

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee Meeting held in The Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 25 October 2022 at 6.15pm.

Present: Councillors Ellis (Chair), Bertie, Brown, Carter (6.17pm), Hollis, Nicholson (6.16pm) & Walters.

In attendance: Councillor Paler (non-voting); Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk.

669 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jones.

670 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

**671 MINUTES
RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 26 July 2022 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

672 FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Town Clerk submitted a financial statement for the quarter ending 30 September 2022 giving details of income and expenditure. Councillors looked at the spend against the budget headings and the ring fenced and ear marked balances. The balances in the Town Council's bank accounts and petty cash as at 30 September 2022 were £745,243.00 of which £239,172.67 is ring fenced / ear marked expenditure. The Reserves as at 30 September 2022 were £299,649.55 which represents approximately 11 months operating costs. This falls within the recommended 3 to 12 months reserves as set by the National Association of Local Councils. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council receive, note and approve the Financial Statement as at 30 September 2022.

673 APPLICATION FOR GRANT

The Town Clerk reported that £12,550 remains in the budget for 'Grants' for the financial year 2022 / 2023. The Town Council has been asked to consider the following Application for Grant:

- Isle of Wight Music, Dance & Drama Festival – 2023 Festival - £100

After a full discussion about the Grant Application it was:

RECOMMENDED

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

674 CONNECT 4 COMMUNITIES GRANT UPDATE

The Town Clerk advised that 15 of the 20 £50 Aldi vouchers have been allocated to those in need of support at this time, having been referred by the Foodbank in Cowes and by the local schools. The remaining 5 x £50 vouchers are in hand for future referrals.

675 CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING FINANCIAL REGULATIONS TO ALLOW PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS BY BACS

A number of companies have requested that their invoice payments are made via the BACS system. In order to comply, it will require an amendment to Financial Regulation 6.1 to read 'Apart from petty cash payments, all payments shall be effected by cheque or BACS payment from the Town Council's bank accounts.' The existing cheque signatories will be given their own online access to authorise any BACS payments to comply with the existing regulation of two Councillors and one Clerk to authorise payments. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council amends Financial Regulation 6.1 to read 'Apart from petty cash payments, all payments shall be effected by cheque or BACS payment from the Town Council's bank accounts.'

676 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (MINUTE NO 668 REFERS)

At the Finance, Acquisitions and Staffing Committee meeting held on 24 May 2022 it was agreed that the Committee would look at one of the Town Council's policies or procedures at each meeting. This meeting reviewed Cowes Town Council's Financial Regulations. Apart from the Recommendation above, it was:

RECOMMENDED

That no further amendments are required to Cowes Town Council's Financial Regulations.

677 STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk reported that the Assistant Town Clerk has recently married and will now be known as Mrs Kate Scragg.

Councillors discussed the possibility of employing a new member of staff to manage the Cowes and Northwood Place Plan. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will write to Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council and Ryde Town Council to request copies of their job descriptions and person specifications for their Place Plan Managers.

678 HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS

There were no health and safety matters to discuss.

679 CLERKS' CONCERNS

The Clerks did not have any concerns to raise. Councillors discussed the possibility of the Clerks being able to access the IW Council's Development Forum online courses which may be of use to the Clerks. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will write to the IW Council to enquire whether Town and Parish Councils can access their online courses.

680 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Review of the Code of Conduct
- Grounds Maintenance at Northwood Park
- Cowes Library

The proceedings terminated 6.42pm.

CHAIRMAN