

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, St Ives Town Council, held in the Committee Room, The Guildhall, St Ives on Thursday 20 July 2017 at 6.00pm

PRESENT

Chairman – Councillor R Tulley  
Vice-Chairman – Councillor C Nicholls

COUNCILLORS

Andrewes T	Henry R
Garrod H	Symons J
Glanville R	Williams T

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor J Griffin  
Councillor A Harris

OFFICERS

Town Clerk  
Facilities Manager

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received from Councillors A Mitchell and S Tanner.

F&GP.29 PUBLIC SPEAKING

None.

F&GP.30 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 6 July 2017.

F&GP.31 DECLARATION OF COUNCILLOR AND OFFICER INTERESTS

None.

F&GP.32 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman advised that the confidential report would be considered first, as the outcome of that report would influence the decision on the first.

F&GP.33 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – “That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.”

F&GP.34 **REVIEW OF STAFF & GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE TO ACCOMMODATE BUSINESS CONTINUITY OF THE FINANCE FUNCTION (Paragraphs 1,2 & 3)**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report and the accompanying recommendation that to ensure business continuity and to target the resources of the council to be most effective, it was recommended to make an appointment of two finance staff (a Finance Officer and a Finance Assistant) to carry out the strategic function and operational functions respectively. Combined, it was intended that these posts would cover the range of financial duties required. Each would have their own areas of responsibility and so could operate as a finance team, working on split days independently and able to schedule crossover periods when needed.

The Committee Chairman presented the proposal, noting that since the staff and governance structure review in November 2015, changes had been implemented and that the town council had continued to grow and to evolve, necessitating further review of the staffing capacity and roles.

During discussion, it was acknowledged that it was important to get the right cover for the finance functions which needed to be carried out, whether a full-time post or two part-time posts to make up a full-time equivalent.

It was noted that timing of the recruitment process would need to take into consideration the operational need of the council and timing against other activities of the council, such as the devolution of the library and the planned staffing structure review.

Various options were considered, with the consensus leading towards advertising for a full-time post to attract from a wider field of applicants.

**RECOMMENDED** – to Council that a full-time finance officer be appointed, with salary scale and job description to be considered when this recommendation is considered by Council.

F&GP.35 **RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** - that the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

F&GP.36 **REVIEW OF SUITABILITY OF ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report on the need to upgrade the accounts software used by the council and associated considerations, such as the reports that would be needed to be generated, timing and practicalities of implementation. The Town Clerk offered to visit neighbouring town council's currently operating two of the accounts packages to ascertain their suitability for this council.

Following discussion, it was

**RESOLVED** – that no action be taken on ordering a new finance package until an appointment was made to the Finance Officer post.