

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 6.15pm.

Present: Councillors J. Bartrum (Chairman), R. Bartrum, Bustin, Fuller, Jones, Oliver, Peacey-Wilcox & Wardrop.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk.

340 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

341 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Fuller declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 345 as Chairman of The Footprint Trust Ltd.

342 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 23 October 2018 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

343 DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2019 / 2020

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with a draft budget for 2019 / 2020 which is split into three sections and each section was reviewed line by line.

1. General Administration – An increase in the scale points of the Clerks' salaries was discussed along with a pending NJC pay scale increase as from 1/4/19 – the % as yet unknown. Savings have been made in other areas resulting in an increase for this budget section of £1,800.

2. Discretionary Services – An increase to the IW Council's grounds maintenance contract has been built in to the budget along with slight increases to the cost of the Toilet Cleaning contract and the Grounds Maintenance contract at Northwood Park. Savings have been made in relation to the reduced charges for the Wallgate unit contract at the public conveniences along with a reduction in the discretionary services contingency budget heading. This has resulted in a reduction for this budget section of £2,800.

3. Town Improvements / Grants/ Special Events – An increase of £1,000 has been added to the Civic – Xmas trees / Festive lights / Bunting to allow for future price increases. The Grants budget has been reduced by £2,000 to identify this amount for The Big Lunch 2019. This has resulted in an increase in this budget section of £1,000. Overall within the three sections there is not a proposed increase to the precept for 2019 / 2020 and this will remain at £299,800. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Draft Budget (V1) for 2019 / 2020 which will require the precept, including grant, to be £299,800.

V1 COWES TOWN COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2019-2020	
EXPENDITURE	2019 - 2020
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	
Town Clerks' salaries / NIC/ Tax / Pension	£48,500
Office Rent	£8,100
Sundry Office Expenses	£200
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	£200
Subscriptions	£1,900
Insurance	£2,200
Audit and Accountancy	£1,700
Mayor's Allowance	£2,000
Newsletter / Publicity	£4,000
Elections / Admin Contingency	£2,500
Sub Total	£75,800
DISCRETIONARY SERVICES	
Northwood Rec Grounds Maintenance	£8,100
Northwood Rec - Skate Park /MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance	£6,000
Northwood Rec Toilets - Cleaning, electricity + other costs	£11,000
Northwood Park Grounds Maintenance	£10,200
Northwood Park Toilets - Cleaning Only	£3,000
Dog + Litter bin emptying	£5,500
Other grounds maintenance in Cowes	£5,500
4 Public Toilets - Cleaning + other costs	£45,500
Cowes Library	£22,400
Cowes In Bloom	£5,000
Environment Officer	£2,600
Warmer Cowes	£2,700
Discretionary Services Contingency	£8,000
Sub Total	£135,500
TOWN IMPROVEMENTS / GRANTS / SPECIAL EVENTS	
Street furniture maintenance	£2,000
Civic-Xmas trees/Festive lights/Bunting	£17,000
New Projects	£4,000
Grants	£22,000
The Big Lunch	£2,000
Remembrance Sunday & Charity Donations	£1,500
Public Toilet refurbishment	£40,000
Sub Total	£88,500
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£299,800

344 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AT NORTHWOOD PARK AS FROM 1 APRIL 2019

The Town Clerk reported that three contractors had quoted for the Grounds Maintenance Contract at Northwood Park as from 1 April 2019. All three quotations were considered and it was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council enters into a Grounds Maintenance Contract at Northwood Park for 2019 / 2020 with Contractor A for the sum of £10,165.00.

Councillor Fuller left the meeting for the following item.

345 'WARMER COWES' SCHEME

Councillors discussed the 'Warmer Cowes' scheme, facilitated by the Footprint Trust Ltd. which had formerly been agreed at the Cowes Town Council meeting on 2 November 2017. Councillors agreed that they wished to continue to support the scheme and that funds had been allocated in the budget for 2019 / 2020. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council continues to support the 'Warmer Cowes' scheme until further notice.

ACTION

That Cowes Town Council's Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee invite a representative from The Footprint Trust Ltd. to attend a future Committee meeting to discuss the 'Warmer Cowes' scheme.

346 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT

The Town Clerk reported that £6,634 remained in the budget for 'Grants, Events & Good Causes'. The Town Council has been asked to consider the following applications for grant:

- (i) Isle of Wight Music, Dance & Drama Festival – 2019 Festival - £100
- (ii) NHS Children in Care & Care Leavers Team – Christmas Acknowledge Event - £200
- (iii) Storeroom 2010 – Cowes Men's Shed – Running the shed for one year - £1,000

After a full discussion about each application it was:

RECOMMENDED

That a grant be made to the Isle of Wight Music, Dance & Drama Festival in the sum of £100.

ACTIONS

1. The Town Clerk will write to the NHS Children in Care & Care Leavers Team explaining that a grant cannot be made for the 2018 Christmas Acknowledge event due to the timescales. However, Cowes Town Council request that in the future an earlier grant application is submitted with a lot more detail to ensure that enough time is available for future applications to be fully considered.
2. The Town Clerk will write to Storeroom 2010 – Cowes Men's Shed, advising that a grant application should be made from Cowes Men's Shed direct rather than under the umbrella of Storeroom 2010 who have a large amount of reserves in their account.

347 THE WATCH HOUSE SHELTER

The Town Clerk wrote to the IW Council to ask that the Watch House shelter is not removed while investigations into costs of the repair or removal are considered. The IW Council's Conservation Officer has advised that planning permission is not required to remove the shelter from the conservation area. The cost to remove the shelter is £2,100 which the IW Council can fund. The cost to repair the shelter is £3,840 which the IW Council are unable to fund. Councillors discussed the options available and the wish to retain the shelter in this well used area. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council funds the difference in the cost of repairing the shelter against the cost of removal of the shelter, up to a maximum of £1,740, to be funded from the 'Discretionary Services Contingency' budget heading.

348 MANDATORY BUSINESS RATE RELIEF FOR PUBLIC LAVATORIES

The Town Clerk advised Councillors that, following the latest Government budget, public lavatories are to be exempt from business rates. This will not come into force until the 2020 / 2021 financial year.

349 PURCHASE OF THREE CAST LION STATUES

The Town Council was asked to consider the purchase of three original cast lion statues from Cowes Parade at the cost of £350 each plus carriage. Councillors discussed this proposal and it was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council does not purchase three original cast lion statues for the sum of £350 each plus carriage.

350 TOWN CLERK'S APPRAISAL

The Town Clerk reported that she had a successful appraisal with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on 30 October 2018. Achievements were acknowledged which included a successful conclusion of the 2017 / 2018 external audit with no matters of concern raised. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor commented that the Town Clerk is knowledgeable, competent and always available for advice. It was noted that the Town Clerk is not being paid on the correct pay grade commensurate with the responsibilities of the role and the NALC pay scales; Councillors agreed that this should be rectified. It was:

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That the Town Clerk receives a two scale point increase from 1 April 2019 with a further additional one scale point increase, annually, until the top of Pay Scale LC2 is achieved.**
- 2. That the Town Clerk continues to be paid for any additional hours worked over and above the 18 hour per week contract.**

351 ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK'S APPRAISAL

The Assistant Town Clerk has a successful appraisal with the Town Clerk on 31 October 2018. Achievements were acknowledged which included expanding skills relating to the servicing of Committees, working toward progressing The Cut project, review and condition survey of the Town Council's assets in the town including a photographic record. It was noted that work towards achieving the CiLCA qualification were reaching a conclusion at which point an extra salary scale point will be awarded. Any hours worked outside of the 37 hour per week contract are taken as time off in lieu. The Town Clerk acknowledged that Kate's performance over the last twelve months has been excellent and she is a real asset to the Town Council. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That, as from 1 April 2020, the Assistant Town Clerk will annually receive an additional one scale point increase until the top of Pay Scale LC2 is achieved.

352 STAFFING

There were no other staffing matters raised by Councillors or Clerks.

353 HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Town Clerk advised that Personal Injury cover for volunteers had been added to the Town Council's Insurance Policy at no additional cost to the Town Council for the current insurance year.

354 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no matters raised for inclusion on future agendas.

The proceedings terminated at 7.34pm

CHAIRMAN