

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 6 December 2016 at 6.15pm.

Present: Councillors McNeill (Chairman), Banks, Bartrum, Brown, Corby, Jones & Slade.

In attendance: Councillor Glendinning; Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk.

### **129 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **130 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In relation to discussions about the draft budget for 2017 / 2018, Minute No. 132, Councillors declared the following non-pecuniary interests:

Councillor Slade declared non-pecuniary interests as Cowes Town Council's representative on the Supporters of Cowes Library, the Fireworks Committee and Shoreside Committee.

Councillor Brown declared non-pecuniary interests as a Member of Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd and Cowes Town Council's representative on the Northwood House Park Sub Committee.

Councillor Bartrum declared non-pecuniary interests as Cowes Town Council's representative on the Supporters of Cowes Library and deputy representative on the Northwood House Park Sub Committee.

Councillor McNeill declared a pecuniary interest as Cowes Town Council's representative and Chairman of Destination Cowes in relation to Minute Nos 132 & 134.

### **131 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 24 November 2016 be taken as read, approved as a correct record (with additional information added to Minute No 124) and signed by the Chairman.

### **132 DRAFT BUDGET 2017 / 2018**

Councillors considered the amended draft budget (v2) for 2017 / 2018 and also discussed the possibility of the Government imposing a 2.5% capping in the rise of precepts post 2017 / 2018. It was:

#### **RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the draft budget (v2) for 2017 / 2018 which will require the precept, including grant, to be £244,700.**

<b>v2 COWES TOWN COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2017-2018</b>		
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>		
Precept + Grant	£ 244,700	
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
	<b>2017 - 2018</b>	<b>Sub total</b>
<b>GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Town Clerks' salaries/NIC/ Tax / Pension	£ 30,000	
Office Rent	£ 6,600	
Office Cleaner & Sundry Expenses	£ 1,000	
Stationary & Office Supplies/Software	£ 1,000	
Office Equipment / Photocopier	£ 1,000	
Telephone/Broadband / Website	£ 2,000	
Postage	£ 500	
Travelling	£ 400	
Conference fees	£ 600	
Training	£ 500	
Hire of Meeting Rooms	£ 500	
Subscriptions	£ 1,500	
Insurance	£ 1,300	
Audit and Accountancy	£ 1,500	
Mayor's Allowance	£ 2,000	
Newsletter	£ 4,000	
Elections / Admin Contingency	£ 2,500	
		<b>£ 56,900</b>
<b>DISCRETIONARY SERVICES</b>		
Northwood Rec Grounds Maintenance	£ 7,400	
Northwood Rec - Skate Park/MUGA Maintenance	£ 5,000	
Northwood Rec Toilets - Cleaning, electricity + other costs	£ 10,000	
Northwood Park Grounds Maintenance	£ 10,000	
Northwood Park Toilets - Cleaning Only	£ 4,000	
Northwood Park + Cowes area - Dog + Litter bins	£ 5,000	
Other grounds maintenance in Cowes	£ 4,900	
4 Public Toilets - Cleaning + other costs	£ 48,000	
Cowes Library Proposed contribution	£ 22,400	
Cowes In Bloom	£ 4,000	
Environment Officer	£ 2,600	
Community Bus Contribution	£ 1,500	
Discretionary Services Contingency	£ 12,000	
		<b>£ 136,800</b>
<b>TOWN IMPROVEMENTS / GRANTS / SPECIAL EVENTS</b>		
Street furniture maintenance	£ 2,000	
Civic-Xmas trees/Festive lights	£ 16,000	
New Projects	£ 4,000	
Grants	£ 20,000	
Destination Cowes marketing budget provision	£ 5,000	
Remembrance Sunday & Charity Donations	£ 1,500	
The Big Lunch	£ 2,500	
		<b>£ 51,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£ 244,700</b>	<b>£ 244,700</b>

### 133 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT

The Town Clerk reported that £8046.53 remained in the budget for 'Annual Grants & Special Events' and £8000.00 remained in the budget for 'New Event Support Budget – Shoreside'. The Town Council has been asked to consider the following applications for grant:

- (i) Cowes Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society – New rollable back cloth - £500.
- (ii) Cowes Primary School – Concrete footpath in sensory / herb garden - £2735.
- (iii) Isle of Wight Music, Dance & Drama Festival – Contribution for running the 2017 festival - £100.
- (iv) Storeroom 2010 – Skills Gap Training Project - £1000.

It was:

#### **RECOMMENDED**

- 1. That a grant be made to Cowes Amateur Operatic Society in the sum of £500.**
- 2. That a grant be made to Cowes Primary School in the sum of £1000.**
- 3. That a grant be made to Isle of Wight Music, Dance & Drama Festival in the sum of £100.**
- 4. That a grant IS NOT made to Storeroom 2010.**

### 134 DESTINATION COWES UPDATE

Councillor McNeill advised Councillors that Destination Cowes was officially launched at the World Travel Market in London on 7 November 2016. The official partners / stakeholders are: Cowes Harbour Commission, Cowes Yacht Haven, Cowes Town Council, Cowes Business Association, East Cowes Business Association, English Heritage (Osborne House), Red Funnel and Visit Isle of Wight. These partners are working together to attract new events and visitors to Cowes and East Cowes. A number of other potential partners have been invited to join Destination Cowes which include East Cowes Town Council, UKSA and Northwood House. A number of projects are being considered and some important leads were generated at the launch which are of particular importance to Cowes. Any leads generated will be followed up by Zoe Stroud and David Thornton at Visit Isle of Wight. It was agreed:

#### **ACTION**

Councillor McNeill will work to agree a Memorandum of Understanding between Destination Cowes and Visit Isle of Wight to cover operational matters.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

**That, as all official partners / stakeholders have signed up to Destination Cowes, Cowes Town Council releases the funds held of £5000 for the marketing of Destination Cowes.**

**Councillor Slade left the meeting at 7.06pm during the Destination Cowes discussion.**

**135 MAINTENANCE WORK ON THE RAILINGS ALONG THE SEAFRONT**

Cowes Town Council has been asked by the Isle of Wight Council to consider part-funding, with Gurnard Parish Council, maintenance work to the railings along the seafront from Cowes to Gurnard. The split being Cowes 75% and Gurnard 25%. The estimated cost of the work would be £60,309. Gurnard Parish Council have decided not to support the project. Councillors discussed the proposed works and queried whether the Isle of Wight Council had a statutory duty, under health and safety, to maintain the railings. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Town Clerk will write to the Isle of Wight Council to ascertain their responsibility in regard to the maintenance of the railings and what works, if any, they are proposing to undertake.

**136 ELECTRICITY CONTRACT - THE TOILET BLOCK, NORTHWOOD RECREATION GROUND**

The existing SSE contract at the Toilet Block at Northwood Recreation Ground expires on 28 February 2017. LSI Energy, on behalf of Cowes Town Council, has obtained a price comparison from electricity suppliers and the comparison shows that SSE is still the cheapest supplier for the toilet block. Councillors were given the option of a 24 month contract for the estimated total sum of £1029.90 or a 36 month contract for the estimated total sum of £1563.16, with a start date of 1 March 2017. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council enters into a 24 month contract with SSE, starting on 1 March 2017, for the toilet block at Northwood Recreation Ground.**

**137 ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK'S PROBATIONARY REVIEW**

The Town Clerk reported that the Assistant Town Clerk, Kate Gibbs, had received her three month probationary review on 5 December 2016. The Town Clerk reported that Kate was performing very well against her job responsibilities and has settled well into her new role. Kate enjoys good relationships with all that she comes into contact with and her general conduct is excellent. Any training opportunities to work towards her CiLCA qualification will be investigated. Kate is a real asset to Cowes Town Council. Councillors agreed that Kate had successfully completed the probationary period and it was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council should confirm the appointment of the Assistant Town Clerk, Kate Gibbs.**

**138 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

- ORP Blyskawica's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – May 2017
- Railings along the seafront

The proceedings terminated at 7.47pm.

**CHAIRMAN**