

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

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

**Present:** Councillors Glendinning (Chairman), J. Bartrum, Ellis, Fuller, Jones, Oliver & Peacey-Wilcox.

**In attendance:** Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk.

**225 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**226 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

**227 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 10 October 2017 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**228 DRAFT BUDGET 2018 / 2019**

Councillors were presented with a draft budget (v2) for 2018 / 2019 split into three sections and each section was reviewed line by line.

1. General administration – An increase to the Town Clerks’ salaries heading was discussed to enable staff resources to increase to 1.5 Full Time Equivalent.

Councillors agreed that no amendments were necessary.

2. Discretionary Services – Councillors agreed to increase the Discretionary Services Contingency to £12,000. No other amendments were necessary.

3. Town Improvement / Grants / Special Events – Councillors agreed to merge the two budget headings ‘Grants’ and ‘Community Events Fund’ into one budget heading ‘Grants, Events, & Good Causes’. No other amendments were necessary. Councillors discussed the amount of £40,000 for the Public Toilet refurbishment which is necessary for the maintenance and upgrading of the four public toilets in the Town Council’s ownership in Cowes.

All proposed amendments will be entered into a v3 draft budget for 2018 – 2019 and circulated to all Town Councillors.

The proposed precept of £299,800 represents a 22.5% increase, which equates to an increase of 25p per week on a Band D property.

Councillors also discussed the ear marked expenditure of £4,986.02 for the Outdoor Gym Equipment – this project having now been completed. Councillors discussed re-allocating this amount to the Northwood Rec – Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym maintenance budget heading. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**1. That Cowes Town Council approves the Draft Budget (v3) for 2018 / 2019 which will require the precept, including grant, to be £299,800.**

2. That funds ear marked for the 'Outdoor Gym Equipment' (Min. No 6875f) be re-allocated to the 'Northwood Rec – Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget heading and any surplus from the 2017 / 2018 budget heading 'Northwood Rec – Skate Park / MUGA Maintenance' be ear marked and added to this fund.

v3 COWES TOWN COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2018-2019			
			See notes below
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	2018 - 2019		
<b>GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>			
Town Clerks' salaries/NIC/ Tax / Pension	£46,000		1
Office Rent	£8,100		
Office Cleaner & Sundry Expenses	£1,000		
Stationery & Office Supplies/Software	£500		
Office Equipment / Photocopier	£1,000		
Telephone/Broadband / Website	£1,500		
Postage	£300		
Travelling	£200		
Conference fees	£500		
Training	£500		
Hire of Meeting Rooms	£300		
Subscriptions	£1,500		
Insurance	£2,500		
Audit and Accountancy	£1,600		
Mayor's Allowance	£2,000		
Newsletter / Publicity	£4,000		
Elections / Admin Contingency	£2,500		
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>£74,000</b>	
<b>DISCRETIONARY SERVICES</b>			
Northwood Rec Grounds Maintenance	£7,400		
Northwood Rec - Skate Park /MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance	£6,000		
Northwood Rec Toilets - Cleaning, electricity + other costs	£10,200		
Northwood Park Grounds Maintenance	£10,000		
Northwood Park Toilets - Cleaning Only	£4,200		
Northwood Park + Cowes area - Dog + Litter bins	£5,500		
Other grounds maintenance in Cowes	£5,000		
4 Public Toilets - Cleaning + other costs	£49,000		
Cowes Library Proposed contribution	£22,400		
Cowes In Bloom	£4,000		
Environment Officer	£2,600		
Discretionary Services Contingency	£12,000		
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>£138,300</b>	
<b>TOWN IMPROVEMENTS / GRANTS / SPECIAL EVENTS</b>			
Street furniture maintenance	£2,000		
Civic-Xmas trees/Festive lights/Bunting	£16,000		
New Projects	£4,000		
Grants, Events & Good Causes	£24,000		
Remembrance Sunday & Charity Donations	£1,500		
Public Toilet refurbishment	£40,000		2
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>£87,500</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>£299,800</b>	3
<b>Significant Variances</b>			
1. Proposal to increase staff resource to 1.5 Full Time Equivalent which equates to 1/6 of the precept.			
2. To address significant shortfall in costs of works associated with the refurbishment and upgrading of four public toilet sites.			
3. The increase in the precept will equate to a 25p increase per week for a Band D Property.			

**229 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PROJECTS COMMITTEE**

1. The Projects Committee recommend the approval of additional costs of £475 for the Architect, Martin Hayles, in relation to additional works undertaken in regard to The Cut project. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council pays the additional sum of £475 to Martin Hayles with the costs being met from the funds set aside for The Cut project.**

2. The Projects Committee recommend repairing worn areas of the tarmac and fixing down loose ramps at the Skate Park at Northwood Rec for the sum of £1,400. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the repairs to the Skate Park in the sum of £1,400 with the costs being met from the Northwood Rec - Skate Park / MUGA maintenance budget heading.**

**230 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

The Town Clerk advised Councillors that the GDPR will apply in the UK from 25 May 2018. The GDPR has been introduced to keep pace with the modern digital landscape and is more extensive in scope and application than the current Data Protection Act. The Regulation extends the data rights of individuals and requires organisations to develop clear policies and procedures to protect personal data and adopt appropriate technical and organisational measures. The Town Clerk will advise Councillors as Cowes Town Council prepares for the GDPR. A public authority which is processing personal data needs to designate someone as its Data Protection Officer. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council appoints the Town Clerk as the Data Protection Officer.**

**231 TOWN CLERK'S ANNUAL APPRAISAL**

The Town Clerk reported that she had a successful appraisal with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on 2 November 2017. Achievements were acknowledged which included that the Town Clerk is very open, transparent and accessible. Her approach to Town Councillors is really positive and Councillors respect her. She also enjoys good working relationships with Isle of Wight Council Officers and stakeholders in Cowes. Due to time constraints it has not been possible to proactively manage the problems / issues raised at the public toilets and most of the time is spent firefighting to keep on top of issues of vandalism and poor investment in the properties in the past.

**232 ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK'S ANNUAL APPRAISAL**

The Assistant Town Clerk had a successful appraisal with the Town Clerk on 1 November 2017. Achievements were acknowledged which included developing the skills to service the Projects Committee; seeing the outdoor gym project through to a successful conclusion; surveying users of Northwood Recreation Ground and obtaining grant funding for three new defibrillators in the town. Due to only a 15 hour per week contract it has not been possible for the Assistant Town Clerk to complete her CiLCA qualification, investigate grant funding opportunities and undertake an annual condition survey for all the assets in the town. 43.25 hours have been accrued by attending evening meetings of the Projects Committee, which should be taken off as time in lieu but a heavy workload has prevented this.

Councillors agreed that staff resources should be increased to 1.5 Full Time Equivalent and the additional costs have been built into the 2018 / 2019 budget. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

- 1. That the Assistant Town Clerk, Kate Gibbs, is given a full time contract (37 hours per week) as from 1 February 2018.**
- 2. That the accrued hours of 43.25 are paid to the Assistant Town Clerk in a one off payment of £452.70**
- 3. That any additional hours accrued between 14 November 2017 and 31 January 2018 are paid in arrears on a monthly basis.**

**233 OTHER STAFFING MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS OR CLERKS**

Councillors thanked the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk for all their hard work which is appreciated.

**234 HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES**

There were no health and safety issues raised by Councillors or Clerks.

**235 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

There were no items raised for inclusion on future agendas.

The proceedings terminated at 7.34pm.

**CHAIRMAN**