

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE COMMITTEE held via Zoom at 7.37pm on Monday 12 October 2020

Present: Cllrs A Baker, A Damadoran, A Layland, N Lloyd (Chairman), M McArthur, S McGregor, J Scholey and B Todd.

In attendance: Cllr J Aldridge, Town Clerk and Finance Officer. No members of the press or public were present.

The Chairman read an advisory statement on the guidelines for conducting an on-line meeting under the Council's standing orders.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received. Cllrs Z Roberts Smith and S Sumner were absent.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS OR PREDETERMINATION

None.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Vice Chairman of the Finance and Governance Committee had stepped down from the position. Councillor J Scholey was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman.

4. TO RECEIVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 JULY 2020

Resolved: that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7 July be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR REPORT AND NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

None

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

Members noted in detail the income and expenditure transactions for the month and

Resolved: that Cllrs N Lloyd and A Layland should sign the Financial Statement for the first five months of the current financial year (up to 31 August 2020) confirming the analysis of receipts and payments, paid expenditure transactions. To approve the financial comparisons and to accept the transfers into and out of reserve accounts.

6.6 Fund Transfer

Capital Reserves

Transfer In: Nil

Transfer Out: Nil

Revenue reserves

Transfer In: £277,487.00 (Precept)

Transfer Out: £45,000.00 (April 2020)
£35,000.00 (May 2020)
£40,000.00 (June 2020)
£61,000.00 (July 2020)
£20,000.00 (August 2020)

6.7 Paragraphs 5.1 to 5.5 approved by resolution of the Council:

6.8 Invoices outstanding for more than 3months

7. FINANCE BUSINESS

7.1 Members' Allowances

Members noted the option of asking the Remuneration Panel to set allowances for Parish or Town Councils at a cost to the Council, and

Resolved: not to ask the Remuneration Panel to set an allowance, but members would continue to claim the mileage rate set by the Inland Revenue for out of parish travel expenses. This allowance will be reviewed every four years in future prior to an election.

7.2 KALC online Finance Conference

Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) had notified the Council of the Annual Finance Conference to be held via Zoom on Wednesday 14 October. Members

Resolved: to retrospectively approve the space the RFO had booked for this session at a cost of £50 plus VAT.

7.3 To confirm the annual Direct Debits

Members noted the list of the annual Direct Debits which had been presented to members at the July Finance meeting, had been updated to show the frequency of these payments. Members noted in future, this will be approved annually at the June meeting, following the annual meeting of the Town Council and

Resolved: to approve the revised listing.

8. FINANCE CORRESPONDENCE

None

9. GOVERNANCE BUSINESS

Members noted the Council's new Terms of Reference which were adopted by the full Council in January 2020. As part of the review of its Committees structure, it included firmer Governance controls and these have been incorporated with the Finance Committee. The Finance and Governance Committee has delegated authority to make decisions once the general policy and expenditure had been approved by the Town Council. The powers were to be exercised in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and any approved policy framework and within the approved budget.

9.1 Members noted the Internal Auditor's end of year 2019/20 report was received by Full Council at the July meeting and the approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

9.2 Members were asked to note the AGAR had been sent electronically to PKF Littlejohn (the External Auditor) at the end of July. 'The Notice: Exercise of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Return' had been placed on the Council's website and notice board on 30 July, including the documentation specified by the External Auditor, in line with the Governance and Accountability instructions. This was removed on 16 September when a period of 30 working days had passed.

9.3 Meeting with new Internal Auditor

Members were advised that a meeting with the Council's new Internal Auditor (Keith Robertson), Town Clerk, Chairman of the Finance Committee and RFO had taken place on Thursday 8 October. The Chairman said that he had a lot of experience of working with Councils in various roles, and would be a great help to the RFO and Finance Committee in the future.

9.4 Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and Leases

Members were advised that the Council now had three SLA's in place which had been operating very well. The agreements are between Edenbridge Town Council and (1)

Eden Valley Museum Trust (EVMT), (2) Edenbridge and District Twinning Association (E&DTA) and (3) West Kent Extra to cover the HOUSE project. The agreements required an interim report on progress and spending, along with any request for funding for 2021/22, to have been submitted to the Council by 30 September 2020. Representatives from the Lease/SLA Negotiating Group had met with West Kent Extra HOUSE project and EVMT recently. The RFO had spoken to E&DTA who had not been able to carry out any planned visits this year. All organisations would be submitting Interim Reports and requests for funding for the Grants meeting in November.

The secretary of E&DTA had written to the Council to express their thanks for the Council's ongoing support. The coordinator at HOUSE had also emailed to express their thanks to the Council.

The Clerk and members of the Lease Negotiation Group had held successful meetings with Nomads Football Club, Edenbridge Cricket Club and Edenbridge Rugby Football Club.

9.5 Review of Capital and Reserve Policy

Members

Resolved: to recommend the full Council to adopt the draft Capital and Reserves Policy, prepared by The Clerk and Chairman of the Finance and Governance Committee.

9.6 Mourning Protocol

Members discussed the Mourning Protocol. There were some minor changes recommended, otherwise Members,

Resolved: to adopt the Mourning Protocol.

10. PRESS RELEASE

None

The meeting closed at 8.15pm