

MINUTES of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE meeting held at Felixstowe Town Hall on Wednesday 25 May 2016 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr G Newman (Chairman) Cllr D Savage
 Cllr S Bird (Vice-Chairman) Cllr A Smith
 Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Wiles
 Cllr S Gallant Cllr K Williams

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
 Mrs D Frost (Finance Administration Officer)

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr N Barber** and **Cllr Jan Garfield**.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Gallant Cllr D Savage Cllr A Smith	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of Suffolk Coastal District Council)
Cllr G Newman	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as a Members of Suffolk County Council)

31. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

There were none.

32. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the **Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 27 April 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

33. BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 APRIL 2016

Committee received the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2016.

The Clerk advised that smart electricity meters were due to be installed at Walton Community Hall which would enable closer monitoring of energy consumption.

Members queried an outstanding receipt due for the hire of Walton Hall. The Finance Administration Officer confirmed that this was being pursued through

the small claims process and undertook to advise Members as to progress with this claim subsequent to the meeting.

RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2016 be noted with no other action required at this time.

34. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Committee noted the requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 for Council to ensure that it has a sound system of internal control.

The Chairman advised that the number of F&GP meetings should be updated in the document to reflect the reduction for 2016-17.

In response to a query as to whether the petty cash limit was restrictive, the Clerk advised that the present arrangements were sufficient and, as more payments were being made via BACS, no changes were necessary at this time.

Following consideration of the Council's policy and internal control statement document it was proposed that it be recommended to Council for approval and adoption with no changes.

It was RESOLVED that, subject to correcting the reference to the number of F&GP meetings being held, the Internal Control Statement for the year ending 31 March 2017 be presented to Council and recommended for formal adoption.

35. REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS

Committee reviewed the arrangements for, and effectiveness of, Council's internal audit.

Members commented that Council received a good service from SALC and it was proposed that the arrangement be continued on the same basis for 2016/17.

It was therefore RECOMMENDED that:

- i. having reviewed the effectiveness of its internal audit, it be recorded that Council considers the arrangements to be effective; and,**
- ii. in being satisfied of the independence and competence of its internal auditor, Mr Colin Poole of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, be appointed to continue as the Council's internal auditor, undertaking a quarterly and year-end audit on the basis of the schedule provided by Appendix 9 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide 2014".**

36. BUSINESS PLAN 2016-2020

Committee considered a draft Business Plan for the Town Council.

Commenting on the layout and design of the document, Members suggested a number of visual enhancements and agreed a draft vision statement.

The Clerk advised that the Plan could be formally adopted by Council following a period of public consultation. The suggested timeframe was for Council to review the draft 8 June; public consultation from 9 July – 21 July; further consideration by F&GP on 27 July; with Council being asked to consider adopting the Plan at its 14 September meeting.

Members paid thanks to the Clerk and the Finance Administration Officer for their work in compiling the draft Business Plan.

It was RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that, subject to agreed amendments being incorporated, the finalised draft Business Plan 2016-2020 be published for a period of public consultation and considered next at the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting of 27 July.

37. COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN WORKING GROUP – UPDATE

Members considered the update from Council's Community Emergency Plan Working Group.

The principle of holding a workshop for all Town Councillors was discussed and it was agreed that the format of this would be to set out the context of the Emergency Plan and to consider local resources which might be available in the event of an emergency. It was agreed that, for practical purposes, the workshop should be held on a convenient evening on which there was no other meetings.

The role of the Emergency Coordinator was discussed and it was agreed that Cllr Steve Gallant should act as the Emergency Coordinator until such time as Council approved the CEP, Emergency Coordinator and deputies.

It was RESOLVED that a workshop for Members be held in order to brief on the context of the draft Community Emergency Plan and consider possible local resources.

38. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.44pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for 27 July 2016 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____