



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

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Chairman: Cllr Richard Herbert
Vice Chairman: Cllr Syrie Cox
Town Clerk: Paul Beckerson



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 2nd DECEMBER 2014 AT THE LEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE, 71-73 ELM ROAD, LEIGH-ON-SEA

Present Cllrs: Patsy Ryan (Chairman), Syrie Cox, Donald Fraser, Richard Herbert, Jerry Holden (until Min 121), Pat Holden, Paul Lawrence, Carole Mulroney and Jane Ward

In Attendance: Paul Beckerson (Town Clerk)

The meeting opened at 7.30pm

106. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

107. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Caroline Parker attending a Governors Meeting.

108. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none.

109. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 4th NOVEMBER 2014

The minutes of the meeting of 4th November 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

110. PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES 21st NOVEMBER 2014 (Appendix 1 to the agenda)

There were four recommendations for approval by the Committee:

Minute 19 – Staff Handbook – Report 2441/PB (Appendix 1 to the PSC Agenda)

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** the Staff Handbook for adoption by Council subject to vetting by Vine HR regarding any changes in the law, followed by a regular review by Vine HR.

Minute 20 – Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure – Report 2439/PB (Appendix 2 to the PSC Agenda)

- The Committee **RECOMMENDED** the adoption to Council of the additional Term of Reference 4 to TR9.

That membership of the Sub-Committee will require the members to undertake training in Employment Law and Human Resources as soon as possible after their appointment as a member of the Sub-Committee, or in an election year within two months of joining the Council. A commitment will also be required to undertake refresher training as appropriate.

- The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the Town Clerk arrange an Employment Training session for all members to be held at the LCC and funded from the

Councillor Training Budget to ensure all members are cognisant of their responsibilities as employers.

- The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the Code of Conduct Complaints by Staff about Members Procedure as set out in the report is adopted and that the Town Clerk produces a flow diagram of how the various complaints procedures work together.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

111. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKING PARTY 3rd NOVEMBER 2014 – Information Report 2443/CEWP (Appendix 2 to the agenda)

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report.

112. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKING PARTY 18th NOVEMBER 2014 – Information Report 2405/CEWP (Appendix 3 to the agenda)

There was one recommendation:

Minute 5 - That a budget of £400 is agreed for the campaign outlined in the report and that the Town Clerk has the delegated authority to approve expenditure against this budget and that the budget to be taken from the Community Engagement budget head.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the recommendation and **note** the report.

Cllr Donald Fraser thanked Cllr Jane Ward for the excellent presentation and asked for it to be minuted.

113. CHRISTMAS CLOSURE 2014

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the proposal to close the office from midday on Wednesday 24th December 2014 until Friday 2nd January 2015, reopening on Monday 5th January 2015.

114. REPORT BACK ON TRAINING BY THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL – For information

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report.

115. GENERAL PURPOSES BUDGET Report 2447/GP as at 25th November 2014 (Information Report for **noting**) (Appendix 4 to the agenda)

The report was **noted**.

116. REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were none.

117. THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S FIRST INTERIM REPORT (Appendix 5 to the agenda)

A proposal was put that the Committee noted the advice but agreed to maintain the present regime as outlined in Standing Orders and Financial Regulation 6.18. Proposed Cllr Jerry Holden; seconded Cllr Pat Holden.

An amendment was put that an explanation should be appended to the proposal regarding the use of the Imprest Account and the Council debit card. Proposed Cllr Carole Mulroney; seconded Cllr Donald Fraser.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report. Having regard to the comments under "Review of Expenditure" the Committee agreed to maintain the same regime as present, as set out in Financial Regulation 6.18 (limit of £1,000 per transaction). For clarity the Imprest Account is the account for the use of the Council Debit Card.

118. LCC VAT PARTIAL EXEMPTION REPORT – Officer’s Report (Appendix 6 to the agenda)

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Council that HMRC be paid the £16,622.18 due and to take this from reserves.

The Committee **requested** that Leigh Community Centre Committee reviews the report and considers the options presented in relation to the future VAT position of the Community Centre.

119. NATIONAL STAFFING PAYRISE 2014/15 – Officer’s Report

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the rises outlined in the report and to authorise the additional payments which had been budgeted for.

120. OFFICE AND COMMITTEE BUDGETS (information Reports for **noting**)

- Office Budget Report 2448/FGP as at 25th November 2014 (Appendix 7 to the agenda)

The report was **noted**.

- Committee Income and Expenditure Report 2449/FGP as at 25th November 2014 (Appendix 8 to the agenda)

The report was **noted**.

121. DRAFT COUNCIL BUDGET 2015/16 (Appendix 9 to the agenda)

The Committee **agreed** to make the following amendments to the budget:

To add the £2,000 Neighbourhood Plan reserve into the summary sheet and adjust the value of the Strand Wharf Capital Reserve to reflect the spending in the current financial year.

A proposal was put to delete the £50,000 Capital Fund Budget in the General Purposes Budget. Proposed Cllr Jerry Holden; seconded Cllr Pat Holden.

An amended proposal was put to reduce the Capital Fund to £30,000. Proposed Cllr Richard Herbert; seconded Cllr Carole Mulroney.

On a point of order the Chairman ruled that the second proposal had the effect of negating the first. The amended proposal was therefore withdrawn.

A recorded vote was requested.

For the proposal: Cllrs Syrie Cox, Donald Fraser, Jerry Holden, Pat Holden, Paul Lawrence and Jane Ward. (6)

Against the proposal: Cllrs Richard Herbert, Carole Mulroney and Patsy Ryan. (3)

The Committee **agreed** the proposal.

A proposal was put that the LCC Budget be referred back to LCCC to consider that £30,000 be removed from the LCC Budget and put into the Capital Fund. Proposed Cllr Syrie Cox; seconded Cllr Richard Herbert.

The Committee **agreed** the proposal.

The Committee then went through each budget sheet in turn.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to refer back the T&H Budget to consider revising the £4,000 allocated to Highway Infrastructure as very little had been spent in the current year. (Proposed

Cllr Carole Mulrone; seconded Cllr Donald Fraser)

The Committee **noted** that Council had already agreed the Allotments Budget.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to refer back the LF&E Budget to consider providing capital expenditure to put Christmas Lights on ten columns in London Road. (Proposed Cllr Jerry Holden; seconded Cllr Pat Holden)

The Chairman then ruled on a point of governance regarding the earlier vote on the General Purposes Budget. That as both the General Purposes and Office Budgets had been through Council and had not been referred back; the resolution could not be reconsidered.

The Committee therefore **RESOLVED** to strike out the earlier resolution regarding the Capital Fund on the grounds that it was not a valid resolution under Standing Order 8.

Cllr Jerry Holden left the meeting

A proposal was put that LCC be asked to consider making a bid to the Capital Fund for the £50,000 Major Projects Budget. (Proposed Cllr Patsy Ryan; seconded Cllr Pat Holden)

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to LCCC that a bid be presented to F&GPC to use £50,000 from the Capital Fund to contribute to the LCCC Major Projects Budget.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Allotments Committee that they consider items of expenditure to include in the 3 year budget forecast.

122. TO NOTE INCOME AND APPROVE EXPENDITURE SINCE THE LAST MEETING

See report 2445/I&E (Appendix 10 to the agenda)

The Committee noted the income and **RECOMMENDED** the expenditure to Council.

123. BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES as at 25th November 2014 were **noted**.

124. MOTION TO EXCLUDE PUBLIC – The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the public and press be excluded and instructed to withdraw (SOs. 3(d) and 24(a) - (staffing)

125. STAFFING REVIEW – REPORT 2446/PB (Confidential Appendix 1)

The report contained four recommendations:

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Council that a Part Time Financial Administrator be recruited at a cost of 2014/14 £3219.24 and 2015/16 £10,440.48 respectively.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Council that a Part-Time Committee Clerk be recruited at a cost of 2014/15 £983.43 and 2015/16 £4,020.21 respectively.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the Committee Structure and meeting frequency be reviewed urgently.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Council that an Assistant Clerk be appointed from within the existing staff and that thought be given to appropriate training for the role – CiLCA or equivalent at a cost of 2014/15 £401.13 and 2015/16 £1,604.53 respectively.

The meeting closed at 9.58pm