

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 5th AUGUST 2015** at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor S. Poultney (Mayor) – Chairman.
Councillor J. Bishop
Councillor M. Bonfield
Councillor W.S. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

Also in attendance:-

Councillor Mrs. C. Finch
Dr M. Ayres – Town Clerk
Mrs R. Darkin-Miller – Internal Auditor
Miss A. Spencer – Finance Officer

Public Participation Time

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence had been reported prior to the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare their interest under the Code of Conduct as defined by regulations made under section 30 (3) of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

Further to Standing Order No. 12) a) viii it was Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and AGREED:

That Item 7) on the agenda be brought forward to Item 3).

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bonfield, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That, under Standing Order No. 1) c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda items 3 (in relation to legal and contractual matters regarding the Seafront and Downs Stabilisation Scheme) and 8 (in relation to legal matters).

3. SEAFRONT AND DOWNS STABILISATION SCHEME-PRESENTATION OF DRAFT INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Town Clerk briefed the Committee on the terms of engagement of the Council's Internal Auditor (Mrs Darkin-Miller) in reviewing the procedures followed in procuring and managing the contract for the stabilisation works.

Mrs Darkin-Miller presented her draft report to the Committee, and the proposed recommendations were noted. It was acknowledged that the final report would be presented to a forthcoming full Council meeting.

4. **INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT-BUDGET REPORT**

The Finance Officer introduced the format of the Council's budget monitoring report for the benefit of new Committee members. This highlighted the principal variations from budget in Council income and expenditure in the year to 30th June. Overall there was a surplus on the general fund of £159,739 for the first quarter of the 2015/16 financial year, £8,947 greater than budgeted for the period.

In respect of the letting of beach bungalows on Shore Road, it was noted that the occupancy of the top-tier was below that forecast earlier in the year, and that this was likely to lead to a shortfall in income from beach hut rentals against budget at year end. The Committee considered action to be taken in this respect. It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Trite and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

That a late summer sale in respect of the upper tier of Shore Road beach huts be authorised with a reduction in price of approximately one-third.

It was further **AGREED:**

That the reduced fees be widely advertised.

Following further discussion regarding the occupancy rates of the beach huts over the winter period it was **AGREED:**

That delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor to agree reductions in beach hut prices for the 2015/16 winter season.

5. **QUARTER 1 TREASURY REPORT 2015/16**

The Committee received the first quarterly treasury report of 2015/16. The performance and position of the Council's investments were noted. After some discussion, it was agreed by the Committee that a summarised quarterly report be issued for future meetings.

The Committee were informed that one of the Council's investments was due to mature in August and that Officers would review investment opportunities available with the Council's treasury advisors, Arlingclose, and King & Shaxson, the Council's custody account holders. The new investment would be made in line with the Council's Investment Strategy. It was further noted that the Council's loan to Swanage Sailing Club had been paid in full.

6. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received a progress report in respect of the Council's agreed capital programme and the position was noted.

7. **FORWARD TOGETHER: A PILOT PROJECT FOR LOCALITY WORKING IN DORSET - TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ENDORSEMENT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Town Clerk informed the Committee of the background of the Forward Together project and provided a summarised history of previous joint working arrangements. Members discussed the contents of the report. Although in theory, the Committee welcomed the engagement with the County/District Councils, concern was raised at the practical implications, with the potential transfer of land and/or services without financial support creating a liability for the Town Council. Nevertheless, it was proposed by Councillor Trite, seconded by the Town Mayor and **AGREED:**

To support the recommendations set out in the report and to give delegated authority to the Town Clerk to act in the matter in the best interests of Swanage Town Council.

8. REVIEW OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS

An updated schedule of Council Priorities and Projects was submitted for information. The Town Clerk briefly stated the purpose of the document for the benefit of the new members of the Committee.

It was noted that:

- The short-term relocation of the TIC needed to be prioritised, together with a review of the Council's tourism service;
- It was intended to lodge a grant application with the Football Foundation in respect of the Forres Field Changing Rooms by 21st September 2015;
- An alternative source of legal advice for matters such as licence agreements and easements was being explored and the Town Clerk would report on the findings at a later date.

9. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS

- (a) Committee Terms of Reference
- (b) Local Government Pension Scheme
- (c) Insurance Claims

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee had been scheduled for 4th November 2015.

The meeting concluded at 6.45 p.m.
