

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF FINANCE, POLICY AND GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE
HELD ON 27 JUNE 2019
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, LEDBURY**

PRESENT Councillors Bannister, Harvey (Chairman) Howells, Manns, Whattler

IN ATTENDANCE Angela Price- The Town Clerk
Olivia Bundy- Minute Taker

F25. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Eakin

F26. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received

F27. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present

F28. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members were requested to give their consideration to the amended Draft Terms of Reference for the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference for the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee be received and noted

MINUTES

F29. TO APPROVE & SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2019

Members were requested to approve and sign the minutes of the Finance and General Purpose Committee meeting held on the 23rd May 2019 as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee be approved and signed as a correct record.

F30.

TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT

Members were requested to approve the invoices for payments with a total of £9,313.21

RESOLVED:

That the invoices for payment as per the document provided at agenda item 6, be approved in the total sum of £9,313.21.

F31.

TO RECEIVE THE RECORD OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FROM 1 APRIL TO 30 APRIL AND 1 MAY TO 31 MAY 2019

Members were asked to receive and note the receipts and payments from the 1 April to 30 April and 1 May to 31 May

Members questioned the Payment to 'PKF Littlejohn' on page 45 and agreed that £36,727.50 was an unrealistic payment.

The clerk agreed that this payment was not realistic and advised that she would check the figure with the Deputy Clerk for clarification.

RESOLVED: That record of Receipts and Payments for 1 April – 30 April and 1 May – 31 May 2019 be received and noted subject to the Town Clerk investigating payment to PKF Little

F32.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIT & TO RECEIVE YEAR END REPORTS TO 31 MARCH 2019 TO INCLUDE THE ANNUAL RETURN

Members considered agenda items 8 and 9 together for which they were asked to receive and note the internal report from Mr Selkirk, the Council's Internal Auditor and the end of year reports for the 2018/19 financial year and to subsequently prepare the Annual Governance Statement for the 2018/19 financial year.

Councillor Harvey advised there a further letter had been received from the Internal Auditor which varied slightly to the letter which had been included in the agenda (pg. 46) as follows:-

"There is no evidence that any cash was involved but that the exercise was purely and simply an accounting exercise."

It was noted that the figure of £238,000 on the letter was incorrect and members agreed it should be read £236,062.

Councillor Harvey suggested meeting be arranged between herself, the Town Clerk and the Internal Auditor to go through all documents regarding earmarked reserves and budget lines. She also advised that she sent members an email before the meeting with attached documents providing details and a summary of earmarked reserves against specific lines in the budget as reviewed by Full Council on the 2 February 2018 for the financial year ending 2019, and a link to the council's website with a detailed budget and Parish precept proposals that were recorded for 2018-2019.

After a lengthy discussion on the earmarked reserves Members agreed that it would be beneficial for the Town Clerk and Councillor Harvey to meet with the auditor to go through the information available to him and his findings so far.

It was agreed that going forward virements should be carried out throughout the year to ensure that monies used from one budget head for another are clearly recorded.

The Town Clerk advised that the practice of deducting monies from the annual precept due to monies being left in the previous year's budget should no longer continue and that any monies left in the budgets at the end of each financial year should be transferred into the Council's reserves in order to build the Council's reserves to an acceptable amount as per the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The Town Clerk advised that as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process the Clerk and Deputy Clerk have agreed that they will review the annual budgets and prepare a draft for discussion with each committee, who will then be asked to consider any additional expenditure for the following year

Councillor Harvey advised that she would prefer to take time with the audit report to ensure that everything is correct.

Members discussed the Annual Return which had been produced by RBS, the Council's accountancy software provider, as part of the year end close down. Councillor Harvey noted the request for additional information as part of the Annual Return and suggested that the brief explanation of significant variations from last year to this year in section 2 should be provided by officers.

Members were asked to consider whether they felt they were in a position to make a recommendation to Full Council in respect of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). Following considerable discussion members agreed to consider the questions within the AGS a copy of the responses is attached to these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- i. **That the Clerk and Deputy Clerk provide a brief explanation of significant variations from last year to this year in Section 2.**
- ii. **That the Town Clerk highlights what payments on page 48 were legal costs for the next meeting.**
- iii. **That Members completed the audit report and that this be submitted to a meeting of Full Council on 4 July for consideration.**
- iv. **That a meeting be arranged between the Internal Auditor, Councillor Harvey and the Clerk/Deputy Clerk.**

F33.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Members were requested to suspend Standing Orders to allow for the remainder of the meeting to be undertaken.

RESOLVED:

That standing orders be suspended for 30 minutes to allow the remaining business to be transacted.

F34.

TO RECEIVE THE BALANCE SHEET AND TRIAL BALANCE AS AT 30 APRIL AND MAY 30 2019

Members were provided with detailed balance sheet and trial balance for 30 April and 30 May 2019

RESOLVED:

That the balance sheet and trial balance for 30 April and 30 May 2019

F35.

TO VERIFY BANK STATEMENTS AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS PRODUCED FOR THE MONTHS OF MARCH, APRIL AND MAY 2019

The Chairman of Finance was asked to verify and sign bank statements and bank reconciliations for March, April and May 2019

RESOLVED:

That the bank statements and reconciliations for March, April and May 2019 be approved which Councillor Harvey signed accordingly.

F36.

LEDBURY IN BLOOM

i. Judging day Luncheon

Members were asked to consider three closed quotes from local caterers and cafes to provide a buffet for the judges of Ledbury in Bloom for the 29 July.

Members agreed to accept quote number one as follows: -

Forkless Buffett - £8 per head for x 20
Cakes- £1.80 per head for x 10
Fruit - £1.20 per head for x 10

Members also suggested that it would be more cost effective to hold the Luncheon in the Jacobean Room and that the budget could come from cost centre 225 – nominal code 4545 - Annual & other meetings

ii. Replacement sign

The Town Clerk advised that she was waiting on one more quotation in respect of the replacement sign and therefore members agreed to defer this to Full Council.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Town Clerk advises Ledbury in Bloom that the luncheon is to be held in the Jacobean room at the Council office and that members agreed to go ahead with quote number one for the buffet.**

- ii. That it be established whether all Councillors are invited to attend the Ledbury in Bloom reception.
- iii. That the replacement of the Ledbury in Bloom sign be deferred to the next Full Council meeting on the 4 July 2019

F37.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED to note that the next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee is scheduled for Thursday, 25 July 2019

The meeting ended at 10.50 pm

Signed **Dated**