

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 5 April 2018 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

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

COUNCILLORS

Andrewes T	Mitchell A
Harris A	Symons J
Henry R	Williams T

OFFICERS

Town Clerk Facilities Manager

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received from Councillors H Garrod, R Glanville and S Tanner.

F&GP.111 PUBLIC SPEAKING

None.

F&GP. 112 MINUTES

An amendment was made to Minute F&GP.106 of the 22 March 2018 meeting. The second resolution now reads, “Additional capacity be provided for, on a temporary basis, to assist the administrative function within the support services team, to be determined by the Clerk *in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee*” (additional words in italics.)

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as a true and correct record of the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 22 March 2018 (as amended), and the Minutes of the reconvened meeting of the committee later the same day.

F&GP.113 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To further inform one of the items on the Town Clerk’s update report, it was announced that there would be a supplementary report

F&GP.114 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLOR AND OFFICER INTERESTS

Councillor Symons declared an Interest in Minute F&GP.118 (grant application – May Day) as the Chairman of St Ives Rotary, and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.

F&GP.115 TOWN CLERK’S UPDATE REPORT

The first item considered under the Clerk’s update report was:

Second Vehicle

The Facilities Manager presented the report and explained that further research had established that a better organisational and economic option would be to rescind the current lease and purchase two vehicles. Potential benefits included a cost saving over a five year period and the ability for modifications for the efficient storage of equipment.

After considering the detail of the report, it was

RECOMMENDED – to Council that

- 1) The current vehicle lease be terminated
- 2) The purchase of two vehicles at a combined cost of no more than £12,000 be approved, with funds being derived from the vehicle budget (approx. £4,000) and Reserves (approx. £8,000);
- 3) A further £500 maximum (if necessary, from Reserves) to be spent on equipping the vehicles and having the town council logo affixed to them.

The following items from the Town Clerk's report were considered:

FOG/LAG Funding – F&GP.56 – Councillors reported that FOG is no longer seeking this grant funding and so it was

RESOLVED – that this item be withdrawn from the list of actions agreed by this committee.

CCTV – Monitoring and Maintenance Contracts - F&GP.107 – the Town Clerk advised that the Police Crime Commissioner's office had confirmed that it was sufficient for their purposes for the maintenance of the system to be carried out by a fully competent company. This response had been noted. The Facilities Manager was in the process of seeking three quotes for the maintenance contract.

RESOLVED – that the Town Clerk's update report be noted.

F&GP.116 FINANCE REPORT

The Finance Report had previously been circulated, with a supplementary report on staffing costs tabled at the meeting. The Town Clerk advised that a full report on the use of Reserves in year would be included as part of the Year End accounts report to Council. Items considered included:

Income from contributors to the Decorative Lights project

The committee was advised that the contribution from BID had been confirmed for payment and that the Decorative Lights Association has also confirmed that its payment will be made in the near future.

Use of Reserves

Councillor Andrewes noted that the Facilities Committee had overseen the approval of the use of approximately £21,000 on the refurbishment of public toilets and that an amount from Reserves had also been allocated for the upgrade of the concert hall lights.

Cost of electricity at the Island Centre:

In response to previous concerns regarding the cost, the following updates were given:

- Councillor Andrewes had inspected the heating systems and established that the settings were

overly generous and included heating rooms at times when they were not in use. The Facilities Manager agreed to arrange for the settings to be changed and for energy usage to be discussed with the tenants to encourage better control of use.

- The Town Clerk advised that there had been a switch to a different energy supplier with more favourable rates which should lead to a cost saving.
- The Facilities Manager reported on unauthorised uses of the hall by authorised users, resulting in greater use of electricity and advised that steps would be taken to stop such use in future.

RESOLVED – that the Finance Report and the updates provided at the meeting, be noted.

F&GP.117 UPDATE OF RESERVES POLICY AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

In the absence of the proposer of this item (Councillor Glanville), it was

RESOLVED – that this item be deferred to the next scheduled meeting of this committee.

F&GP.118 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Councillor Symons declared an Interest in this item as the Chairman of St Ives Rotary, and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.

Applicant: St Ives Rotary – application for £500 towards May Day 2018

Consideration: the aim for this to be a fundraising and community event, with some concern that funding was requested from the town council each year, while the support of the town council was given in view of the community benefit of the event.

RESOLVED – that a grant of £500 be awarded to the applicant, for the purpose set out in the application.

F&GP.119 DATA PROTECTION

It was noted that the General Data Protection Regulations would be in force from May 2018 and that it was expected that there would need to be changes made to town council policies on records retention and in any areas where data was held. It was noted that training had been attended by the Admin Support Officer and that advice had been received from the Cornwall Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks. The Town Clerk advised that other workload pressures meant that a report on this matter had not yet been prepared.

It was noted that a report would be presented to the next scheduled meeting of the Council, if possible.

F&GP.120 INTERNAL AUDIT MEETINGS HELD SINCE LAST MEETING

Councillor Tulley reported on the recent internal audit of weddings procedures. He and Councillor Nicholls had been impressed by the processes in place which covered every stage of the booking process, and commended staff for their efforts and dedication to implementing the detailed procedures.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F&GP.121 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

F&GP.122 EXCLUSION OF 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 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.123 STAFFING MATTERS (Paragraphs 1,2 & 3)

The Chairman advised that a draft Deputising and Acting Up Policy had been written by the Town Clerk had been withdrawn for further work to be done on it. Although a decision was not required at the meeting, Councillors views were invited both at the meeting and prior to the Council meeting, where the draft policy will be presented.

A report from the Town Clerk was circulated which set out considerations in relation to the staffing situation. It was noted that various circumstances had led to the current position and that the issue requires councillors and officers to work collaboratively. The Chairman noted that short and longer-term measures would help, and that extra staff cover would be expected to result in a necessary over-spend on the staffing budget for administration.

RESOLVED – that the Committee Chairmen are each asked to go through their committees’ areas of responsibility to determine what work within their service area could be put on hold over the next 6 months; and

It was AGREED – that the Town Clerk will present a Deputising and Acting Up Policy to the next meeting of the Council.

F&GP.124 DEBTORS AND CREDITORS (Paragraph 3)

The report circulated prior to the meeting was noted. An update on the current status of various debtors was noted. There were a number of minor sums (i.e. mostly under £1) that would be written off as part of the year-end procedure.

RESOLVED – that Invoice CH0493 (for £150) be written off as a bad debt.

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Chairman