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Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee, St Ives Town Council held in the Committee Room, The Guildhall, St Ives on Thursday 16 April 2015 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT

Chairman – Councillor R Tulley
Vice-Chairman – Councillor L Taylor

COUNCILLORS

Glanville R	Nicholls C
Lait R	Tanner J
Mitchell A	Williams T

OFFICERS

Town Clerk

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received from Councillors Andrewes.

R.105 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 19 February 2015.

R.106 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Additional item – Approval of Credit Card application.

R.107 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLOR AND OFFICER INTERESTS

Councillor Taylor declared an Interest in Minute R.110 (Grants) as a member of the Rotary Club, and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Lait declared an Interest in Minute R. 116 (Community Building) as the town council's representative on the St Ives Archive, and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

R.108 TOWN CLERKS UPDATE REPORT

The Clerk's update report had been circulated prior to the meeting

RESOLVED – that the Clerk's update on various actions since previous meetings be noted.

With regard to Councillor's wish for grants cheques to be issued with immediacy, the Clerk gave an undertaking that the cheque book would be brought to Council meetings in future in order that cheques may be written and signed when agreed.

R.109 **FINANCE REPORT**

Two finance reports had been circulated prior to the meeting: the 2014/15 income and expenditure against that budgeted; and a report on the 2014/15 income and expenditure against that in the previous year.

The following points were raised during discussion:

- The accounts circulated would be subject to year end adjustments
- The Devolution budget had a significant underspend as projects had not come to fruition within the financial year
- The budget provision for a loss for the tourist information service had not proved necessary
- A review of reserves would need to take account of any spending of reserves in-year.
- The Clerk suggested that the town council consider adopted a Reserves Policy.

RESOLVED – that the finance report be noted, and that a review of the Earmarked and General Reserve be an agenda item for the next scheduled meeting of this committee.

R.110 **GRANTS APPLICATIONS**

The following grant applications were considered:

Councillor Taylor declared an Interest in the first application as a member of the Rotary Club, and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Applicant: St Ives Rotary Club (St Ives May Day Celebrations 4 May 2015)

Consideration: The opportunities that the organisers have to raise monies on the day, and the fact that they then distribute funds to local charities. Whether it would be an option to underwrite the event if necessary. Also, that it is an event valued in the town and that the town council were supportive of it continuing.

Recommendation: To make a grant of £500 this year, with a note that if there is a surplus from May Day, an amount be reserved from these funds in readiness for future years. Also a suggestion to meet to discuss plans for future years.

Applicant: St Ives Town AFC (Upgrade pitched for children's teams in addition to adults)

Consideration: The number of youngsters from the area who play football and rugby and benefit from the pitches at Lelant.

Recommendation: To make a grant of £1,000 (subject to confirmation of two signatories) for the project specified in the grants application.

Applicant: The Parochial Church Council of St Uny Church, Lelant (Replacement of the church floor and addition of under floor heating system.)

Consideration: That this is an application from the church, a benefit to the wider community

and a valued community building in the parish of St Ives.

Recommendation: That a grant of £1,000 be awarded for the project specified in the grants application.

RECOMMENDED – to Council that the grants recommendations set out above be approved.

R.111 DECORATIVE LIGHTS UPDATE

Councillor Tulley reported that the Decorative Lights Committee had been requested to take on ownership of the decorative lights by 31 March 2015 and had declined. Offers to meet had been made, with the lights association advising that discussions were not considered necessary at this stage. Requests had again been made for copies of the structural report.

The Decorative Lights Association was in discussion with St Ives BID regarding plans for Christmas Lights and they were also planning new lights for St Andrews Street. Discussions were being held between the Association and St Ives BID.

The Clerk advised that having taken on responsibility for the decorative lights, the town council should be in a position of knowledge of the structural and operational integrity of the lighting system, hence the request for the Association's report on the structural and electrical condition.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED – to request from the Decorative Lights Association a copy of the report on the structural and electrical integrity of the lights, with a need for the report to be received as a matter of urgency.

R.112 FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

A draft of the annual revised version of the Financial Risk Assessment had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised that the council is expected to carry out an annual assessment of the financial risks it is exposed to, and identify any actions it considers necessary to minimise those risks in accordance with the town council's Risk Management Strategy. The draft set out the Clerk's recommendations.

RESOLVED – that the Financial Risk Assessment be approved and adopted.

R.113 APPLICATION FOR CREDIT CARD

The Clerk advised that the town council's Financial Regulations had been updated to enable credit card transactions and that a commercial credit card agreement had been arranged with the town council's bank.

RESOLVED – that

1. The town council (the 'Company') should open a Commercial Card account with HSBC Bank plc ('HSBC') and that HSBC should be authorised to issue Commercial Cards to such employees as a Secretary or a Director of the Company (the 'Authorised Persons')

may request; and

2. The Authorised Person be empowered to sign the Agreement set out in the application pack, on behalf of the Company and agree with HSBC any amendments to it and deal with HSBC in all operational matters relating to the said account or any such cards that HSBC may issue at the request of the town council.

RECOMMENDED – to Council to amend Financial Regulations to state that the credit card limit be amended to refer to a £500 debit balance at any one time as opposed to a limit of £500 per month (the current provision).

R.114 **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”.

R.115 **REVIEW OF STAFFING / OPERATION OF THE COUNCIL, INCLUDING VISIONING DAY EVENT** (Paragraph 3)

Following previous consideration by the Staffing Committee (12 March) a meeting had been held with the HR company recommended to carry out the staffing review. With the benefit of the proposal circulated prior to the committee meeting and an update on the discussion with the HR company representative, Members discussed the review and visioning event.

Discussion included the following points:

- Clarification requested on the focus of the review – whether staffing review or Visioning Event.
- Advice that the review would be based on the previously agreed need to review the staffing structure and the Visioning Event to be held first to help direct this
- The need also to consider how the Councillors work and how the Council works as a whole – including review the committee structure
- Visioning Day – to help identify problems, where to improve, the way forward
- Importance of the Visioning Day in helping determine a 5 year plan for the council.

Following discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED – to Council that the proposal by Sapience HR be approved.

R.116 **UPDATE ON NEGOTIATIONS RELATING TO DEVOLUTION AND LEASE ARRANGEMENT FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING** (Paragraph 3)

Councillor Lait declared an Interest in this item as the town council’s representative on the St Ives Archive, and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.

Councillor Nicholls reported on a meeting with representatives of prospective tenants of the building earlier in the week. The focus of discussion had been on the remedial works needed for

the building and the Archive's need for the situation to be resolved as soon as possible.

The Clerk reported on the update from Cornwall Council officers on the legal transfer process, along with an update from the Devolution Project Manager on the building and structural matters.

During discussion the following points were considered:

- The previously agreed structural survey was due to be commissioned and would be necessary to inform the decision of the town council in taking on the lease
- The business plan would need to be reviewed to make provision for recently identified works
- Actual costs for the necessary works had yet to be received, an indication was given of the potential level of cost, and consideration was given to whether funds could be contributed by Cornwall Council or by the prospective tenants for that section of the building.
- An update on users of the buildings and others who had expressed an interest in its use
- The previously agreed willingness of the town council to take on the community building if viable to do so, and the wish to accommodate the needs of the prospective tenants.
- Whether there was scope for offsetting the town council's financial contribution to the building as part of the transfer process against the wider devolution package.

RESOLVED – that following previous approval for the project in principle, decision on the structural works be deferred pending a structural survey of the building, to enable the town council to make an informed decision, to include consideration of a full revised business plan including potential income and expenditure, marketing and development plans.

R.117 **TO CONSIDER THE OPTION OF A HOSTED IT SYSTEM FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL**
(Paragraph 3)

The Clerk presented the report setting out the option for the town council to move to a hosted IT system, an option which had been taken up by other town and parish councils to give an assurance of data security and accessibility to files in the office and remotely, whilst not requiring in-house IT expertise.

The Clerk reported that the hosted IT option was being recommended for the core town council officers (4 users) and that the Visit St Ives team would not be seeking to join the system at this stage. Weaknesses with the current IT system included:

- The system did not enable an offsite backup to be maintained – always a recommendation to maintain business continuity if there was a complete failure of the office IT.
- Without moving to a hosted system, there was a need to make a purchase of a new PC and software, and to commission an IT professional to network the new PC and to bring in necessary improvements to the existing network in view of frequent loss of service.
- The current system did not enable remote working / file sharing and so officers at meetings and working remotely were transferring files, giving greater risk of data loss.
- The current systems to enable remote working and file sharing were inefficient and costing staff time.

The current system was considered, along with the advantages and disadvantages of moving to a

hosted system. Costings provided by three companies were presented and considered.

Members thanked the Clerk for the detailed report and during discussion, the following points were raised:

- With the forthcoming review of the staffing and council practices, there was a wish to defer the item pending the outcome of that review
- Noted that IT upgrades usually cause upheaval to organisations
- Alternatives were suggested (local data hosting company, other cloud computing providers, upgrading the existing network to incorporate a server)
- The wish to explore other alternative options.

RESOLVED – that this matter be deferred pending the staffing and organisational review.

R.118 MARKET HOUSE RENT REVIEW

The Clerk reported on the Market House unit due for rent review, with the written report setting out information on options to be considered.

During discussion it was noted that one of the neighbouring units had recently undergone a rent review with a percentage increase agreed between the town council and the tenant. This was considered a suitable way forward with regard to the rent review currently due.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED – that a percentage rent increase of the same percentage as that recently agreed with a neighbouring unit be proposed to the tenant for the coming 3 year period.

R.119 DEBTORS AND CREDITORS (Paragraph 3)

The Clerk presented the schedule of debtors and creditors.

Following consideration, it was

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 9.08 pm

Chairman