

# FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 at 6.30pm at Grosvenor House, Grosvenor Road, Whittlesey

**Present:** Cllr Dorling, Bristow, Boden, Mason, Mrs Mayor, Wicks

**Officer in Attendance:** Mrs S Evans – Town Clerk & RFO

**Recording:** DS250050.DS2 – The minutes are recorded for the purpose of Minute taking only.

**FP09/16 - To receive apologies from absent Members.**

Cllr Butcher (unwell)

**FP10/16.- Declaration of Members Pecuniary Interests, on items to be discussed later in the agenda and the Council to decide which items are to be discussed as confidential under agenda item number FP13/16.**

Cllr Bristow declared a Prejudicial Interest in the Tesco fund however the item is not on the agenda.

**FP11/16 – Public Forum.**

There were no members of the public present.

**FP12/16 - To confirm and sign the Minutes from the last meeting of the Finance & Policy on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016.**

Ratified: The Minutes were approved.

**FP13/16 Agenda Items for Discussion**

**Whittlesey Town Council Policies.**

Cllr Boden advised he had commenced working on the financial Regulations, where he found some anomalies, some of these can be rectified very quickly, the others required further discussion with the Clerk. One of these items being the dates that are in the financial regulations for the discussions about the budget versus the actual dates the council are working to. Members agreed on this point that the budget be approved at the first full council meeting in January. The other amendments to be discussed in a separate meeting between Cllr Boden and the Clerk and will be brought back to F & P for agreement prior to being taken to Full Council for approval.

**Reserves Strategy Document**

This will be deferred until the next meeting.

**5-year plan**

Cllr Dorling advised members that the council should have a plan looking forward, one of the biggest assets on this will be the Neighbourhood plan, if we are going to steer the whole group forward there needs to be a policy for this. Cllr Mrs Mayor disagreed and stated the Neighbourhood Plan sits completely on its own. Cllr Boden advised that the policy decision has already been made to go for a Neighbourhood Plan, however the finances will need to extend

beyond a one-year budget. Members to email Cllr Dorling with their aims, objectives any costings for future consideration.

### **Neighbourhood plan progress**

The Neighbourhood plan will not form part of the five-year plan and will stand alone due to the financial implications of the plan, these will need to be considered by the F & P Committee.

### **Property working group update**

The Clerk advised members that a letter had been sent to the Landlord asking if he wished to attend a meeting to discuss Grosvenor House and the potential purchase by the council. No response had been received by the Clerk however the Mayor had seen the Landlord and asked that question. The landlord had advised he may be interested in selling the building, however a valuation would have to be sought by the council, the landlord did mention some figures to the Mayor, these were relayed to the F & P committee who have concluded that the purchasing of Grosvenor House will not be a viable option.

### **Website Update**

Cllr Wicks advised that the website will be 'prettied up' with the new pictures, and a new flag on the tabs bar for Ward Matters, there will be links to Must Farm and Straw Bear Website. Cllr Mason advised that January FC minutes were not present, the Clerk will investigate as she had sent these over, Cllr Mason also asked where other ward newsletters were as there was only Delph and St Andrews on the website, Cllr Wicks will investigate these. Cllr Wicks suggested that guidelines are put together for Cllrs who wish to produce a newsletter. Cllr Dorling asked if Cllr Wicks could move this forward with assistance from Cllr Dorling.

### **Whittlesey Community Grants (Successor to Tesco)**

Cllr Dorling advised members that Cllr Mason had written to Sainsbury to see if they would be happy to offer something similar. Cllr Boden advised he thought that this had worked really well and would like the committee to consider a pot of money for future donations, these could be submitted to the council and the council just deal with these donations once a year. This will not happen until the 2017 / 18 financial year. Members agreed to defer this to a future meeting and review the implications of annual awards.

### **Bank reconciliation**

Members discussed the bank reconciliation and Cllr Boden queried as to why the BACS payments were on the list as uncashed, the Clerk advised that she had processed these on the accounts system and scheduled on the bank, but they still needed authorisation, hence they were still outstanding. Cllr Boden was happy with this response

### **Year to date figures**

Members approved the year to date figures.6+

### **Payment list for approval**

Members approved the payment list.

Members discussed whether payments can be approved at F & P or must all go to Full Council, the Clerk to investigate all possibilities for the approval of payments.

### Frequency of meetings

Cllr Dorling advised that due to the amount of items that are appearing on the agenda we should continue to have monthly meetings.

### Purchase of new office shredder

The Clerk advised that the current straight cut shredder was not fit for purpose as there is quite a lot of confidential information that passes through the office and therefore would like to move to a cross shredded, 3 prices had been obtained by the Clerk, however the clerk was asked to put this item on the Full Council agenda.

### Asset Register

Cllr Wicks offered to undertake this task and would visit the office to commence the work.

### Audit of all furniture in Grosvenor House

Cllr Wicks will also undertake this task

### IT plan

Members suggested that a long term IT plan is put together, we should not wait for IT equipment to breakdown, but should have a replacement policy in place.

### FP14/16 - Donation Requests.

Donations are dealt with at the following meetings February, April, July & November

Whittlesey Festival – Proposal by Cllr Dorling for a donation of £3500.00 seconded by Cllr Mrs Mayor with a unanimous vote in favour.

Rural Cambs Citizens Advice Bureau - Cllr Boden proposed £1000, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Mayor, could we have a breakdown of how many people from the villages benefit from the CAB.

Fenland Volunteer Bureau – Cllr Boden proposed refusal of this application, seconded by Cllr Bristow, Cllr Mason abstained, all other members were in favour of this refusal on the basis that it was not focussed on Whittlesey

### FP15/16. Exclusion of the Public, including the Press.

Resolved that in respect of the following item of business, the public, including the press, will be excluded from the meeting, because of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, publication of which would be prejudicial to the public interest.

### FP16/16. – Date of Next Meeting – Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

Close Meeting 8.30



Cllr Dorling  
Chairman