

MINUTES of a MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 1st JULY 2019 in the Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, PL25 5DP at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Cohen, Colwill, French, Jones, King, Lanxon, Oxenham, Palmer, Rees and Walker

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

F/19/01) Election of Chairman

Councillor Jones asked for nominations for Chairman. Nominations were received for Councillors Jones and Councillor Oxenham.

It was **RESOLVED** that the election of Chairman should be undertaken by way of a secret ballot.

A secret ballot was undertaken and Councillor Jones received 8 votes and Councillor Oxenham received 2 votes.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Jones be elected as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the 2019/20 civic year.

F/19/02) Election of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Jones asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Nominations were received for Councillors Palmer and Oxenham.

It was **RESOLVED** that the election of Vice-Chairman should be undertaken by way of a secret ballot.

A secret ballot was undertaken and Councillor Oxenham received 6 votes and Councillor Palmer received 4 votes.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Oxenham be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the 2019/20 civic year.

F/19/03) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bishop, Brown and Styles.

Councillor Palmer advised that he needed to leave at 7.30pm.

F/19/04) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

F/19/05) Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

F/19/06) Minutes of meeting held on 8th April 2019

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 8th April 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Councillors French, King and Walker abstained from voting on this matter

F/19/07) Matters to Note

In response to a question, the Clerk advised that the tarmacking work had been carried out to a good standard in Priory Car Park and that officers were pleased with the manner in which the contractor had performed the work. He also advised that the work on the wall was progressing well and that the quality of the work appeared to be very good.

F/19/08) Public participation

There were no members of the public present.

F/19/09) Internal Audit Report

The Clerk advised that the Council had received the Internal Auditor's Report at its annual meeting in May but felt that it was important to highlight the Auditor's comments with regard to the adequacy of the Town Council's reserves. The Internal Auditor suggested that the Council's General Reserve was possibly slightly low. The Clerk advised that the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance had issued guidance recently that suggested that a Council's General Reserve should be between 3 and 12 months net expenditure. Members noted the Audit report and guidance on reserves.

F/19/10) Budget Monitoring Report

The Clerk introduced a report setting out a budget monitoring report and explained the significant variances which were highlighted. He explained that £15,000 grant funding had been received from the Police and Crime Commissioner for CCTV, that £15,000 grant had been received from the Pocket Parks initiative and that £16,000 had been paid to the Town Council by Cornwall Council for Poltair Park Café fitting out. Car Park income was slightly down against budget and expenditure included the purchase of a new vehicle and the completion of the CCTV upgrade. He advised that overall the expenditure was reasonably in line with budget.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

F/19/11) Members Allowances Scheme

Members considered a draft Members Allowances Scheme for the 2019/20 financial year. Members highlighted a number of issues including the cost of running electric vehicles and the potential for the authority to support Councillors in working in a paper free manner. The Clerk undertook to produce a report setting out the cost of printing and publishing Council agendas.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Members Allowances Scheme as drafted.

F/19/12) Data Protection

It was **RESOLVED** to note the correspondence received from the Information Commissioners' Office.

F/19/13) Poltair Café

The Clerk provided an update on progress with the Poltair Café. He advised that the shell of the building was nearing completion. Work was underway with a consultant to draft a specification and lease. There was potential to have a trial café facility operating this summer to assess demand. Currently, the building has no electricity or CCTV. One flower bed has been planted and further planting is required. A meeting is due to take place shortly with an Environmental Health Officer to assess the legal requirements for the kitchen area. Councillor Hanlon was assisting with accessibility issues. It is anticipated that there will be an official handover of the café to the Town Council in the next few weeks. Issues to be considered include waste management and the ability to support the Council's aspirations with regard to being plastic free, healthy eating and re-cycling. The Clerk explained that a lot of these issues would be addressed through the tender process and through contract evaluation.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the update and progress to date.

F/19/14) St Austell Library

The Deputy Town Clerk referred to the newsletter circulated previously and advised that footfall for June was 7,609. She explained that Cornwall Council no longer publish the footfall statistics and that there was the potential that they may no longer measure footfall in the future. Members stressed the importance of footfall figures as a measure of the popularity of the library service.

The Deputy Clerk advised that the Town Council had recently hosted a visit from Truro City Council at the library to help it understand how the Town Council manages the library. She explained that the library door is due to be fitted this week and that SALSA would be entering South West in Bloom "Its your Neighbourhood" competition. She also advised that the coffee machine has been well received -and that staff were investigating the potential to install a debit/credit card machine to accept payments by card.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and to instruct the Town Clerk to write to Cornwall Council requesting that it retains a measure of footfall to help Members assess the take up of the service.

F/19/15) Carlyon Road Bus Shelter

The Clerk advised that the Community Committee at its meeting on the 1st April 2019 **RESOLVED** to write to Cornwall Council expressing the desire to retain the bus shelter at Carlyon Road and the potential for the Town Council to adopt the shelter if Cornwall Council refurbish and bring it up to standard. The Clerk advised that the decision had been made to refurbish the bus shelter, utilising CORMAC with Cornwall Council paying 2/3rds of the cost and SABEF picking up the balance and funding art work on the shelter which would be designed in conjunction with local schools. The Town Council would be expected to maintain the shelter in the future and there would be a need to ensure that the art work is robust and repairable.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree to maintain the bus shelter subject to being consulted about the proposed art work prior to installation.

F/19/16) Dates of next meeting

It was noted that the next meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee are due to take place on Monday 23rd September 2019 and Monday 11th November 2019.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm