

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE
COUNCIL OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, ON WEDNESDAY 2ND APRIL 2014 AT 7.30PM

Present: Councillor C Francis-Pester Committee Chairman
 Councillor, C Blades, B Garner, P. McNeill, J Middleton, T. Morgan, J. Norton-Sealey, N Pennycott, D Shopland (8.05), G Watkins, C Wring
 Town Clerk – Ms P. Heath,
 In attendance Councillors B Hatch, J Geldart.

FGP 14/407 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors, C Hall, & G Hill (illness)

FGP 14/408 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest on items on the agenda at this point ; declaration made later.

FGP 14/409 RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 8TH JANUARY 2014

The minutes of the Finance & General Policy Committee meetings held on 8th January 2014 and ratified by Council on 12th March 2014 were accepted.

FGP 14/410 RECEIVE AND AGREE THE FGP COMMITTEE BUDGET 2013/2014.

Members received and noted the finance papers that had been circulated with the agenda

PART 1

FGP 14/411 CLARIFY AND SET UP A PROCEDURE FOR PAYMENT AUTHORISATION FOR ONLINE BANKING AND AMENDMENT TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOLLOWING THE ALTERATIONS TO LGA 1972 S 150(5)

Members received the draft amendments to the Financial Regulations as circulated with the agenda. Members noted the inclusion of provision for the preloaded debit cards details of which would be presented to the next meeting for a decision.

Proposed, seconded and **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the financial regulations are amended to include the amendments to section 5.3 and 5.4 as circulated with the agenda.

FGP 14/12 RECEIVE QUOTATIONS FOR TOWN COUNCIL INSURANCE AND AGREE PREFERRED COMPANY.

Cllr Francis-Pester declared a personal interest as an ex-employee of one of the companies

.A breakdown of the quotations had been circulated with the agenda

Proposed, Seconded and **RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL** that this Council takes out a 3 year deal with Zurich Insurance as they provide the best value for money of the 3 quotes over the breakdown.

PART 2

FGP 14/413 RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF THE AUDIT & ACCOUNTABILITY ACT 2014 AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE ACCOUNTANCY REQUIREMENTS

Members received and noted the report from the Town Clerk on the new Audit & Accountability Act 2014. Members noted that areas of the Act which could impact on the future financial and accountability of the Council. In response to a question it was confirmed that the Act did allow for all Council/Committee meetings to be filmed but the statutory instrument giving details had not yet been issued.

FGP 14/414 RECEIVE VERBAL REPORT ON STAFF APPRAISALS, TO DISCUSS RECOMMENDATION AS ATTACHED

The Town Clerk gave a report on the staff appraisals carried out in January. In response to a question it was noted the February Committee meeting where these would have been discussed had been cancelled. Staff assessments are carried out formally once a year although there is a programme of rolling assessments all year. The Chairman explained that the Town Clerk had a formal assessment annually and 2 or 3 informal assessments during the year, therefore any issues can be dealt with in a timely manner as they arise.

Members noted the written report that had been circulated with the agenda showing future costing needs for training, plus a background explanation for the recommendations to the FGP committee in respect future employment management in keeping with their role as employers.

The Members discussed the recommendations shown below at length.

- That the Council obtains an independent assessment to carry out a review and make a report direct to Council of all staff working hours, and pay, looking at individual responsibilities and abilities in line with the NALC/SLCC evaluation, to ensure all staff members are on the correct spine points, with sufficient hours to undertake the work load required by Council, Committees and Government. To recommend any changes of contracts, procedures and working practices to Council.

The Town Clerk and Chairman explained that this would enable the Council to comply with the requirement of employment law for a fair and unbiased assessment based on the job and not the personalities involved. Members, although agreeing that a review and assessment should be carried out, were in differing minds as to whether this should be done in-house or independently.

It was **AGREED** to place this on the next FGP Agenda to enable an investigation of options to be presented to the Committee.

- That this assessment is carried out prior to the Town Council elections in May 2015 and any recommended changes put in place prior to May 2015.
This would be included in the above item for the next agenda
- That following the independent assessment the Council schedules in annual assessments of all staff members to be reported to the Finance & General Policy Committee.
This would be included in the above item on the next agenda

- That Mrs Johnson changes her work days from September to Wednesday/Thursday/Friday.

This was **AGREED** and would be implemented.

In response to a question on the staff structure it was explained that this was the staff structure in existence and had been since at least 2008 when the current Town Clerk was interviewed and employed. The Chairman of FGP acts as the Town Clerk line manager for personal issues only in line with the Councils Grievance policy, Discipline procedure and policy, and standing Orders No. 26. The Chairman of the Council works with the Town Clerk and staff as leader of the Council but in respect grievance or discipline aspects he acts as the appeal therefore needs to be independent of the initial conversations; this is in keeping with general employment law and based on ACAS recommendations.

Cllr Shopland arrived

The Town Clerk left the room at 8.05 pm for the following item

FGP 14/415 RECEIVE THE TOWN CLERKS STAFF APPRAISAL BY THE CHAIRMAN AND DISCUSS ITEMS ARISING

The following decisions were recorded by the Committee Chairman.

Proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that subject to Town Council standing Orders and HR Policy the Town Clerks appraisal be made available at the next Finance & General Policy Meeting, to be reviewed and returned to the Clerk at that meeting.

[NB: Following legal advice obtained from South West Employers (this Council HR advisor), ACAS, and practices by adjacent public authorities. The appraisal document is confidential to the officers involved in the appraisal. Members of the Committee may view the document at the Town Clerks discretion.]

Town Clerk returned at 8.20pm and informed that this item had been deferred to 18th June 2014 meeting.

FGP 14/416 DISCUSS AND MAKE A DECISION FOLLOWING THE ABOVE AGENDA ITEM TO PURCHASE BACK THE TOIL OUTSTANDING AT 31ST MARCH 2014.

Members were informed of the number of TOIL (time of in Lieu) hours held by The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk in total 68 at a cost of £938.00

Members discussed at length the reason behind the build-up of TOIL hours and the work load of all staff members. There was discussion on how the amount of TOIL could be limited. Members also discussed whether a year without any major projects would see the workload reduced although they accepted that there was still some work required on the archive side. This should be addressed within the proposed review.

Proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the Council will purchase the outstanding TOIL hours from the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk from 2014/2015 budget 4008/101

Cllr Hatch and Cllr Geldart left the meeting

FGP 14/417 RECEIVE REPORT ON THE AVON PENSION INVESTMENT FORUM ATTENDED BY CLLR WATKINS

Cllr Watkins gave a brief verbal report on the Pension Investment Forum. The Pension appears in good shape and there is no indication of problems meeting its obligations.

FGP 14/418 RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON CHANGES TO THE LOCAL PENSION SCHEME BY TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk explained the changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme from 1st April 2014.

FGP 14/419 RECEIVE FOR FIRST CONSIDERATION DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES;

A draft copy of the Terms of References based on current practice had been circulated to all Members with the Agenda. Members noted these and the timescale indicated on the agenda. It was noted that these could only be considered as guidelines for the new council elected in 2015.

It was **AGREED** following a discussion to delay the start of this procedure until after the final decision by the Boundary Commission on ward changes; this had been delayed due to appeals on 2 separate areas within North Somerset. There has been no appeal for the Clevedon proposals or on the number of Councillors per ward as per Councils minute 13/387

FGP 14/420 RECEIVE RESPONSE FROM HMRC CONCERNING THE VAT IMPLICATIONS ON THE TOILETS AND HALL RENTALS

Members noted the response from the HMRC and the information contained within.

FGP 14/421 RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF INCREASE IN RRP OF GREEN RECYCLING BAGS FROM £1.50 TO £2.50 AND DECIDE IF THE COUNCIL WISH TO CONTINUE PROVIDING THIS FACILITY

Members discussed the provision of the service of providing green bags; it was **AGREED** to continue.

FGP 14/422 RECEIVE REQUEST FOR THE COUNCIL TO PROVIDE A BUSINESS CARD FORMAT SO THAT COUNCILLORS AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE, PRODUCE A CARD WITHIN THE SET FORMAT

Members discussed the request from a Councillor and refused the request.

FGP14/423 RECEIVE EMAIL FROM LOCAL WORKS RE REQUEST UNDER SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT AND DECIDE IF THE COMMITTEE WISH TO SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT.

Cllr Shopland declared a prejudicial interest as a business rate payer and took no part in the discussion.

Members discussed the letter and possible implications of the proposals. It was agreed, by a vote of 7 – 0 with Cllr Shopland abstaining, to send a letter of support for the principle of the proposals.

FGP 14/424 CHAIRMAN ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

There were no Chairman’s items for Information

FGP 14/425 DETERMINE PART I AND PART II ITEMS.

Part 1 items agenda item 5 the financial regulations amendments and Agenda item 14 the Insurance Quotation.

Meeting closed at 9.02pm

CHAIRMAN DATE