

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 16 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present: Liz Jones (Deputy Town Mayor), Peter Hollick (Chairman), Philip Crawley (Vice-Chairman), Wendy Bater, Matthew Brennan, Mark Cant, Alan Corkhill, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Gloria Martin, Cameron Restall and Lee Roberts

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 Sid Abbott (Town Mayor)

Public Attendance: None

143 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 June 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

144 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

145 ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the meetings of the Accounts Sub-Committee held 19 June, 24 July and 21 August 2019 were sent to Members on Tuesday 17 September 2019 for their review.

146 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Finance and Support Services presented a revenue budgetary control report and detail of the Council's earmarked reserves for the period ending 31 July 2019. The summary of outturn position (Appendix 1) shows a potential overall underspend at the end of the financial year. This is based on what is known to budget managers at this point in the year and does not take account of other items that may arise as well as unexpected demands on budgets in year.

Members also noted the completion of the audit for the year ending 31 March 2019 and were pleased to note the budget and reserves were being well managed.

The Head of Finance and Support Services proposed that a separate Accounts Sub-Committee is no longer required and that the reporting of monthly payments to be taken to Finance and General Purposed Committee as a routine agenda item. Following members discussion, it was proposed that the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes together with one or more members of the committee would be invited on a monthly basis to view the bank statements and that a rota be set-up so all Councillors get to view and understand the finances of the Council.

RESOLVED: that Members recommend to Council the dissolution of the Accounts Sub-Committee as detailed in the appendix to the report

147 MATERNITY COVER ARRANGEMENT REPORT

Members received the information report on the outcome of the recent internal recruitment process for the Head of Community Services maternity cover and associated back filling arrangements.

Members welcomed the opportunities this cover would provide for existing staff.

148 AMENDMENTS TO COUNCILS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE REPORT

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a report to propose to members minor changes to the Council's Grievance Policy and Procedure. The suggested amendments have been made for accuracy purposes and to give the Town Clerk and Chief Executive more flexibility when dealing with any potential grievance issues.

RESOLVED: that Members adopt the proposed new Grievance Policy and Procedure as presented

149 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE MINOR STAFFING ALTERATION

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a report from Grounds and Environmental Services Committee to seek approval to delete two 7-month temporary seasonal Grounds Assistant posts and create one new full-time Grounds Assistant post.

RESOLVED: that Members approve the recommendation from Grounds and Environmental Services Committee on 9 September 2019

150 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- a) CAB Management Committee – Councillor Bater advised that she would be attending a meeting next week for which she would report back on to at the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting. Councillor Jones added that she had been in touch with the manager of CAB who would welcome visits to their new offices and encouraged Members to get in touch to arrange this directly with CAB.
- b) DITA – Councillor Hollick reported that the brochure the organisation were in the process of compiling would detail the history of the past 60 years of the current Twinning Committee, and are hoping this will be ready for distribution early in the new year.
- c) Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Jones reported that the organisation were currently struggling to identify funding streams and were reliant on fundraising events. The next event is a Ploughman's Supper on 5 October if any Members would like to attend. The organisation held a stall at the recent Themed Market 'Charity Day' in Ashton Square and would welcome Members assistance at future events.
- d) Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillor Hollick reported that they had had an issue with a spelling error on some signage, but this was being rectified imminently.

151 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.

152 STAFFING REPORT

The Committee considered the proposal to restructure the Finance and Support Services Team.

The Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee noted thanks to the Head of Finance and Support Services for putting the report together and for the way it was presented at Committee.

RESOLVED: that that the recommendations contained within the covering report be approved.