

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee Held on Tuesday 25th June 2013 at 8.00pm in the Community Office

Present:

Councillors:

Tim Horton – Chairman
Ian Hill
Barry Adby
Roddy Orr

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

25/13 Apologies for absence

Harvey Batten, Tony Williamson

26/13 Chairman's Remarks

TH reported that Rhian Woods has now formally resigned from this Committee as she is very pressed with other commitments. It was agreed that TH send a letter of thanks to her on behalf of the Committee.

27/13 Election of Vice-Chairman

Tim Horton proposed Roddy Orr and this was seconded by Ian Hill. There were no other nominations.

Resolved: That Roddy Orr be unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman.

28/13 To approve the Minutes from the Meeting on the 19th February 2013 which were received by Council on 12/3/2013 and 11th June 2013 which have not yet been received by Council

Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record of these meetings and that they be signed by the Chairman.

29/13 Matters Arising

There were none other than agenda items.

30/13 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

31/13 Budget/Reserves

1. **2012/2013** – Information to be sent to External Auditor and Internal Auditors report. – This was received by members.

It was noted that the Balances brought forward at the end of 2012 were £79,084.00 and at the end of 2013 were £79,257.00.

The Summary Income and Expenditure sheet was considered and it was noted that the total income for 2011/2012 was £115,524 as opposed to £121859.21 for 2012/2013. A difference of £6635. The was mainly because of increase in precept and the stairclimber contribution from the Town Hall Charity Body.

The difference in expenditure, year on year was an increase of £10,000 which included the purchase of the stair climber (£6110), repair of the public convenience roof (£1500), outside items for pavilion (£1006), Election costs (£700) and the Sports Field trees ((£1800).

2. **Budget 2012/13** – The Clerk had finalised the end of year budget figures and these were approved by the Committee.

3. **Budget Pressures** – Operation Committee areas: Tree matters, public conveniences, grass cutting and community offices. Discussion took place on this. Bob West and Barry Adby will be looking at reviewing the grass cutting tender document shortly as the contract ends on the 31/3/2014 and a new tender process will need to be done. It was noted that works to the trees in the car park will be taken out of the car park budget. It was noted that the outside painting of the community office is not a budget item and the committee will need to look into this as regards any budget implications.

32/13 Staff Issues

1. **Staff reviews and designated responsibilities** – Ian Hill had prepared a note for discussion on this issue that related to caretaking responsibility

TH stressed that this was not a performance review, but an early stage in redefining the areas of responsibility related to the caretaking role. He said that the item was therefore appropriate for discussion in public session. Anything that went away from this task would be ruled out of order or debated as the committee might in private session.

Much discussion took place and it was noted that this is an important document. It was agreed that this document should be sent to the Operations Committee and the Town Hall Charity Body for discussion as regards the work of the caretaker. IH reported that he had made the assumption that daily is for 5 working days and the yearly amount of weeks being 50. It was noted that the working hours for the caretaker were 40 hours per week. Ian Hill went through the document to check a reasonable amount of time was allocated to tasks, however he felt it would be valuable to have consultation with the Clerk and the Caretaker and for amendments to be made prior to committee consideration. IH stated that the jobs do not at present include sufficient time for getting to places, obtaining the correct tools, although some allowance was made for this. Tasks are done in multiple places around the town and his document is not a definitive answer at present. He said he would like comments on how reasonable his assumptions are. IH has not yet reconciled the tasks with the amounts paid in each area.

IH stated that there are many questions relating to work done in the Pavilion. There appears to be a desire to allocate time in the caretaker role to this location, but no income derives from internal or external agreements for this engagement.

BA stated that we keep taking things on and we cannot just keep increasing the job list without considering any implications for the other jobs that are already done. This was noted and IH will add to the schedule some time for exceptional tasks. The document may eventually be reflected on a weekly and monthly basis in creating rotas but, as it develops, will need to be reconciled with the hours paid for by contractual arrangements with SODC and others.

Resolved: That IH and TH go through this document and obtain any clarification from the Clerk and/or Caretaker and then the revised document be sent to the Operations Committee and the Town Hall Charity Body for their comments. The Pavilion Committee will also need to look at this document in the light of the work done in the Pavilion by the Caretaker. The matter will be returned to at the September meeting of the Finance Committee.

2. Staff training – BT wishes to attend a First Aid Course

It was noted that a 3 day course would cost in the region of £275. There are also 1 day courses available. It was agreed that KT contact Dick Tracey for his advice on what type of course would be best.

3. Salary costs/pay for 2013/2014 – TH had prepared a note on this which was discussed.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That the increase in pay for the Clerk be in accordance with the agreed increase on the NJC scale (being some 1%) when formally published.

That the increase for the Caretaker and the Administrative Assistant should reflect the precise increase in percentage terms of the increase in the Clerks reward.

That the increases should be backdated to 1st April 2013.

4. Pensions - TH reported that under the workplace legislation, pensions will need to be offered to full time workers from 2017. He also drew attention to the fact that the Clerk may join the present local government contributory scheme. After discussion, the following was agreed:

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: The Chairman should write to the Clerk and caretaker setting out their entitlements should they wish to join existing or future schemes for a workplace pension and seek their own advice on their individual circumstances.

33/13 Other Financial Issues

1. Car Park Contributions – KT reported that the invoices for this financial year are in the process of being sent out with a letter of explanation of what has been done in the car park during the last year.

2. Office Equipment

a) **New computer** - It was noted that the Clerk's computer is now 10 years old and is giving some problems and that a new computer is now needed. RO suggested a discussion on having a list of depreciation of equipment and RO and KT to discuss this.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That up to £750 be allocated for a new computer and upgraded software which may be taken out of contingency if necessary.

b) **Extra telephone**- To be discussed at the next meeting.

3. Energy Costs

a) **Update on actions re Electricity costs** – BA reported that the Community Office electricity has been changed and this is for a 2 year period. It was noted that the Pavilion and Public Conveniences electricity is in contract until May 2014.

b) **Water supply costs for public conveniences** – It was noted that the water supply has been decreased and is now using 3 units per day.

c) **Actions needed for Gas costs** – TH has given out a note on this which was discussed. It was noted that if we change to Crown Gas and Power there should be a saving of some £900 on the year. This would be on fixed standing charge of £1.03 per day and a variable unit charge that was 3.986p per kilowatt hour. TH thanked BA for the work he has done on this issue.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we accept a 34 month contract with Crown Gas and Power which should lead to a saving of some £900 on our gas costs.

4. Cheque Signatories

It was noted that we now need to take Ted Backhouse off the signing list and it was agreed to add Ian Hill as a signatory.

4. Bank Account update/changing accounts - TH reported that he has spoken with a Barclays Business Advisor who said that she could only advise on Barclays own products and discussion took place on 6, 9 and 12 month bonds that would currently achieve rates of around 1.5%. Our accounts at present are achieving less than 1%. However it was noted that our banking is currently free which may not be the case if we move an amount of money to another bank. RO suggested discussion on this at the next meeting to see if there has been an increase in the interest rate.

34/13 General Issues

a) **Letter from Youth Club** – this was attached to the agenda. After discussion the following was agreed:

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we pay the Youth Club the £3,000 grant that is in the budget for 2013/2014.

35/13 Correspondence

1. **Berinsfield Community Business** – re increase in grass cutting costs for paddock area (letter No 156)

This letter was discussed and it was agreed that in the light of the fact that they have done many free cuts for the WPC in the paddock area, to increase the frequency of the cutting in this area from one per month to two per month and this will increase the paddock costs from £108 to £170. KT will inform Berinsfield Community Business.

36/13 Items for Next Meeting.

Staff Designated Responsibilities
First Aid Training Course
Extra Telephone
Bank Accounts

37/13. Any Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.55PM