

F&GP.152 CLOSURE OF THE LIBRARY FOR REFURBISHMENT WORKS

The Clerk reported that funding for the works outlined in the report came from a variety of sources. Councillors expressed satisfaction at the design work and their thanks for all staff who had worked hard to get the LIS transfer to this point. Councillor Andrewes was singled out for particular praise in view of his input throughout the planning and transfer of the library. Councillors noted the need to upgrade the rest of the building, and the Facilities Manager listed completed and upcoming works. The Library Partnership Group is due to meet in early April and will be able to draw on the views of the wider public.

RESOLVED – to note the report.

F&GP.153 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

Councillor Glanville reported that he had carried out two internal audits and had been impressed by the information the system provided and the Finance Officer's grasp of the council's finances. Councillor Henry agreed to attend the next internal audit on 28 February.

RESOLVED – to note the report.

F&GP.154 GRANT APPLICATION

One, tabled application was put in front of the committee that had been delivered after the agenda had been sent. It was noted that it did not contain all of the information required for a decision to be made.

RESOLVED – that the applicant be advised to resubmit a complete application for future consideration.

F&GP.155 FINANCE REPORT

Speaking to the report, the Clerk asked Members to note that staffing costs in the administration cost centre are in budget, expected to be around £150,000 against an annual budget of £160,000. A by-election had caused an overspend that would be met from General Reserves. The IT and Telephones budget line in the Administration cost centre was over budget but would be reduced when the year-end recharge to the VIC cost centre had been carried out.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F&GP.156 REVIEW OF EARMARKED AND GENERAL RESERVES

The Clerk reported that current reserves are at the lower end of the recommended levels and advised that the council needed to make sure that its expenditure allowed reserves to be maintained. Members accepted this but felt that the council needed to be aware of the needs of local people – some of whom are unable to create reserves from their own finances.

It was said that ear-marked reserves should be for specific matters and be time-limited. Following this rationale, some long-standing earmarked reserves should be dissolved and

placed in the general reserve. It was agreed that this was a matter that deserved closer attention and it was agreed that it should be considered in-depth at the next meeting of this committee. The Clerk said that it would be helpful to have any queries or comments made in advance of the meeting so that her paper was as useful and meaningful as possible. It was also agreed that the Community & Environment and Facilities committees should review the earmarked reserves falling within their remit.

RESOLVED – that

- 1) A paper be brought to the next meeting to review the earmarked reserves in detail;
- 2) The chairmen of the Community and Environment and Facilities committees be asked to include a review of those committee's earmarked reserves at their next committee meetings.

F&GP.157 **LETTING ARRANGEMENTS**

Members discussed the soon-to-be vacant space currently occupied by the Visitor Information Centre. It was noted that town council staff should have the space that they need to work efficiently, and that the Guildhall had no viable reception area. In the discussion on this topic, Members explored the potential to utilise the larger (VIC) office space to accommodate the Support Services team of staff, and to consider instead letting out the office spaces which would be vacated if the team were to vacate them.

RECOMMENDED – to Council that

- 1) the current VIC office space be converted into town council office space and reception, and that the two small offices on the ground floor be rented out; and
- 2) a report be presented to Council to seek approval for use of Reserve funds, if necessary, to reconfigure the space, and purchase any necessary furniture and equipment to set up the space as a working office and reception area.

F&GP.158 **SCALE OF CHARGES 2019/2020**

Councillor Andrewes declared an interest and left the meeting during discussion of the charges for the hire of the hall by the Farmers' Market.

It was noted that the craft market in the Island Centre brings in the majority of the income of that building – but meant that other hirers were potentially being put off from doing so by the craft market's needs.

Members considered the draft scale of charges circulated prior to the meeting, and agreed that they should be recommended to council for approval, with the following additions/amendments:

- i. the charge for hiring the Island Centre should be £10 per hour, with a 10% reduction for block-booking, and £10 for overnight hire;
- ii. for Guildhall hall hires, the hourly rate after midnight, bar charges and the damage deposit will not be offered at concessionary rate;
- iii. Market hire charges, to be £180 (amended from £160) to regularise the charge before bulk discount applied;

- iv. Discounts for regular hirers: a regular hire discount of 10% to be allowed for block bookings of 6 or more sessions at the Guildhall and at the Island Centre
- v. Library and Information Service charges:
 - a. Hire of Greta Williams community room: £10 per hour with part hours after the first hour charged at £5 for up to half an hour. A £20 supplement to be charged for commercial hires of the room if any of the booking is out of standard opening hours.
 - b. Wall hung banner adverts - £600 per annum, with officer discretion able to be applied in the first, trial, year.

RECOMMENDED – that the Scale of Charges for 2019/20 be recommended to Council, with the amendments agreed at this meeting.

F&GP.159 **STAFFING APPOINTMENTS**

The Clerk reported that rotas had been drawn up for Library and Information Service (LIS) staff, despite the difficulties imposed by the various permutations of terms and conditions of TUPE'd staff and those joining the team from the former visitor information service. A working pattern had been developed which incorporated the wishes of all of the individuals involved. She stated that staff have now received letters informing them that they begin their new roles in the LIS on February 11.

Members agreed that the temporary administrative assistant should be kept on for a period to be decided by the Town Clerk in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman of this committee.

The merits of setting up a staffing sub-committee were debated. Members agreed that it could benefit a small group to give specific staffing matters detailed attention. The Clerk advised that a

RESOLVED – that the Clerk, in consultation with the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman to determine the terms on which to extend the contract of the temporary administrative assistant.

F&GP.160 **CHANGES TO NATIONAL PAYSCALES IN 2019/2020 (Paragraphs 1, 2 & 3)**

The Facilities Manager withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Town Clerk presented the report and explained the changes to the National Joint Council (NJC) agreed pay spine which formed the basis of the payscale system of the town council. It was reported that usually the spinal column points for each job were directly aligned to new pay rates in the coming financial year but that this year there had been changes to the nationally agreed pay spine which meant that some paygrades had merged and others had split. There was therefore there need to decide how to apply the new payscales to the town council's staff structure.

Following discussion on this, and associated matters, it was

RESOLVED – that

- 1) the contents of the report be noted;
- 2) the principle is approved that, when transferring to the new pay spine, increments will be applied first, and then pay points will be assimilated to the new pay spine
- 3) having noted that SCP 1 will next year be paid at approximately the same rate as Living Wage Foundation minimum wage, the town council will continue to apply the LWF minimum wage rate to those posts already paid at that rate.

RECOMMENDED – to Council that, where there are changes in pay grades after the increment and assimilation exercise is complete, the new pay grades should be approved, and existing post holders advised of changes relevant to their pay grading.

F&GP.161 **DEBTORS AND CREDITORS** (Paragraph 3)

The current list of creditors and debtors was noted. Members noted that many debtors appeared to be overdue but were no cause for concern, being people who had paid deposits on weddings or hall hires for which full payment is not yet required as the initial agreement had been signed far in advance of the hire date.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F&GP.162 **PROPOSED RELOCATION OF CCTV CAMERA** (Paragraph 3)

The meeting considered correspondence between the facilities Manager and the owner of a building in the town on which a public realm CCTV camera is located. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED – that arrangements be made for the removal of the CCTV camera before March 1st, and its relocation in the vicinity once the necessary permissions have been received.

Meeting closed at 9.07 pm

Chairman