



EMERSONS GREEN
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee

24 September 2020

Held via Skype due to COVID-19 restrictions

Present: Councillors R Nichols (Chairman), S Budd, J Hunt, C Johnson, P Todd and Al Hassan

Attendees: Kath MacConnachie (Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)

116. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hill and Somers.

117. Declarations of interest under the Localism Act 2011

There were no declarations of interest.

118. Minutes of 30 July 2020

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of 30 July 2020 were an accurate record of the meeting. There were no outstanding actions to note.

119. Bank Statements & Bank Reconciliations

The Clerk reported that Councillor Somers had attended the Town Council Office reconcile the bank statements which he had signed. Councillor Somers would report to the next meeting.

Action: Councillor Somers

120. Payments

The meeting considered the schedule of payments for September 2020 which was circulated in advance of the meeting.

It was **Resolved** that the payments be approved and authorised for payment by the Chairman and Clerk.

Action: Clerk

The August payments were noted.

121. IT Services

The Committee noted the correspondence from Clearwater IT Services, regarding the closing of the company, and introducing Nebula IT. It was noted that Nebula IT were taking on Clearwater IT Services customers on the same agreements and pricing structures.

The Clerk noted that the current Town Council spend on IT support, on a 'pay as you go' basis, was very low.

It was considered that as things changed for the Town Council in the future, in terms of size and facilities, that would be the time to review IT support service provider.

Given the low spend and the benefits of continuity of service/handover, it was **Resolved** to transition to Nebula IT for IT support provision.

122. **Youth project preliminary/feasibility costs**

Preliminary/feasibility costs from Earmarked Reserves: This item was deferred to the next meeting.

The Clerk explained that in order to apply a public works loan, the outcome of consultation would be required and a signed business case. It was noted that the consultation needed to include notifying members of the public of the public works loan requirement, and any required precept increases necessitated by the project.

The Clerk explained that, based on the current schedule, the draft budget would be presented to the November Finance Committee and to the December Full Council meeting, alongside a business case.

123. **Personnel Committee update**

The Committee considered the draft Pay, Recognition and Rewards Policy which the Personnel Committee had approved for recommendation to Full Council. It was noted that the Personnel Committee had requested an amendment concerning pro rata allocation of additional leave days for part time staff which would be amended before presenting to Full Council.

It was **Resolved** to recommend the Pay, Recognition and Rewards Policy to Full Council for adoption.

Action: Chairman

The meeting noted the updated NALC pay scales which would be implemented in October payroll, effective 1 April 2020. It was **Resolved** to adopt the updated NALC pay scales.

Action: Clerk

124. **Membership of SLCC**

The Clerk suggested that membership of SLCC would be beneficial to the Town Council in terms of the advice and guidance offered. It was noted that a number of other Town and Parish councils fund membership for this reason. The cost was noted to be £281 per annum, plus £20 registration.

It was **Resolved** to fund membership of SLCC for the Town Clerk.

Action: Clerk

125. **Terms of Reference**

The Committee considered the draft updated Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee that were circulated in advance. It was noted that the main amendment was to take out the

duplication of the Financial Regulations at the end of the document, as this was unnecessary duplication, and would necessitate the amendment of the Terms of Reference any time the Financial Regulations were amended. The draft updated Terms of Reference made it clear that the Finance Committee would act in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

It was **Resolved** to recommend the draft updated Finance Committee Terms of Reference to Full Council for adoption.

Action: Chairman

The Committee considered the draft updated Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee, in particular in reference to the provisions around remuneration of staff.

Councillor J Hunt expressed concern around the proposed amendment which would mean that not all decisions would have to go to Full Council for ratification. Councillor J Hunt suggested that decisions on personnel matters should not be taken 'behind closed doors'. The Clerk clarified that Personnel Committee meetings were still public meetings and that minutes of were shared with the public as such. The Clerk clarified that where there were agenda items which were of a personal and sensitive nature, a resolution must be passed to exclude members of the press and public in the usual way for that agenda item. The Clerk also confirmed that minutes of all Town Council Committees, including private items, were circulated to all members.

The Clerk reported that delegation of decision making powers to the Personnel Committee was in line with ALCA/NALC advice. The Clerk explained that there was no point in a delegated Committee with no delegated powers. The alternative would be to have no Personnel Committee and for all items to be brought to Full Council.

It was **Resolved** to recommend the revised Terms of Reference to Full Council for adoption.

Action: Chairman

The Clerk noted that both sets of Terms of Reference would be considered by Full Council on 8 October.

126. Items to report from members

There were no items to report from members.

127. Date of next meeting: Thursday 29 October 2020, 19.00 by Skype