

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 13th DECEMBER 2017** at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor M.P. Bonfield (Mayor) – Chairman.

Councillor C. Finch
Councillor G. Green
Councillor M. Whitwam

Also in attendance:-

Dr M. Ayres – Town Clerk
Miss A. Spencer – Finance Manager
Mr G. Brookes – Operations Manager (until 10.45 & from 11.30)
Mr C. Milmer – Visitor Services Manager

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

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Bishop, Harris and Morris.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 – 13 of the Council's Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3. **CARD DETAILS SECURITY POLICY**

Consideration was given to a draft Card Details Security Policy, which outlined the Council's policy in handling security of data when taking payment by card. It was noted that one amendment was required in Appendix B.

It was proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Green, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND:

That, subject to a revision to Appendix B, the Card Details Security Policy be adopted.

4. **DRAFT ESTIMATES 2018/19**

(a) **Capital Programme, Scale of Charges and Draft Estimates**

Consideration was given to a detailed report which provided a commentary on the preliminary revenue budgets for 2018/19, together with planned capital expenditure, contributions to reserves and balances and a Scale of Fees and Charges.

It was noted that all of the recommendations made at recent meetings of the Transport, Tourism, General Operations and Personnel Committees had been incorporated in the draft budgets, together with the budget setting principles, agreed by this Committee in November 2017.

Further to Minute No 13c) of the General Operations Committee held on 15th November 2017, consideration was given to a revised Schedule of Estimated Capital Expenditure for the years 2018/19 – 2020/21. It was noted that this incorporated a contribution of £62,500 towards a new fishermen's slipway at Peveril Point, as agreed under minute 7a) of the same meeting.

Attention was drawn to discussion at the Monthly Council meeting held on 27th November 2017 regarding the possibility of increasing the council's contribution towards the slipway project. However, it was agreed that this should remain at £62,500 at the current time. Following receipt of a request to employ relevant consultants to draw up detailed proposals, it was agreed that £1,500 be paid in the current financial year, and that the sum allocated in the Estimated Capital Programme should be reduced to £61,000.

Members expressed a desire to see an improved planting scheme on the northern end of the Recreation Ground prior to November 2018 and the Operations Manager was asked to investigate this further with respect to an estimated budget cost. The possibility of operating a memorial tree scheme was also raised for further consideration.

Following discussion, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Whitwam and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates Meeting that the revised Schedule of Estimated Capital Expenditure for the years 2018/19 – 2020/21 be accepted, incorporating the Priority Capital Programme for 2018/19.

Attention was drawn to the schedule of one-off revenue expenditure included at Appendix A of the Preliminary Budget Report. Particularly detailed consideration was given to the possible introduction of a barrier system at the Boat Park and improvements to the Shore Road beach hut doors, after which it was **AGREED:**

That the schedule of one-off revenue expenditure be approved for inclusion in the draft budgets for further consideration at the Estimates Meeting on 22nd January 2018, together with reports from relevant working parties, as set out below.

During the discussion on the items above, a number of matters were referred to meetings of the following working parties, and it was agreed that they should be considered prior to the Estimates Meeting:

- Public Conveniences – improvements to Burlington Chine, paddlegate installation at the Heritage Toilets and the future of North Beach public conveniences.
- Boat Park – improvements required prior to re-opening in May 2018 (including consideration of installation of barriers).
- Seafront Enhancement – improvements to Shore Road beach hut doors and replacement of locks.

It was also agreed that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairman of the Tourism Committee and relevant members of the management team should meet with the market operators early in the New Year.

Consideration was then given to the draft Scale of Fees and Charges for 2018/19. During the discussion the possibility was raised of introducing a seasonal permit solely for North Beach Car Park, which could be marketed to hotels and other accommodation providers in New Swanage. It was agreed that the Visitor Services Manager and the Tourism Committee Chairman would further explore the potential demand for such permits.

A schedule of amendments to the draft scale of charges in relation to the Boat Park, Beach Gardens and the Tourist Information Centre (copy attached at the end of these minutes) was submitted by the Visitor Services Manager. During the discussion, the possibility of re-introducing a 10% discount for early payment for grid spaces at the Boat Park was raised, and this was referred to the Boat Park Working Party.

Attention was drawn to the fact that Beach Gardens would open for the 2018 season on Good Friday, 30th March, but that the scale of charges was not due to come into effect until Easter Sunday, 1st April. It was AGREED:

That the draft Scale of Fees and Charges be amended so that the 2018/19 fees for Beach Gardens come into effect from 29th March 2018.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Green and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates Meeting that the Scale of Fees and Charges for 2018/19 be accepted as amended, incorporating the schedule of changes proposed by the Visitor Services Manager, subject to any further recommendations brought forward from relevant working parties.

It was noted that, as in previous years, the sum of £10,000 had been allocated for Grants, Donations and Contributions to Partner Organisations in the draft budgets. A separate budget had been allocated for payments made for the provision of services by third parties, such as funding for the school crossing patrol at Swanage Primary School and the grant to the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust to support the continuation of the youth service. As a consequence the full £10,000 of the grants and donations budget would again be available to local charities and voluntary groups.

Consideration was then given to the annual request from Dorset County Council – Highways seeking funding of the wages costs of the Swanage Primary School crossing patrol in 2018/19, and it was RESOLVED:-

To approve inclusion of funding for the Mount Scar school crossing patrol in the 2018/19 draft budgets at an estimated cost of £3,300.

Consideration was given to the Council's General Fund Balance and the precept to be set for 2018/19. During the ensuing discussion, it was reported that notification had now been received from Purbeck District Council that the Council Tax base is likely to have increased marginally year-on-year. It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Finch, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates meeting on 22nd January 2018 that the Estimates Book, with any required revisions, be approved and the level of precept to be levied for 2018/19 be increased by 2% to £718,030.

(b)

Reserves and Balances

Consideration was given to the Council's Reserves and Balances Policy, revised and adopted 23rd January 2017. It was reported, that in addition to the Useable Capital Receipts Reserve the Council had established the following earmarked reserves:

- Festive Lights
- Vehicle and Plant replacement
- King George's Play Area and Skate Park equipment replacement
- Forres Field changing facilities
- General Play Equipment replacement
- Car Park Machine upgrade
- Tennis Court refurbishment (to receive contributions from STC and Swanage Tennis Club)
- Repairs and Renewals Fund
- De Moulham Estate Service Road maintenance
- Public conveniences refurbishment
- IT equipment replacement
- F.J. Grace will trust (for public amenities in Swanage)
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Insurance and contingency reserve

In light of the proposed capital programme for 2018/19 to 2020/21, the possible re-allocation of the Repairs and Renewals Fund as a Seafront Enhancement Reserve to fund the costs of the proposed improvements to the Spa, Weather Station Field and Sandpit Field was considered and agreed.

It was also noted that the Insurance and Contingency Reserves should be utilised to hold funds to finance any one-off expenditure resulting from the proposed Local Government Re-organisation for Dorset. It was reported that this fund currently held £40,000.

It was noted that the above reserves are projected to contain just under £1.1 million at 31st March 2018 and that the draft three-year capital programme showed £1,330,000 being spent from the reserves by 31st March 2021.

It was AGREED:-

TO RECOMMEND to the Estimates meeting on 22nd January 2018 that an updated Policy on Reserves and Balances be approved and adopted, incorporating the above amendments.

5. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS**

a) **NOTIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR**

A letter had been received from the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA) notifying the Council of the newly appointed external auditor, PFK

Littlejohn LLP. The letter also outlined the requirement to notify the SAAA of any potential conflict. No conflict was reported.

The Town Clerk highlighted the change to the Annual Return, which would now be known as the “Annual Governance and Accountability Return”. The details of any resulting changes to the return were not known at this time, but would be reported at a later date.

6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee would be held at 9.30 a.m. on Monday, 15th January 2017.

The meeting concluded at 11.50 a.m.

Amended fees and charges	Tourism Committee 22 nd November 2017	Amended Charge
Boat Park		
Slipway Launch Annual Ticket	£500	£250
Slipway launch fee for residents – 25% discount	£0.00	£21.00
Beach Gardens - Tennis		
Coaching of adult non-members per hour	N/A	£4.30
Coaching of child non-members per hour	N/A	£0
Beach Gardens - Bowls		
Hire of Slips		
Hire of Woods	£2.50	£2.00
Beach Gardens - Putting		
Adult season ticket	£55	£49
Family season ticket (2 adults plus up to 2 children)	£140	£125
Beach Gardens – Table Tennis		
Table tennis bat and ball hire	New	£1.00
Swanage Information Centre		
Umbrella hire	New	£10 per week
Additional beach hut chair	New	£5 a week
Additional beach hut key	New	£10 per booking