

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH,  
DUNSTABLE**

**ON MONDAY 17 JUNE 2019**

Present: Councillors Sid Abbott (Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Deputy Town Mayor), Peter Hollick (Chairman), Philip Crawley (Vice-Chairman), Wendy Bater, Mark Cant, Alan Corkhill, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Gloria Martin, Cameron Restall and Johnson Tamara

In Attendance: David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Lucy Salim (Head of Finance and Support Services) and Lisa Scheder (Finance Officer)

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Lee Roberts

Public Attendance: None

**103 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 25 March 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**104 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no specific declarations of interest.

**105 ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the Minutes of the meetings of the Accounts Sub-Committee held 20 March, 24 April and 22 May 2019.

**106 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a revenue budgetary control report for the financial year ending 31 March 2019. The summary of net expenditure showed an overall net revenue saving against budget at the end of the financial year. This saving offset the previously agreed unbudgeted expenditure for specific projects and resulted in a year end contribution from the General Reserve.

Members also noted the current balance of the Council's allocated reserves as at 31 March 2019 and the end of year balances.

**107 INTERNAL AUDIT – FINAL UPDATE 2018/19**

Members received the final update report of the Internal Auditor setting out the areas examined during the visit made on 17 May 2019.

Members were pleased to note that the conclusions contained within the report raised no issues to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Members wished to thank the officers for their hard work that has resulted in this Audit Report.

#### **108 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2020**

The Committee considered a draft calendar of meetings for the calendar year 2020. It was noted that the Council is required to hold 6 meetings of full Council during the year (including the Annual General Meeting) with the requisite cycle of Committee meetings reporting thereto.

**RESOLVED:** that the meeting dates set out in the Calendar of Meetings for 2020 be approved.

#### **109 PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 11 April 2019 and adopted the recommendation contained therein regarding the introduction of a Staff Volunteering Scheme.

**RESOLVED:** that the Council adopt the Staff Volunteering Scheme as presented to the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 11 April 2019.

#### **110 BENNETT'S ADVENTURE PLAY FENCING SPENDING (Minute 65/2019)**

The Committee considered a recommendation from Grounds and Environmental Services Committee that approval be given to the release of allocated reserve funding to purchase fencing for the new Bennett Adventure Play area. After a lengthy discussion on the merits and process for making the final decision to purchase and install fencing, the Committee resolved the following.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) that Officers undertake an on-site consultation with visitors to the play area, during the summer, to determine peoples view on the need for a fence.
  - (ii) that, subject to the outcome of the consultation, the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Chairman of Grounds and Environmental Services, be authorised to determine whether to proceed with a fence.
  - (iii) that, if the consultation results in the decision to proceed with the fencing, the Committee approves the release of up to £22,000 from the Open Spaces Improvement Plan reserve to provide a dog proof fence for the Bennett Adventure Play area.

#### **111 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY REPORT**

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a detailed report for Members to agree and adopt the updated Social Media Policy and new procedure.

Members discussed the detail of the Policy at length. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive reiterated that this Policy covers both Officers and Councillors and if approved, training would be offered to all.

**RESOLVED:** i) that the updated Social Media Policy and new procedure be approved and adopted

ii) that separate Members guidance on the use of social media be produced

iii) that suitable training for Members be organised in line with the production of the social media guidance

## **112 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

- a) CAB Management Committee – Councillor Bater advised she had not received any communication from the Citizens Advice Bureau to date, however Members were aware that CAB were in the process of relocating.
- b) DITA – Councillor Hollick reported that the organisation was in the process of compiling a promotional brochure.
- c) Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Jones reported that the organisations AGM was to be held on 1 July. Volunteers had attended the Motor Rally on 8 June in Priory Gardens which had resulted in signing up 2 more volunteers.
- d) Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Corkhill and Hollick reported that they were currently dealing with some parking issues and had introduced signage in the hope of resolving this issue. They advised that the residents were satisfied overall, and any maintenance issues were being considered.

## **113 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** that, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

## **114 STAFFING REPORT**

The Committee considered the proposal for the award of Honorariums

**RESOLVED:** that that the recommendation contained within the covering report be approved.

## **115 HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES – MATERNITY COVER PROPOSALS**

The Committee considered the arrangements proposed for covering the impending maternity leave for the Head of Community Services

**RESOLVED:** that the proposal contained in the covering report to carry out an internal recruitment exercise to provide temporary cover arrangements be approved.