

Minutes of a Meeting of the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee held on Wednesday 20th April 2016 at 10 a.m. in The Eckford Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem

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

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

Resolved:-to receive the following apology

Cllr J Murray

- 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.

| Councillor | Item | Dispensation |
|---|---|---|
| Shropshire Councillors Cllr Mellings and Cllr Dee | Twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council | Dispensation previously granted to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council |

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 Audit & Corporate Governance Committee held on 10th February 2016.

Resolved:-that the minutes of a meeting of this Committee held on 10th February 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

- 4 **Progress Report** – to receive progress report on items raised at previous meeting.

Resolved:-to note the report.

- 5 **Accounts** –

a) **2015-16 year end** - to receive 4th quarter budget report. The draft year end figures were presented and considered It was noted that these were not the final accounts as they are due to be closed by RBS later in May as part of the external audit preparations. Cllr Mellings reported that although there was a deficit in the budget a large amount of urgent unbudgeted additional expenditure had been identified throughout the year including streetlighting works and the installation of a fire alarm at the Butler Sports Centre.

Resolved:-to note the report.

b) **Insurance** - to review the Town Council's insurance levels. The insurance levels were reviewed and it was

Resolved:-to note the levels with no changes recommended.

- 6 **Health and Safety** – To discuss the Town Council's Health and Safety policies and procedures and consider services that Shropshire Council can offer to assist with Health and Safety advice and guidance.

A discussion took place on the need for specialist advice and support to review the Town Council's Health and Safety policies and procedures. The Town Clerk reported that she had received a very competitive quote from Shropshire Council to provide the following

- Designated officer time to carry out site visits to view services and facilities run by the Town Council and undertake a review of current H&S policies and procedures and associated documentation.
- Develop an action plan as a result of the review.
- Access to H & S telephone support helpline (for 1 year).
- Access to H & S training at a reduced cost.

Resolved:-to recommend that the Town Council approve the quote provided by Shropshire Council to provide Health and Safety support on a 1 year trial.

7 Risk Assessments– to review and discuss the following;

- Groundsman's Risk Assessments.
- COSSH Risk Assessments.

Resolved:-to recommend adoption of the risk assessments and COSSH Assessments.

8 Town Clerk 6-month appraisal – to set date.

Resolved:-that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman undertake the Town Clerk's appraisal by the end of May.

9 Training update – for discussion.

A discussion took place on the need to undertake a review of the skills and training needs of councillors. Cllr Mellings reported that he would draft a questionnaire in order to start the skills audit of existing councillors and that training needs could be identified from this.

A wider discussion took place on the delivery of training to councillors and ways of reducing costs through joint working. This led onto discussions over the role the Town Council could play in supporting neighbouring smaller parishes who may not have the capacity to deliver training in order to raise standards locally within the sector.

Resolved:-that the Town Clerk hold a meeting with Clerks from neighbouring parishes to discuss the delivery of training locally and joint working.

10 Town Council Elections 2017 – To consider strategy to promote the 2017 Town Council elections.

Following a discussion it was agreed that this would fall under the remit of the Communications Working Party to develop a draft strategy to promote the elections and to ensure people are interested in standing as candidates.

11 Date and time of next meeting – to agree.

Resolved:-that for the year 2016-17 subject to room availability the future committee meetings of the Audit and Corporate Governance committee would take place on
14.00 Tuesday 21st June
14.00 Tuesday 16th August
14.00 Tuesday 18th October

14.00 Tuesday 6th December
14.00 Tuesday 14th February 2017
14.00 Tuesday 18th April 2017

**12 Closed session –
Exclusion of press and public**

To resolve: That in accordance with s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the following items to be considered involves the likely disclosure of confidential information.

Resolved:-to exclude press and public (none present).

Staff Salaries - to consider incremental pay award as per staff contracts and staff salary changes following introduction of the living wage.

Resolved:-to recommend approval of incremental pay award from April 2016 for Town Clerk as per contract.

Resolved:-to note that as all salary scales are already above the living wage there is no need to alter staff salaries following its introduction.

Meeting ended 11.45