

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 22 August 2023 at 6.15pm.

Present: Councillors Carter (Chair), Brown, Nicholson, Rafferty & Walters.

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

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Carter was elected Chairman for the meeting.

749 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ellis and Hollis.

750 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

751 MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 27 June 2023 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

752 FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

The Town Clerk submitted a financial statement for the quarter ending 30 June 2023 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 June 2023 were £886,661.60 of which £303,105.78 is ring fenced / ear marked expenditure. The Reserves as at 30 June 2023 were £308,249.30 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 June 2023.

753 CONNECT4COMMUNITIES HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND OF £5,000

Cowes Town Council have purchased 80 x £50 Aldi vouchers of which, to date, 75 have been allocated to those who have provided a completed application form and claimed eligibility. The balance of £1,000 is being used to purchase a further and final 20 x £50 vouchers.

754 TOWN CLERK'S RETIREMENT

The Town Clerk advised Councillors that she will be retiring as at 31 December 2023. Councillors were asked to consider the job description, person specification and advert for the vacancy of Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. Councillors were also asked to consider whether to increase the hours per week from 18 to 20; it was agreed to continue with a minimum of 18 hours per week. Councillors may also consider psychometric testing during the recruitment process. Councillors expressed their thanks to the Town Clerk and were sad that she is retiring. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Rafferty will provide the Town Clerk with details of psychometric testing.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That the Job Description, Person Specification and Advertisement be approved.**
- 2. That the advertisement be placed in the County Press and the Observer for two weeks and circulated to IWALC and the local SLCC branch.**

755 OTHER STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk reported that the Deputy Town Clerk had successfully completed a training course on Facilities Management.

756 HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS

Councillors felt that the Deputy Town Clerk would benefit from further health and safety training including a qualification to undertake risk assessments. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Rafferty will send the Town Clerk details of suitable health and safety training.

Councillors also discussed the recent disability claim against the Town Council. Although the Town Council has still not received the Judge's written decision it was agreed that a timeline of events would be produced for Councillors, to be discussed at the first quarterly meeting of the Chairmen of Committees, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor. Other Councillors will be invited to attend. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Clerks will produce a timeline of events in regard to the recent disability claim.

Councillors acknowledged that the Town Clerk had circulated a 'Councillors' Skills, Qualifications and Experience' form; to date none have been returned. This will enable the Clerks and Councillors to draw on a wider group of Councillors when specialist skills are required. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will re-circulate the form requesting completion and return, asap.

757 CLERKS' CONCERNS

No concerns were raised by the Clerks.

Councillor Walters left the meeting at 7.12pm.

758 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

No items were raised for inclusion on a future agenda.

The proceedings terminated at 7.16pm.

CHAIRMAN