

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 14 February 2017 at 6.15pm.

Present: Councillors McNeill (Chairman), Corby, Glendinning & Jones.

In attendance: Councillor Wardrop; Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; one member of the public.

139 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Banks, Bartrum & Slade.

140 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jones declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No 144 as Secretary of the Friends of Northwood Cemetery.

Councillor Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No 152 as Cowes Town Council's representative on the ORP Blyskawica 75th Anniversary Steering Group.

141 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 6 December 2016 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

142 FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2016

The Town Clerk submitted a financial statement for the third quarter of the financial year giving details of income and expenditure. The balances in the Town Council bank accounts and petty cash as at 31 December 2016 were £416,006.26 of which £199,656.20 is ring fenced / committed expenditure. The balance of the budget for 2016 / 2017 is £83,796.89; Reserves are £132,553.17. It was agreed that the Town Clerk, for clarity, would clearly identify which items are 'ring fenced' and which are 'earmarked' for particular projects. The 'New Projects' budget heading for 2016/2017 is overspent by £6,101.14 with further expenditure expected in the final quarter. However there is an amount of £7,286.00 which had previously been earmarked for New Projects (Minute No 6979e5) which can be transferred to the 2016/2017 budget to support the over spend. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the sum of £7,286.00 earmarked for New Projects is transferred into the 'New Projects' budget heading for 2016/2017.

143 PROJECTED FINANCIAL SPEND AS AT 31 MARCH 2017

The Town Clerk submitted a projected financial spend as at 31 March 2017. Although some budget headings are predicted to have an over spend other budget heading have made savings. Therefore it is predicted that the Town Council will not have exceeded the total budgeted expenditure for the year of £238,010.00.

Councillor Jones withdrew from the meeting for this item.

144 APPLICATION FOR GRANT

The Town Clerk reported that £6,575.33 remained in the budget for 'Annual Grants & Special Events' and £8,000.00 remained in the budget for 'New Event Support Budget – Shoreside'. The Town Council has been asked to consider the following application for grant:

- Friends of Northwood Cemetery – Container for housing wood chipper - £2,000.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That a grant be made to Friends of Northwood Cemetery in the sum of £2,000.

145 EXTENSION OF TOILET CLEANING CONTRACT FOR 1/4/17 – 31/3/18

At the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting on 11 October 2016 it was reported that the toilet cleaning contractor, All Round Cleaners, had confirmed that there will be no increase in charges for the next financial year for the four public toilets in Cowes, plus Northwood Recreation Ground and Northwood Park. The cost of £28,878.24 has been built into the approved budget for 2017/2018. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council extends the contract with All Round Cleaners from 1/4/17 – 31/3/18 for the sum of £28,878.24.

146 ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF ENVIRONMENT OFFICER SUPPORT AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE WORK IN COWES FOR 2016-2019

At the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting on 11 October 2016 Councillors discussed the Isle of Wight Council's agreement for Cowes Town Council to financially support, for the years 2016 – 2019, the provision of Environment Officer support for 5 hours per week for the annual sum of £2,600 and Grounds Maintenance work in Cowes for the annual sum of £11,306 (inclusive of annual inflation and set for three years). The grounds maintenance figure has increased slightly since then to include additional works at Moorgreen Reservoir (not including the copse), the annual sum now being £12,317. The costs have been built into the approved budget for 2017/2018. The Town Council can end the agreement at any time during the period by giving the Isle of Wight Council 3 months' notice. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council signs the agreement with the Isle of Wight Council for the provision of Environment Officer support for the annual sum of £2,600, and Grounds Maintenance work in Cowes for the annual sum of £12,317 for 2016 – 2019.

147 ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL AGREEMENT FOR COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR COWES LIBRARY FOR 2017 – 2018

At the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting on 11 October 2016 Councillors discussed the Isle of Wight Council's agreement for Cowes Town Council to pay for the running costs of the Library and pay for a second member of staff for the full financial year; the annual sum being £22,400 (estimated). The costs have been built into the approved budget for 2017/2018. The Town Council can end the agreement at any time during the period by giving the Isle of Wight Council 3 months' notice. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council signs the agreement with the Isle of Wight Council for financial support for Cowes Library for the sum of £22,400 for 2017 – 2018.

148 EXTENSION OF NORTHWOOD PARK GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR 1/4/17 – 31/3/18

At the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting on 11 October 2016 it was reported that the current grounds maintenance contractor for Northwood Park, Andy Butler Sports Ground Specialist, had confirmed that there will not be an increase in charges for the next financial year for the grounds maintenance work at Northwood Park. The cost of £9,810.00 has been built into the approved budget for 2017/2018. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council extends the contract with Andy Butler Sports Ground Specialist from 1/4/17 – 31/3/18 for the sum of £9,810.00.

149 MAINTENANCE WORK ON THE RAILINGS ALONG THE SEAFRONT

At the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting on 6 December 2016 the Town Clerk was actioned to 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. A response from the Isle of Wight Council explained that sections of railings between Cowes and Gurnard are being replaced for health and safety reasons. The new rails will be galvanised, which should protect against future corrosion, however they will not be painted or match the existing rails. It was agreed:

ACTION

That Cowes Town Council will monitor the works to the railings that are undertaken by the Isle of Wight Council.

150 COMMUNITY BUS PROJECT

At the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting on 24 November 2016 the Town Clerk was actioned to check the status of the bond that Cowes Town Council gave to the Community Bus project and ascertain whether any refund is due. The Town Clerk contacted the administrator of the project at Northwood Parish Council who confirmed that Cowes Town Council have not paid a bond to the Community Bus project and therefore no refund is due.

151 PROPOSAL FROM COWES WEEK LTD FOR COWES TOWN COUNCIL TO MANAGE COWES WEEK FIREWORKS

The Town Clerk reported that a letter had been received from Cowes Week Ltd stating they have decided that they cannot continue to manage the fireworks and they propose that the fireworks should now be managed by Cowes Town Council. Councillors discussed this proposal and agreed that the Town Council cannot take on the responsibility for fund raising for the fireworks which are estimated to cost in the region of £40,000. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council do not take over the management of the Cowes Week fireworks for 2017 as they have neither the staff nor resources to manage this.

Councillor Jones left the meeting at 7.25pm during the Cowes Week fireworks discussion and before the recommendation had been agreed.

Councillor Wardrop left the meeting at 7.40pm.

152 COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORP BLYSKAWICA

Councillors discussed the 75th Anniversary of the ORP Blyskawica which is taking place on the 4th – 7th May 2017. Councillors agreed that as this is a significant event for Cowes and, as it will probably be the last big celebration of its kind, should be supported by the Town Council. As this is a shoreside event and there is a balance remaining of £8,000 in the 'New Event Support Budget – Shoreside' budget heading for 2016/2017 this could be used to support the event. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council underwrites up to £8,000 from the 'New Event Support Budget – Shoreside' budget heading to financially support this event.

153 COWES BIG LUNCH – 4 JUNE 2017

Councillor McNeill advised the Committee that plans were underway for the 'Big Lunch' taking place on Sunday 4th June 2017 at Northwood Park. Stakeholders include Cowes Town Council, who have set aside £2,500 in the 2017/2018 budget, Northwood House, Royal Yacht Squadron, Island Sailing Club and hopefully Red Funnel. Lots of events are being planned including a photo competition, baking competition and a big band. It is expected to be bigger than last year's 'Patron's Lunch' at a lower cost. The objective being to bring the town together, charities will be represented, local businesses will be offered stalls, and businesses outside of Cowes will not be encouraged. Further updates will be given as plans progress.

154 STAFFING

There were no staffing matters raised by Councillors or Clerks.

155 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Add a standing item to Staffing – 5b – To discuss any health and safety issues
- Review of Risk Management

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.57pm.

CHAIRMAN