



Minutes of the Special Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting on Tuesday 1st May 2018

Present

Councillors: Sanham (Chairman), Beer and Squire

In attendance: Town Clerk

165 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Burrows, Rowland and Read.

165 Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were made

165 Standing Orders

Discussion took place around:

Standing Order 1 – Meetings generally

- Paragraph (j) be amended to delete the last sentence and to end the previous sentence with 'at the discretion of the chairman'
- Councillors felt that it would be a good idea to update the leaflet that was previously used so that members of the public know what they need to do in terms of speaking at meetings and also to add in reference to filming and recording meetings
- Paragraph (y) be amended to add the following 'If the meeting looks like it will go over the two hour limit, the Chairman will check with the Committee as to whether they wish to continue.'
- Paragraph (z) – the Committee asked the Town Clerk to check the Openness of Local Bodies Regulations 2014 regarding Councillors using electronic communications during meetings

Standing Order 2 – Ordinary Council Meetings

- Paragraph (j) bullet point v – to delete this bullet point
- Paragraph (j) bullet point xiv – to remove reference to the Data Protection Act 1998 and to include reference to the General Data Protection Regulations 2018

Standing Order 3 – Proper Officer

- Paragraph (a) – the Committee felt that the agenda should be published 5 clear days before the meeting as per good practice rather than the legal requirement of 3 clear days, together with all supporting documents
- Paragraph (i) - to remove reference to the Data Protection Act 1998 and to include reference to the General Data Protection Regulations 2018

- Paragraph (k) – to finish the sentence with ‘in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Document Retention Guidelines
- Paragraph (p) – to add in the wording ‘in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000)

Standing Order 5 – Motions requiring written notice

- Paragraph (d) in the last sentence delete the word ‘clear’ so that it reads at least 8 days before the meeting
- Keep paragraph (h) rather than deleting it as originally suggested

Standing Order 8 – Code of Conduct

- To add in another paragraph after (b) to refer to what happens, as per the Councils Code of Conduct, if a Councillor has a personal interest, i.e. declare interest, stay in the room, take part in the debate and vote.

Standing Order 10 – Minutes

- Paragraph (a) – to be reworded as follows ‘draft minutes of all Council and Committee meetings to be copied to all councillors and published on the website’

Standing Order 13 – Voting on Appointments

- To add in at the end of the section the wording of ‘The Council’s Co-option Policy will be followed at all times’

Standing Order 16 – Committees and Sub-Committees

- Paragraph (d) – remove the bullet points v, vi, vii and ix as they are not relevant
- Paragraph (d) – add in a new bullet point which says ‘may dissolve a committee’

Standing Order 20 – Estimates/Precepts

- Paragraph (b) – amend the wording so that instead of Proper Officer it reads ‘F&GP Committee

Standing Order 21 – Predetermination and Bias

- The standing order be amended from previous title of Canvassing of and recommendations by a Committee to Predetermination and Bias.
- Wording to be added in to reflect the areas of Predetermination and Bias

Standing Order 23 – Restrictions on Councillors Activities

- The Committee requested that the Town Clerk get advice on this section as to whether this applies to planning visits and allotments

Standing Order 25 – Matters affecting Council employees

- Once the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee have been agreed the Committee requested that the Town Clerk ensure that this section dovetails with the ToR

Standing Order 26 – Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004

- This Standing Order to be amended to include the General Data Protection Regulations 2018

Standing Order 28 – Liaison with District and County Councillors

- Paragraph (a) to be amended to ‘together with the agenda and minutes’
- Paragraph (b) be removed

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend the standing orders to the Annual General Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 8th May for approval, subject to the amendments listed above.

(Moved Cllr Beer; seconded Cllr Squire)

165 Financial Regulations

Discussion took place around:

Section 2 – Annual Estimates (Budget) and Forward Planning

- Paragraph 2.1 amend the wording so that it reflects that the Council sets an annual budget and then produces an forward plan for 5 years

Section 3 – Budgetary Control and Authority to spend

- Paragraph 3.1 – to ask the Council AGM to refer this section back to the Finance Committee for further discussion as the Committee felt that a more detail debate is required on the levels of authorised expenditure
- Paragraph 3.3 – the Committee felt that the figure of £100 or 15% of the budget was acceptable
- Paragraph 3.4 - 3rd line down to remove the wording ‘Chairman of the’ so that it reads ‘copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Personnel Committee’
- Paragraph 3.5 – to add some wording to make it clear that approval be done retrospectively at the next Committee

Section 4 – Accounting and Audit (Internal and External)

- Paragraph 4.4 - To check the wording with the NALC guidance as it doesn’t seem to read correctly.
- Paragraph 4.10 – to amend the wording so that it reads ‘The Council will review their Internal Auditor every 3 years to ensure that independence and objectivity are maintained

Section 5 – Banking arrangements and Cheques

- Paragraph 5.1 – to remove the last sentence but Finance Committee to review this and consider adding it in if the Council decides to start using internet banking
- Paragraph 5.6 to be amended to show that cheque signatories to be reviewed by Council at the first meeting of the financial year

Section 7 – payment of salaries

- Paragraph 7.4 – in light of the changes under the new GDPR to move the Events Officer salary so that it is under the administration budget and that details of her salary are not obvious to members of the public

Section 10 – Orders for work, goods and services

- To include a paragraph on pro-forma invoices to make it clear that a pro-forma invoice will only be paid in exceptional circumstances and only where there is a clear audit trail to accompany the pro-forma invoice

Section 14 – Assets, Property and Estates

- Paragraph 14.2 – the financial limit to be £200 rather than £50

Section 19 – Finance System

- Paragraph 19.2 – that the words ‘and any members using computers for the council’s financial business’ be removed

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend the Financial Regulations to the Annual General Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 8th May for approval, subject to the amendments listed above.

(Moved Cllr Beer; seconded Cllr Squire)

165 Internal Controls

Discussion took place around:

- The need to consider the process and procedure for the debit card at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend the Internal Controls to the Annual General Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 8th May for approval.

(Moved Cllr Beer; seconded Cllr Squire)

165 Asset Register

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend the Asset Register to the Annual General Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 8th May for approval.

(Moved Cllr Beer; seconded Cllr Squire)

165 Risk Assessment

The Town Clerk confirmed that, following the consideration of the risk assessment by the Councillors working group, that the risk assessment system is in the process of being updated and the report will be brought back to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

165 Bank Reconciliation

The Committee reviewed the Bank Reconciliation as at the 31st March 2018, including the bank statement, the list of outstanding payments and receipts that have not yet been received.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliation as at the 31st March 2018.

(Moved Cllr Beer; seconded Cllr Squire)

165 Budget Outturn for 2017/18

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the outturn position following the year end adjustments.

Discussion took place around the changes following the report to the Committee on the 16th April 2018, as follows:

Administration

- The outturn position had changed as some of the expenditure relating to the Town Guide had gone against the Parishes Together project code 2167 meaning that the outturn figure now stands at -£1,633.89

Allotments

- The outturn position had changed and is now £825.73

Amenities

- The outturn position had changed and is now £1,943.70

Community

- The underspend balance for the Air Ambulance donations code 2157 had changed due to the production of a map for the planning process. The outturn figure for carrying forward is now £5,536.82

Marshlands

- The outturn figure had changed slightly and is now £15,480.44

Parishes Together Funding

- The Town Clerk confirmed that the Parishes Together funding awarded at the end of the 2017/18 financial year has been received and that this is now showing a zero balance at year end.

The overall budgetary outturn position at the end of the 2017/18 financial year was an underspend of £29,592.33 plus earmarked reserves of £27934.24.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the budget outturn report and recommended that it be presented to the next meeting of the Council.
(moved Cllr Beer; seconded Cllr Squire)

The meeting ended at 9.45pm

Chairman: _____

Dated: _____