



EMERSONS GREEN
TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee
21st February 2019**

Present: Councillors, C Johnson, S Hill & R Nichols

Attendees: Cate Davidson (Clerk) and a representative of Emersons Green Primary School (NR)

Members noted the evacuation procedures.

376 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors S Budd, U Shepherd, P Todd & B Wiltshire.

In the absence of the Chairman Cllr R Nichols chaired the meeting.

377 Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011

No interests were declared at this time.

385 Grants

The Committee agreed to bring this item forward and the Chairman invited NR to address members. Members were provided with a report including the 3 quotes that have been received for the completion of new outdoor play equipment. Members were informed the school was built in 2000 and is a Resource Base for visually impaired and disabled children. The existing outdoor play equipment has been in place since the school was built, photographs were passed around. The School Council has raised replacement of the play equipment as a priority.

The following questions were asked (*answers in italics*):

- Will the school be match funding any grant the Council approves? *The School is not in a position to do this, however there is £1,000 funding from Tesco Bags for Life scheme.*
- Why has the school not got a budget for the replacement of equipment? *The PTA had funds for this project, but these were diverted to an IT project. With budgets being so stretched items like play equipment are a long way down the list of priorities.*
- £20,000 is a large amount for play equipment, why is it so much? *Half of the cost is for an accessible roundabout; however, this is a wish list and if all the funding was not available plans could be adapted.*
- How many children are in the Resource Base? *Currently 12 children with 8 more with additional needs in the mainstream school. Funding for these children has reduced recently. There are 273 children in the school altogether.*
- Does South Glos Council give a capital budget each year for things like this? *Yes, SGC does give capital funding but due to budget restraints this now has to go on building maintenance.*
- Does the school look to increase income from renting the buildings out? *Yes, there is a holiday club which uses the building, an after-school club which is for EGPS children only and the Scouts, but this is done at a reduced rent as it is for local children. The School is currently looking at maximising income from the Pod. (At this point Cllr R Nichols declared an interest as he has made enquiries about the Pod).*

- Has the School done any fund raising for this project? *Not currently however it could look at this in the future.* Members suggested the District Councillors are approached as they have MAF available.

The Chairman thanked NR for attending and advised that this committee will take its recommendation to Full Council for a decision in March.

Members had a lengthy discussion with the following points noted:

- The School should have accounted for this and been accruing funds for the replacement of the equipment.
- EGTC has several schools in its catchment area and any grant awarded could lead the way for other schools to submit applications.
- Children do need to be encouraged to be outside and run around.
- Should the Council ask the school to match fund the grant?

It was **Resolved** that this committee makes a recommendation to Full Council that a grant of £7,000 is awarded towards the cost of a new Trim Trail.

Action: Clerk to take recommendation to Full Council

378 To approve Minutes of meeting of 24th January 2019

It was **Resolved** that the minutes are approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting on 24th January 2019.

379 Payments

Members received the schedule of payments which was considered, and it was **Resolved** that the payments are approved.

380 Bank Statements & Reconciliations

Members viewed the Banks Statements alongside the Bank Reconciliation to 31st January 2018 and it was **Resolved** that they are accurate and approved for signing by the Chairman.

381 Staffing Matters

Members considered and approved the matters as recommended by the Staffing Committee. The new NALC PayScale's were noted.

382 Council Policies

Members received the documents in advance of the meeting, and it was noted that the documents have been recently reviewed by the South Glos Council Personnel Department.

It was **Resolved** that the new Absence Management and Managing Employee Performance Policies are approved subject to some minor corrections.

Action: Clerk to ensure Staff are provided with new Policies

383 Internal Audit

Members noted that the internal audit has recently been done and although the formal report is awaited there were 3 points noted verbally:

- The Chain of Office needs to be included on the Asset Register, Clerk to do this.
- There is a discrepancy of £200 between the approved budget and that on the RBS system, this is an error which the Clerk will correct.
- There is not a copy of the signed Circus Agreement, it was noted that the was stolen during the office move last year.

The Clerk informed members that a 3-year Internal Audit programme with South Glos Council has now ended and they have asked that we renew the agreement for a further 3 years. It was noted that the cost has increased from £235 to £250 per day and that this will increase annually in line with APT& C Pay Awards. There does not seem to be any benefit to approving a 3-year contract as opposed to an annual one therefore it was **Resolved** that the Council approves the appointment of South Gloucestershire Council Internal Audit services for 2019/20 and then considers the matter annually.

Action: Clerk to liaise with South Gloucestershire Council

384 Town Council Insurance

The Clerk advised members that the 3-year insurance agreement with Zurich expires on 31st March 2019 therefore she has asked Came & Company which is a specialist broker to obtain quotes. 3 quotes have been received in addition to the Zurich renewal and a schedule of these along with a breakdown of cover was circulated.

Members asked the Clerk about Key Person Cover which is provided by 3 of the companies but not Zurich. The Clerk is to ask Zurich for more information about this and how much it would cost to add it to the Policy with Zurich. Members were interested if Key Person cover includes sickness cover and if so, what the limits would be.

It was **Resolved** that the Clerk obtains further information and takes this matter to Full Council for a decision.

**Action: Clerk to obtain information about Key Person Cover and a quote from Zurich
Clerk to take this matter to Full Council**

385 Grants

In addition to the Emersons Green Primary School application the following grant was considered:

- Mangotsfield Village Festival; £1,000 towards Festival running costs. Members raised concerns about the fact the Festival Committee wards grants to local groups totalling £1,000 per year. It makes it hard for the Council to justify awarding a grant when the Committee gives its own grants out. However, members are aware this is an excellent community event and wants to continue supporting it. It was **Resolved** that the Committee recommends approval of this grant to Full Council but makes it aware of the grant situation.

Actions: Clerk to refer to Full Council

386 Items to report

No items were raised at this time.

387 Date of next meeting – Date of next meeting: 28th March 2019, 19.00, EGTC Offices

The Chairman closed the meeting at 20.05