

**MINUTES** of the **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** meeting held at Felixstowe Town Hall on **Wednesday 24 May 2017 at 7.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllr G Newman (Chairman) Cllr D Savage  
Cllr S Bird (Vice-Chairman) Cllr A Smith  
Cllr N Barber Cllr S Wiles  
Cllr M Deacon

**OFFICERS:** Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)  
Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)

**32. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were none.

**33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr S Gallant, Cllr Jan Garfield** and **Cllr K Williams**.

**34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**35. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

There were none.

**36. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the **Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 22 March 2017** be signed by the **Chairman** as a true record.

**37. INTERNAL AUDIT – QUARTER FOUR 2016/17**

Committee considered the Internal Audit report for the period ending 30 March 2017. It was noted that the Internal Auditor had completed the relevant page of the Council's Annual Return, confirming that the Council has met all its internal control objectives.

There was one recommendation in the Quarter 4 Internal Audit Report: *'The insurance values on the asset register need to be updated to match those in the insurance documents. This helps Councillors and officers cross-reference the two sources of information to confirm that all the assets that need to be insured are included in the insurance documentation and that insurance is indeed adequate.'* Committee noted that, given the timing of the recommendation, this had been reported to Annual Council. Accordingly, the Asset Register for the year ending 31 March 2017 had been updated and approved.

Members commended staff for their work in ensuring Council's continued sound financial governance.

**It was RESOLVED that:**

- i. the report of the Internal Auditor be noted;**
- ii. that the action taken by Council in respect of the Asset Register recommendation from the Audit report be noted.**

### **38. REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS**

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

Members commented on the good service received from the SALC-appointed auditor and it was proposed that the arrangement be continued on the same basis for 2017/18, albeit half-yearly rather than quarterly.

**It was therefore RECOMMENDED to Council 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 half-yearly 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".**

### **39. ACCOUNTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 1 APRIL 2016 – 31 MARCH 2017**

Committee received the accounts report for the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 along with a report on Earmarked Reserve changes throughout the year.

**RESOLVED that the Council's financial position as at year end 2016/17 be noted with no other action required at this time.**

#### **40. BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 APRIL 2017**

Committee received the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2017.

**RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2017 be noted with no other action required at this time.**

#### **41. 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.

It was noted that the Internal Control Statement had been updated to include Committee's previous recommendation that internal audits be undertaken biannually (*Minute #347 of 2016/17 refers*) with further reference given to the approved use of electronic payment methods.

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 further changes.

**It was RESOLVED that the Internal Control Statement for the year ending 31 March 2018 be recommended to Council for formal adoption as presented.**

#### **42. BUSINESS PLAN 2016-2020 – ACTION PLAN REVIEW**

Committee reviewed the Council's Action Plan which had been updated to reflect progress against Business Plan objectives achieved to May 2017. Members expressed thanks to the Deputy Town Clerk for the thoroughness of the 29 page report and advised that the format of the Action Plan could be reviewed in order that it may be condensed. Members suggested that the plan could be made more concise, reflecting strategic aims along themes such as community investment outcomes and quality of governance.

The Clerk advised that the Action Plan review was the first step towards a review and update to the Council's full Business Plan. This would be brought back to Committee in due course for consideration together with an updated financial projection for the life of the Plan.

**It was RESOLVED that the Action Plan review be agreed as presented with no changes at this time; future iterations of the Action Plan to be condensed and streamlined on a more strategic and thematic basis.**

#### **43. LOCAL COUNCILS AWARD SCHEME WORKING GROUP – UPDATE**

Members considered the update from the Local Councils Award Scheme Working Group. It was noted that the Group was working towards resubmitting evidence required to meet the few elements raised by the LCAS Panel in order to achieve the Gold standard. The Clerk advised that once the evidence was

complete, it would be reviewed by the Working Group and distributed to Members for comments before being submitted.

**It was RESOLVED that the update from the Local Councils Award Scheme Working Group be noted.**

**44. CLOSURE**

The meeting was closed at 8.28pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for 26 July 2017 at 7.30pm.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_