

TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee held on Monday 1st September 2014 at 7.00 pm in the Council Committee Room, 4 York Road, Torpoint.

PRESENT: - Councillor Mrs. R A Southworth (Chairman), M N Pearn (Town Mayor), B Hobbs, Miss J L Kinsman and Mrs. J M Martin plus the Town Clerk with the Assistant Town Clerk in attendance.

41-14FGP Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors M J Crago (Deputy Town Mayor), J F Creek and Mrs. C I A Trueman.

42-14FGP Declarations of Interest relating to items on the Agenda

None.

43-14FGP Minutes of the previous meeting

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 30th June 2014 are taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman subject to the inclusion of Councillor L E Keise as "also present".

44-14FGP Matters arising from the minutes

a) Torpoint and Rame Youth Project:-

Pursuant to minute 31-14FGP (a) receipt was reported of further correspondence from this organisation containing accounts, brief information on the reason for the request and confirmation of support from a parish council on the Rame peninsula. The information was in response to a letter sent from this Council requesting the additional information so that the application could be considered further. Councillor B Hobbs briefed the Committee on modus operandi of this organisation and how the organisation is financed. The Chairman expressed disappointment that this organisation does not seek to engage with the Council until finances are required. Councillor Mrs. J M Martin was of the opinion that this Council should primarily support voluntary organisations staffed by volunteers and suggested that requests are as a result of Cornwall Council withdrawing funding. Following further discussion it was **recommended** that consideration is given to provisionally support the request for a funding grant of £1,680 subject to further discussion at Council and additional information to be obtained by Councillor B Hobbs.

45-14FGP To Consider Policies Delegated to this Committee

a) Managing Sickness Absence:-

Members considered the proposed Managing Sickness Absence (as circulated). Note was taken that additional policies were required to which the Clerk replied that the Council were considering the additional HR policies to compliment this policy. Following further discussion it was **recommended** that the policy is adopted by the Council subject to the outstanding policies referred to in the Managing Sickness Absence policy are considered and adopted by the Council.

46-14FGP To consider the Council Business Risk Management Plan

a) Debtors/Creditors and Overtime/Casual Hours.

It was **resolved** that both the above items were taken with the Public and Press Excluded due to the commercial sensitivity and matters relating to staff contracts (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) and discussions are contained in the confidential minute appended to these minute.

b) Insurance Schedule:-

Members considered the insurance schedule that this Council has effected with Zurich Insurance. The Clerk firstly outlined the key parameters within which the Council worked. These are also contained within the Council Finance Risk Policy and the methodology of how the amounts were calculated. Receipt was reported of a valuation of the Skateboard Park equipment of £44,350 from the Inspection Company. The Clerk informed the meeting that the insurance valuation on the Fixed Asset Register as being £85,344 as the cost of the equipment and installation together with the inflationary increase. Following discussion on this matter it was **recommended** that the Council retain the current insurance value of £85,344.

c) Asset Register:-

Members considered the asset register as presented to the Council as part of the financial accounts. The Clerk confirmed that the insurance valuations have been agreed by Council as part of the financial accounts. The Assistant Town Clerk reported that together with the Chairman of the Asset Management and Localism Committee an inspection of fixed assets will be undertaken shortly.

d) Proposed Photocopier Lease:-

The Assistant Town Clerk presented a proposed variation to the current lease arrangement. It was noted that the current lease had a further 2 years left and the proposal was for a smaller copier (less the finisher that was primarily for booklets) and a reduction in costs in the region of £75 per quarter. The Assistant Town Clerk expanded on the benefits of a proposed new contract explaining that the finisher was rarely used. However to move to the proposed new lease would result in extending the current arrangements with a new lease of 5 years. Councillor B Hobbs observed and asked if the Council wished to add another 3 years to the lease in a restricted market when in 2 years' time the Council could go to onto the open market to obtain a new lease with further competition. Councillor Hobbs suggested that the Council retain the current arrangements. After further discussion it is **recommended** that the Council retain the current photocopier lease arrangements.

47-14FGP Items referred to this Committee

a) Financial Regulations (Revision).

The Committee considered the revised Financial Regulations following a recommendation from the External Auditor to undertake the review of the current regulations. The External Auditor had drawn attention to examples of best practice regulations that included procedures for Internal Audit, internal systems of control and the newly implemented legislation allowing debit and credit cards together with internet banking. The Clerk confirmed that the revised Financial Regulations have been produced as a result of best practice within local councils, principal authority and the guidance issued in the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils (2014). Members considered the document and drew attention to the following amendments:-

- i) The current para 6.4 is deleted as a duplication of para 6.3. The current para 6.5 therefore becomes para 6.4.
- ii) In para 8.5(b) reference to "5.6" below should be amended to read "8.6" below.
- iii) In para 14.1 v) the titles Chairman and Vice Chairman are deleted to be replaced by the titles Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.
- iv) In the Best Value Statement para 4 the words Financial Officer is added to word Responsible.

With a few minor punctuation changes it is **recommended** subject to the amendments in i) – iv) above the Financial Regulations as presented are adopted by this Council.

b) Banking Arrangements:-

Following consideration of the Financial Regulations in a) above and the proposed consideration of the Council Finance Policy that would also include reference to council banking arrangements this matter was deferred until the next meeting of this committee.

48-14FGP Correspondence

a) The Council considered the following applications to use Council facilities at no cost. Any approvals granted by the Committee or referred as recommendations to Council would be subject to the usual terms of reference contained in the Lettings Policy.

i) Churches Together – Benodet Park.

Noted. It was **resolved** to grant the immediate request but to **recommend** that a separate application form must be completed on each occasion an application to use facilities was being made.

ii) Community Health around Torpoint (Fashion Show in the Council Chambers).

It was **recommended** that the application is approved.

iii) Cancer Research (Fund Raising - Council Chambers).

Noted. It is **recommended** that the application is approved.

iv) Torpoint Community College

It was confirmed that the Torpoint Community College intended to use the Council Hall for the presentation of the Duke of Edinburgh awards to students. It was **resolved** to allow this use at no cost as this Council were members of the Torpoint and Rame Learning Partnership and it was in the spirit of the Torpoint Town Council led initiatives within the Lettings policy.

Receipt was reported of the accounts statement from the "Play It Again" group that used Benodet Park at no cost from the 28th July until the 1st August. The information was noted.

49-14FGP Planning Applications

a) PA14/06936 – 4, Carew Terrace, Torpoint – Proposed first floor rear extension to provide bathroom. No objections or observations.

b) PA14/07456 – 43, Maker Road, Torpoint – Proposed single storey extension. No objections or observations.

50-14FGP Accounts for payment

It was resolved to confirm that the invoices paid in August 2014 (as appended to these minutes) were approved. The Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk responded to questions from members prior to approving payment.

51-14FGP Date of next meeting

Tuesday 30th September 2014.

52-14FGP Any business that has been disclosed to the Chairman and members prior to the meeting.

None.

53-14FGP Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was **resolved** to exclude the Public and Press as items to be discussed involved occupiers and payments, staffing requests and staffing contracts (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960). The minute is listed as confidential and appended to these minutes.

Meeting closed at 8.42pmChairman