

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 4 April 2019 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

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

COUNCILLORS

Andrewes T	Messenger K	Tanner S
Arthur K	Mitchell A	Tulley R
Henry R	Harris T	Williams T

OFFICERS

Town Clerk Facilities Manager

F&GP.163 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received from Councillor Symons.

F&GP. 164 PUBLIC SPEAKING

None.

F&GP.165 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7 February 2019.

F&GP.166 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that it had not been possible to bring a recommendation for a Staffing Committee to this meeting, but that it will be on the next agenda along with a proposed Terms of Reference.

F&GP.167 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLOR AND OFFICER INTERESTS

Councillors Williams and Nicholls each declared an interest in Minute F&GP.174 (Grant Applications) due to family members holding a Directorship of Drama Express. They withdrew from the meeting while a possible grant award for Drama Express was discussed.

F&GP.168 TOWN CLERK’S UPDATE REPORT

The update report had been circulated prior to the meeting. With regard to Minute F&GP.162, the Facilities Manager informed Members that he has approached a neighbouring building as a potential alternative site for the CCTV camera removed from a building in the town centre, at the request of the building owner, but this had been declined. A site meeting will be held with Cornwall Council, Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service and SSE to identify a suitable alternative location for the camera.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F&GP.169 FINANCE REPORT

The finance report had been circulated prior to the meeting, and as usual was presented on an exceptions report basis. Speaking to the report, the Town Clerk informed Members that there were no significant changes since the last meeting.

In response to a question, the committee was advised that the apparent overspend of £4,500 for CCTV provision was a result of the accounts system not aligning the CCTV grant funded income to the CCTV expenditure line. Members were assured that this was a report formatting issue and that the CCTV installation had been carried out within budget.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F&GP.170 VIREMENT IN COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE BUDGET

A virement was by the Community & Environment Committee to move an underspend of approximately £3,000 from the 2018/2019 Street Weeding budget to that for Footpath Maintenance in 2019/2020.

The Clerk advised that the carry-forward amount would be logged as an earmarked reserve in the 2019/2020 accounts and so would be included in the finance reports in the coming financial year.

The Facilities Manager advised Members that the £3,000 is unlikely to cover the cost of keeping all footpaths clear in the absence of the Amenities Officer, and that he would prioritise footpaths in terms of the amount of footfall they receive.

RESOLVED – that the virement of £3,000 from the 2018/2019 Street Weeding budget to the 2018/2019 Footpaths Maintenance budget be approved.

RECOMMENDED – to Council that £3,000 from the 2018/2019 Footpaths Maintenance budget be carried forward as an earmarked reserve for Footpaths Maintenance in 2019/2020 to enable the commission of external contractors to clear footpaths and the South West Coast Path up to a contract value of £3,000.

F&GP.171 OFFICE RELOCATION TO THE FORMER VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

Previous meeting recommendations (Minute F&GP.157) were 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.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the Support Services Team had proposed a series of changes to the VIC space. A new Town Council reception area was proposed along with 5 desk spaces (3 administrative, one for the Support Services Manager and a hotdesk). Other improvements included a rest area/meeting area, better and increased storage, a bespoke, DDA-compliant reception desk, and separate staff and public entrances. The slat-wall shopfitting would be removed and the walls made good, the server and photocopier

relocated, and a kitchenette constructed in the rear office.

It was reported that a community organisation has expressed interest in renting office space in the reception area, with other organisations expressing interest in the vacated offices.

Members expressed concern at apparently inflated costs for some items, and queried whether a consultant should be involved in designing the space. There was general acceptance that visual representation of how the space might look would help councillors decide how much money to commit to the project. All councillors agreed that staff needed appropriate facilities in which to carry out their duties, and accepted that a community group would impact on confidential discussions.

RESOLVED – that a designer be engaged to produce a sketch layout of the proposed space and for the possibility of rental desk space to be explored. The maximum budget for the production of the sketch is £1,000.

Councillor Messenger asked to be recorded as voting against this proposal.

F&GP.172 **REVIEW OF EARMARKED AND GENERAL RESERVES**

Following the discussion at the last meeting, the Town Clerk talked through her paper on proposed changes to Reserves. Members discussed the need to build up Election Reserves, and how best to display the Solar Array loan repayment (as an earmarked reserve or a revenue item shown in the budget). The Town Clerk explained that showing the amount to be repaid in each year's earmarked reserve would allow income and expenditure to be visible before electricity costs were applied.

Members also considered the purpose of the earmarked reserve for allotment provision, and the need to keep bus shelters as an Earmarked Reserve following the installation of a shelter in Lelant.

The Facilities Manager requested that monies be carried over to next year to improve public services. He said that staff shortages and pressure of work had prevented these improvements from being made, but their need had not diminished. The Town Clerk explained that officers are not able to spend monies in one year that were allocated to the previous year's budget.

RECOMMENDED – to council that the proposed movements in earmarked reserves, as set out in the schedule tabled at the meeting, be approved, with the following amendments:

- 1) Item 5 (Election Reserves) be increased to £10,000 at financial year end
- 2) Solar Array EMR be reduced to £5,400 for 2019/2020 as the equivalent of the loan repayment to be paid in 2019/2020 only, with subsequent year's budgets to include a line in the revenue budget for the loan repayment expenditure.
- 3) Funds set out at 28 and 30 be carried forward as earmarked reserves in 2019/2020 and those listed at 27, 29, 31, 32 and 33 will revert to the general reserve at the end of the 2018/2019 financial year.

F&GP.173 **INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Town Clerk asked Members to confirm the same internal auditor to be appointed for year-end audit as has carried this role out in previous years.

RESOLVED – that the same internal auditor be retained for the year-end audit.

F&GP.174 **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Application: Cameo

It was noted that a full application had now been submitted as requested in previous meeting. The committee questioned whether the venue should have submitted the application, as the venue would be the main beneficiary.

Decision: that no grant be awarded.

Application: September Festival

Background of the festival and yearly grant award was given by Councillor Tulley.

Decision: Removed from the agenda as a standard amount is allocated per year, subject to approval by the committee chairman.

Application: St Ives Life Saving Club

Members noted the value of the work of the club to the local community.

Decision: that a grant of £500 be awarded.

Application: Drama Express

(Councillors Nicholls and Williams left the room for this agenda item.)

£400 (not £800 as appears in the schedule) was requested. There was some concern at the request for funding for an award ceremony, but the committee noted that the ceremony was designed to be confidence boosting for young people with disabilities in addition to being a celebration of their achievements.

Decision: that a grant of £400 be awarded.

Application: St Ives Easter Course

An update was circulated by hard copy with further information on the Easter course. Members discussed the lack of available accounts, although Council policy is to request full accounts or 6 months of recent bank statements which were submitted. In view of the level of

funds handled by the Easter Course, the committee stated that in future years there would be a requirement for the group to submit accounts rather than bank statement, for a grant application to be considered.

Decision: that a grant of £500 be awarded with the importance of submitting full accounts with future applications highlighted.

Application: Rotary Club

This is an annual request.

Decision: that a grant of £500 be awarded.

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

F&GP.175 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.176 DEBTORS AND CREDITORS (Paragraph 3)

The Town Clerk circulated a report prior to the meeting, with a number of debts settled after the report was circulated.

RESOLVED – that write-offs be approved for the debts referenced ALT103 and COR005, and the report be noted.

F&GP.177 CARETAKER PAYRATES (Paragraphs 1, 2 & 3)

The Town Clerk explained the current recommendation from Facilities Committee that any hours worked by Caretakers later than 1am are paid at double time. The committee considered the banding of rates of caretaker pay during unsociable hours, noting that they were often called out for short periods of time.

RESOLVED – that any hours worked after midnight (until normal daytime hours are resumed) are paid at a rate of £20 per hour.