



EYE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee

Thursday 1st February 2018

Eye Town Hall @ 1:00 pm

Present: Cllrs Evitt (Chair), Gould, Walker, Robins, Blake, Burke, Byles, Wendy Alcock (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

All members of the committee present.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Burke all in agreement.

3. Chairs Actions

Nothing to report.

4. Staffing

To receive an update on office line management

4.1 The annual appraisal has been completed with the caretaker and a new work schedule had been agreed with him whilst the Town hall had no hirers. **Action** - Clerk to send work plan to F&G

4.2 Project Co-ordinator – Cllr Evitt had received the report on current workloads and commitment. No issues reported, very pleased with the outputs being achieved.

4.3 No issues were reported on the Town Clerks performance. Councilors were more than happy with the work completed by the clerk in all areas of work. It was noted that the annual appraisal was still outstanding. The Town Clerks contract to reflect the change of hours has been agreed and signed. Cllr Byles reported that the clerk had queried contractual arrangements for jury service and compassionate leave. A clause has been included in the Clerks contract for jury service and Cllr Byles will be writing a policy to cover both jury service and compassionate leave for all staff.

4.4 Admin Assistant – The current contract for the Admin Assistant is currently up to the 30th April 2018. Budget provision has been made in 2018/19 to allow for the implementation of the Cemetery Management System.

Proposal to extend the contract of the Admin Assistant by a further 12 weeks to the 20th July 2018 to assist with the implementation of the Cemetery Management System.

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Burke all in agreement.

4.5 The Street Carer has requested to sell one week's annual leave. This has historically been approved by Council. The Street Carer still takes the minimum required annual leave of 4 weeks as per European Working time directive and the cost of replacing the Street Carer for one week is more expensive than the annual leave payment received.

To approve payment of 14 hours annual leave to the Street Carer.

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Blake all in agreement.

4.6 To approve the annual bursary of £120 to the Mace Bearer –

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Byles all in agreement.

4.7 The National Minimum and Living Wages increase have been agreed by Government at £7.83 per hour from 01/04/2018. The Street Carer's hourly rate is based on the agreed hourly rate recharged by MSDC. This is usually increased by the same amount as the national minimum and living wage giving a new hourly rate of £8.26.

Proposed to adopt the National Minimum and Living Wage of £7.83 per hour for ancillary staff and agree £8.26 per hour for the Street Carer from the 1st April 2018.

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Robins all in agreement.

5. Finance

The budget monitoring report @ 25.1.2018 as supplied by the Town Clerk was discussed. In general, the budget has been well managed overall. Action for Clerk to review negative variances and propose virements from existing budgets to cover shortfalls at March meeting.

6. Governance

6.1 To discuss the requirements for the Data Protection Bill – GDPR and decide resolution to Council

There is still much confusion around the new Data Protection Bill which comes into effect on the 25th May and the requirements for the Council to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO). Committee agreed that more information is required as conflicting advice is being received from SALC and the LCPAS. The cost of provision of a DPO from SALC is considerably more than the budget provision based on previous estimate.

6.2 The current asset register was produced including capital purchases during the last financial year. The register was discussed and confirmed as containing all assets owned by the Council.

Proposal to review and approve the revised asset register dated February 2018.

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Burke all in agreement.

6.3 The Internal Audit Report for Quarter 3 to the 31st December 2017 as previously circulated was discussed. It was noted that there have been significant improvements to the internal controls by the Clerk and she was commended for her work.

The recommendations within the report were acknowledged. The completion of the Annual Governance Statement for 2017/18 in relation to the Town Hall re-roofing and contractual issues were discussed. The internal auditor highlighted that in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) will require the Council to confirm that *“all reasonable steps were taken to assure ourselves that no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the authority to conduct its business or manage its finances”*. The Council would not be able to answer Yes to this question but could, in mitigation provide an attachment to the 2017/18 AGAR detailing the circumstances of the award of the re-roofing contract, including a copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the 15th August 2017, in order to mitigate the risk of External Auditors issuing a Qualified Audit Opinion for the year 2017/18.

Action – Cllr Gould agreed to draft a mitigating statement for inclusion with the AGAR.

7. Documents (to include policies, procedures and protocols)

- Data Protection Policy
- Risk Management Policy

The Policies as stated above were reviewed and agreed by the Committee.

Proposal to approve and adopt the Data Protection Policy.

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Walker all in agreement.

Proposal to approve the review of the Risk Management Policy

Proposed by Cllr Evitt seconded by Cllr Walker all in agreement.

8. Tendering, Contracts and Agreements

- None due for review

9. Health and Safety (including risk assessments)

Cllr Byles reported the incident outside the Town Hall with lead falling from the Town Hall roof. Our quality surveyor Caston's Health and Safety specialist will carry out a review of existing practices and make proposals for improvement.

Cllr Byles reported an incident of members of the public who climbed onto the roof via the scaffolding. All possible means to cease these activities in the future will be implemented.

Wedding licence renewal – Fire Assessment must be carried out annually. Cllr Byles will start investigative process.

Meeting paused for Demonstration of Sound system available given by TMServices.

10. Grants and Donations

Request from Neighbourhood Watch in Suffolk for £50 has been received. Committee agreed to support this request under the Local Government Rating Act 1997 S31.

Proposed by Cllr Walker seconded by Cllr Robins all in agreement.

11. Reports and Updates

- Dropbox solution for shared drive between office laptops.

The Town Clerk explained the background to requiring a method of sharing files between the two office laptops to allow both the Clerk and the Admin Assistant to access the same files. The Town Council's IT Support Echo Internet have recommended a secure web-based product call Dropbox. The subscription for this can only be paid by debit/credit card hence why this has not been a viable option previously. Cllr Burke asked that there would be sufficient storage for the files required. The Clerk confirmed that Echo Internet had looked at the space taken up on the primary laptop and agreed that there would be sufficient space for current and future usage.

Agreed that an annual subscription be paid to appear on accounts payable for April 2018.

12. Correspondence and Referrals

None received

13. AOB

- Recognition of Cllr Coopers length of service – Ideas were discussed Cllr Byles to investigate and then report back to Councilors with suggested contribution.
- Democracy – Cllr Byles would like supporting papers to agenda items to be more readily available for the public. It was noted that the printing of papers would be expensive, and numbers of copies required were not always easily identifiable. The supporting papers are available on the website. Clerk agreed to trial bringing the second laptop to Council meetings to display papers as they are discussed on the agenda. Cllr Evitt commented that this would also be useful for displaying complicated Planning consultations.
- Strategic Planning Meeting – Agreed a workshop session which would be facilitated by the Project Co-Ordinator. It would be an opportunity for new Councilors to meet everyone in a less formal setting and decide the strategic direction of the Council for medium term planning. The Town Clerk will co-ordinate with the AR for an appropriate evening date Feb/Mar
- Housing Needs Assessment - Cllr Gould – presented resolution for Council to move forward as soon as the locality funding has been confirmed. The survey methodology dovetails with those used by Mid Suffolk Council.

That the Council consider approving the commissioning of Community Action Suffolk (CAS) to undertake a Housing Needs Assessment for Eye as part of the Town Council's

development of a Neighbourhood Plan. The cost of this surveys should not exceed £5000 and the commission is wholly dependent on the cost being fully met entirely from Government funding through Locality. The Council is asked to consider the commissioning of CAS without having obtained three quotations because the methodology used has specifically been designed to work with that of Mid Suffolk District Council.

Proposed by Cllr Gould seconded by Cllr Byles all in agreement.

- Costs of the Town Hall – Cllr Byles presented the paper which would go to Full Council. Phase 1 and phase 2 are now overlapping in timelines. Provision has been made for contingency which have been identified. Phase 2 has been adjusted with the new plans and extra works required to finish the project.

14. Date of next meeting -1st March 13:00