

**MINUTES of a MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016 in the Council Chamber at the St Austell One Stop Shop, 39 Penwinnick Road, St Austell at 6.00 pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Brown, French, Lanxon, Leonard, Murtagh, Oxenham, Palmer and Walker.

**In attendance:** David Pooley (Town Clerk), Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk).

**Also in attendance:** Councillor Heyward.

**F/15/58) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bradford and Murtagh.

**F/15/59) Declarations of Interest**

Councillor French declared an interest in agenda item 7 by virtue of being Chairman/Treasurer of the St Austell MCTI.

**F/15/60) Dispensations**

There were no requests for dispensations.

**F/15/61) Minutes of meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**F/15/62) Matters to Note**

The Clerk advised that further to minute number **F/15/54** the Priory Car Park public conveniences have been transferred to the Town Council under a Tenancy at Will for 12 months. The self-opening/closing pay machines have been installed and the contractors are due back within a few days to stain the new doors. The dispute with the allotment holder has been resolved and the allotments should be transferred to the Town Council during the first week of May.

Arising from the above, Councillor Palmer advised that under EU legislation all car park pay machines would have to be contactless card friendly by 2020.

**F/15/63) Public participation**

There were no members of the public present.

**F/15/64) St Austell CIC (Councillor French)**

Councillor French advised that in 2006 a St Austell CIC was set up to oversee the production of the St Austell MCTI plan. The document was shaped by an extensive consultation process and covers themes such as Environment, Economy, Leisure and Culture, Social and Community and Infrastructure. Councillor French advised that the St Austell CIC would like to update the document, wind up the CIC and hand over the custodianship of the document and the remaining funding to the Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the custodianship of the updated St Austell MCTI plan and the remaining funding to enable the winding up of the St Austell CIC.

### **F/15/65) Review of Standing Committees**

The Clerk referred Members to Councillor Brown's document and thanked Councillor Brown for his suggestions. Councillor Brown advised that a review of the Standing Committees was relevant in the light of the proposed devolution of services over the coming months and that his suggestions were based on the existing Terms of Reference for each committee. The Committee agreed to review each Committee and made the following recommendations.

#### Planning Committee

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the full Council consider:

- i. Changing the name of the Committee to Planning and Regeneration Committee.
- ii. Changing the purpose to dealing with planning, regeneration, economic development, highways and licensing matters on behalf of the Council.
- iii. Adding as an additional responsibility "to consider issues, consultation documents and policy initiatives relating to the regeneration and economic development of the St Austell area and to respond, on the Council's behalf, as appropriate."
- iv. Adding as an additional responsibility "to direct all activity designed to regenerate the town and promote economic development in the St Austell area."
- v. Adding the same Spending Limit responsibility as applies to the Communities Committee.
- vi. Changing the first delegation "to responses to consultations on planning and other consultations relating to matters within the remit of the Committee."

#### Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the full Council consider:

- i. Transferring the responsibility to direct the Council's communications activity from the Communities Committee.
- ii. Adding responsibility to manage the following services:
  - Library
  - Car Parks
  - Public Conveniences
- iii. Adding a responsibility to oversee any issues relating to Property and Information Technology.

## Community Committee

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the full Council consider:

- i. Changing the first responsibility to direct all activity designed to improve the community and cultural life of the St Austell area including the environment.
- ii. Taking over the responsibility to manage the Council's allotments and to oversee the allotments budget, together with overseeing any activity designed to improve allotment provision for local people from the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- iii. Re-confirm responsibility to manage contracts for:
  - CCTV
  - Footpath maintenance
  - Weed treatment
- iv. Adding as an additional responsibility to manage the sports grounds, open spaces, verges and bus shelters which are owned, leased or managed by the Town Council.
- v. Adding as an additional responsibility to oversee any issues relating to youth services and The House.

It was further **RECOMMENDED** that:

- i. The Devolution Working Group continue and be responsible for considering major issues relating to the devolution of services from Cornwall Council reporting to the Town Council;
- ii. Consideration is given to moving reports from representatives on outside bodies from the Council agenda to the most relevant committee and naming the outside body on the agenda.

### **F/15/66) Draft Accounts**

The Clerk explained the draft annual Accounts for the 2015/16 financial year. He outlined the changes to fixed assets, the general working balances and a number of proposed transfers to and from reserves. He advised that there was still a great deal of uncertainty with regard to the devolution of services and the costs involved. It was anticipated that the reserves available would be required to meet set up costs such as vehicle and machinery acquisitions, legal fees and unforeseen costs.

In view of the difficulties with regard to budgeting and the potential costs faced by the Council, Members expressed the need for a prudent approach to spending on projects and grants in the future.

It was **RESOLVED** to ask the Community Committee to scrutinise any projects and grants very carefully in the forthcoming year and to not exceed the approved budgets without the agreement of the full Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and approve the transfers to and from reserves outlined in the report.

#### **F/15/67) Budget Monitoring Report**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the budget monitoring report and bank reconciliation statement.

#### **F/15/68) Asset Management and Insurance Issues Update**

The Clerk advised Members of the technical changes to the Asset Register with regard to the office computers and allotments and the addition of a CCTV camera.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the revised Asset Register as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

#### **F/15/69) Risk Management**

The Clerk updated Members on the Town Council's latest Risk Management arrangements. It was noted that the Risk Management Strategy and Risk Management Policy Statement had both received little changes from the previous year but the Risk Register had been revised particularly with regard to the risks associated with the devolution process.

Members considered the risks identified in the Risk Register and felt that it would be appropriate for the full Council to consider and identify the risks involved.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Risk Management Strategy and Risk Management Policy Statement.

It was further **RESOLVED** to report the Risk Register to full Council for consideration.

#### **F/15/70) Treasury Management**

The Clerk updated Members on the Town Council's Treasury Management arrangements including an investment with Cornwall Council. Members noted the interest received for the past three financial years and the low risk approach taken.

Arising from the above, Members stressed a desire for the Town Council to be investing money as ethically as possible.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and to seek to invest ethically where possible.

It was further **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should write to Cornwall Council to ask what their current ethical policy is with regard to Treasury Management.

*\*\* Councillor Lanxon left the meeting\*\**

#### **F/15/71) Scheme of Members' Allowances**

The Clerk introduced a report suggesting that the Member's Scheme of Allowances should be re-confirmed for the forthcoming financial year.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Member's Scheme of Allowances should be approved as set out in the report.

### **F/15/72) Our Place**

The Clerk advised Members that in order to comply with the Town Council's Financial Regulations approval was needed to transfer £1,250 of the £3,250 "Our Place" grant to Young People Cornwall for various expenses relating to safety checks and minor works relating to The House. The Clerk explained that the balance of the grant had funded the production and printing of an Operational Plan, staff time and legal expenses.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the payment of invoices totalling £1,250 to Young People Cornwall utilizing funds received from the "Our Place" grant.

### **F/15/73) Dates of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committees are Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

The meeting closed at 7.32pm.