Mayor represents the Town Council, in the absence of the Town Mayor, they may draw down funding from the receipted element of the Town Mayor's allowance.

Payment of claims should generally be transacted at the Monthly meetings of the Town Council, all claims must be submitted at least quarterly.

That the Town Council set the amount of expenditure that will not require a receipt and where an explanation of would be sufficient.

Any unspent balances of the Mayor's allowance at the end of February each year are paid to the Mayor via the Town Council's payroll and subject to Tax and NI.

## 9 Training

a) **Cemetery Training** – to receive a report of training course held.

It was reported that the training course was very informative, two members of staff and one councillor had attended and the course had made a small income for the Council.

**Resolved:-** to note.

b) **Staff training** – to consider request for Clerk to attend SLCC Leadership in Action Conference 6/6/18- 7/6/18

**Resolved:-** to approve.

c) **Councillor Training** To review progress on councillor training plan. The training plan was reviewed and it was

**Resolved:-** that the Clerk would;

- Contact the Monitoring Officer to establish progress on the code of conduct CD that was to be developed as a training tool.
- To seek quotes from trainers on planning training to look specifically at how to respond effectively to planning applications
- To seek quotes for a training course for councillors on Local Council Finance, Budget Setting and Accountability.

## 10 Staffing

a) **Clerks leave request** – for consideration.

**Resolved:-** to approve the Clerk's request for 3 weeks annual leave to be taken in August 2018

## 11 Date and time of next meeting – to note.

**Resolved:-** to set a provisional date of the next meeting as Tuesday 10.7.18 time to be confirmed.

Meeting ended 15.45

Chairman.....