

F&GP.163 FINANCE REPORTS

The Clerk took questions on the finance report, which was presented to the committee for the first time in the new format. She explained that reports from the new accounts software package were comprehensive but that there was less flexibility to interrogate the system at meetings, and so questions are best raised before meetings if answers are required before the report can be accepted.

After discussion, it was agreed that monthly reporting to direct to councillors would be useful and not onerous for staff. The monthly reports will be emailed, and will keep councillors apprised of the financial situation between meetings. Normal reports to committees will continue to be made. The Clerk advised that the budget versus actuals report will give councillors the same information as a cashflow report when the projected budget figures were included from the October meetings onwards each year.

Councillors expressed concern about the outstanding debt owed to the council by the Police and Crime Commissioner for the CCTV installation. The Clerk reported that the PCC's office had, stated that the funding was dependent on conditions that the council had still not received. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should contact the PCC's office and require that the outstanding debt is paid without further delay.

The Chairman asked members to refer any further comments or questions about the report to the Clerk outside of the meeting.

F&GP.164 PROPOSED REVISED JOB DESCRIPTION FOR SUPPORT SERVICE MANAGER POST

The Clerk tabled a revised job description from that circulated with the agenda, having included duties relevant to the post which did not significantly change the remit of the job. Broadly speaking, the proposed role is similar to that carried out by the last Support Services Manager, but without duties passed permanently to other staff and now including new roles to address some of the issues raised by the staffing review group earlier in the year. Further to the original draft, the postholder will be responsible for the promotion of the Guildhall, will be Designated Premises Supervisor and have responsibility for civic functions.

The Clerk said that staff were not able to sustain the present workload without the Support Services Manager post being filled quickly – which would probably take at least 3 months.

Members felt that the job description was too large and should be made more interesting and slimmer. It was also proposed that the job should be retitled, "Assistant Town Clerk". It was pointed out that the Clerk does not have a designated deputy, and that this puts the council at risk. If the Clerk is absent for any period of time, no other officer could fulfil the role without formal training and delegation by the council.

The Chairman was asked to explain why the report was supported by the Mayor and Clerk but not him. He stated that he believed the Rolley Report should be implemented and also felt that the Town Clerk should be relieved of financial duties to concentrate on other area. The Clerk assured members that the RFO role was not onerous and that she and the Finance Officer had established a good working relationship that would see more responsibility passed across to the latter over time. She cautioned that she would not want to lose the grip that has been established on council finances, and against giving such responsibility to a new appointee who would have much else to learn and take on.

A councillor regretted that the job description suggested little change and that the work of the staffing

review group had been a waste of time. The Clerk said that the job description reflected some of the proposals that that group had made – including better communications between the council and the community and better marketing of council facilities.

The committee agreed that there is a pressing need to fill the post, and accepted changes to the proposed job description viz. changing “assist” to “support” in paragraphs 14 and 16; simplifying the title; including the role of “Proper Officer” in the Clerk’s absence; and making the role more interesting than it currently sounds.

The Clerk made the case for having the job evaluated by South West Councils, stressing the need for consistency and emphasising SWC’s experience providing the service to local councils across the region. Cornwall Council’s HR department was mentioned as an alternative evaluator. However, it was noted that the town council’s staff roles would have had been variously evaluated by three organisations if the local authority’s assistance was sought. Members felt that Chris Rolley Associates had a good understanding of the town council and councils in general, and felt that that would make its recommendations reliable.

RESOLVED – that

- 1) The revised job description be approved, incorporating the changes made by the committee;
- 2) Chris Rolley Associates are commissioned to evaluate the role, with South West Councils agreed as the fall-back position, if necessary;
- 3) The reviewed job description and salary scale be brought to Council on 18 October for approval and advertising;
- 4) A minute-taker be appointed by the Clerk to attend all committee and council meetings, the temporary post to be reviewed in six months’ time.

F&GP.165 **EXTENSION OF CONTRACT FOR TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

Having considered the report circulated prior to the meeting, a vote was taken on this matter without discussion.

RESOLVED – that the postholder is retained until the appointment of the Support Services Manager, and is given a guaranteed four weeks’ minimum notice.

F&GP.166 **JOB DESCRIPTION FOR NEW POSTS IN THE COMBINED LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE**

Councillor Andrewes advised the committee that the job descriptions were the product of a lot of hard work by the Task and Finish Group and urged the committee to ratify them without delay. It was agreed that all the job titles should have the standard prefix of “Library and Information Service.”

RECOMMENDED – to Council that the job descriptions and evaluated pay grades for the LIS Manager, Deputy Manager and Information Assistants are adopted for staff in the new Library and Information Service.

F&GP.167 **FUNDING OF £10,000 FOR SKATEPARK PROJECT**

Members were pleased to be able to approve the grant to the Skatepark Project, but expressed unease about tying the payment to the production of invoices. It was noted that the Skatepark Project Group would not be able to claim VAT exemption and could consider alternative governance arrangements to address this.

RESOLVED – that

- 1) The Skatepark project group be advised that the town council gives assurance that £10,000 will be given to replace the skate park at Palemon Best Recreation Ground on the basis of the project presented to Council earlier in 2018;
- 2) That payment for the grant funding will be made on the signing of the contract between the Skatepark Project and the chosen contractor.

F&GP.168 BY-ELECTION FOR ST IVES WEST: ISSUE OF POLL CARDS

The Clerk reminded the committee that the cost of an election in the ward would be in the region of £5,000 in addition to the £1,200 quoted in the report for poll cards. The committee agreed that all reasonable efforts should be made to promote the local democratic process.

RESOLVED – that poll cards be requested for the forthcoming St Ives West by-election.

F&GP.169 REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

This paper was withdrawn and will be considered at the next meeting of this committee.

F&GP.170 PROPOSALS FOR PURCHASING POLICY

Councillors Nicholls and Williams each declared an interest in this item (due to their involvement in local retail) and withdrew from the meeting while it was discussed.

The Facilities Manager reported that efforts are made to purchase locally, but said that staff needed guidance regarding purchases that could be made locally, but are costlier or take more time to deliver. Members expressed sympathy with the general tenor of the proposal and acknowledged its merits, but agreed that greater clarity is required.

RESOLVED – that officers develop a purchasing policy that promotes the sourcing of goods and services locally whenever it makes good business sense to do so.

F&GP.171 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Application: Lelant Village Fayre (application for funding for chairs and booking Artists)

Councillor Harris declared an interest and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this application.

Considerations:

That the group has a substantial income and there is insufficient benefit to the community to justify the committee giving the requested amount.

Decision: that a grant of £100 be made.

Application: National Coastguard Institution (application for replacing windscreen wipers)

Considerations:

That the local station raises funds that are taken by the NCI head office; and that the request could not be considered by the committee in the absence of a balance sheet.

Decision: that the National Coastguard Institution is advised to resubmit its application with an up-

to-date balance sheet, as required by the council's grants policy.

Application: Cornwall Animal Hospital (funding towards new Animal Rehab Centre)

Considerations:

That the £400 requested is insignificant in terms of the CAH charity as a whole and could be better used in smaller, local projects where less money is available.

Decision: that the request for funding is declined.

Application: Lelant Village Pride (funding towards environmental projects in Lelant)

Councillor Harris declared an interest and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this application.

Considerations:

That the project appears worthwhile but the request is vague and comes too early in the group's formation. The committee looks forward to hearing more about the group's plans in the future.

Decision: that a grant of £250 be made.

RESOLVED – that the grants be awarded as set out above.

F&GP.172 **INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE**

The Chairman advised the next internal audit by councillors would take place on 7 October. All committee members will, in time, attend an internal audit meeting alongside the committee chairman who attends all of them. The Clerk advised that the internal audit report had been received from David Gallie, who had found no fault with the council's financial processes and has signed off the Internal Auditor certificate in the council's Annual Return.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F&GP.173 **CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

F&GP.174 **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.175 **JOB EVALUATION OF POSTS (Paragraph 3)**

Members sought assurance that officers should be present for discussion of this item. The Clerk said that the Society of Local Council Clerks had advised that the nature of the discussion meant officer attendance was allowable.

Members agreed that the Clerk's and Facilities Manager's roles had changed and should be re-evaluated. Errors in the report about the Facilities Managers' responsibilities were noted. Members felt that the revised job descriptions should be brought before the committee before they were sent

for evaluation, and that the work should be commissioned from Chris Rolley Associates (and from South West Councils if Chris Rolley could not undertake the work).

RESOLVED – that revised job descriptions for the Facilities Manager and Town Clerk should be brought to the next meeting of this committee for agreement before being evaluated by Chris Rolley Associates.

F&GP.176 OUT OF HOURS COVER (FIRE AND SECURITY) (Paragraph 3)

Members agreed that the service proposed by PJI Security gave the Council greater security and offered value-for-money.

RESOLVED – that PJI Security is engaged to provide a keyholder service to alarms sounding in the Guildhall, Market House and Island Centre, and in the public library when that building transfers to town council ownership.

F&GP.177 DEBTORS AND CREDITORS (Paragraph 3)

The Clerk updated on debts listed in the report but paid since production of the report to committee, and advised that many debtors should not be considered to be a concern as experience and the council's relationship with them strongly suggested that the debts will be paid. A number of debtors had been invoiced well in advance (eg weddings in 2019/2020) and so although overdue in the accounts, these monies would be expected to be received well in advance of the actual ceremony and/or room booking. The Clerk asked that two, small debts relating to disputes over weddings fees should be written-off.

RESOLVED – that

- 1) The report, actions taken and future actions given in the report are noted.
- 2) The two small debts relating to weddings be written-off.

Meeting closed at 9.22pm.

Chairman