

SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Finance Full Council** meeting held on **Monday 29th October 2018** at **6.30pm** in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: Mayor Cllr C Houghton (in the Chair)

Councillors: Mrs J Skinner, Mr P Darby, Mrs S Matthews, Mrs A Thorp, Mrs B Bowler, Mr R Bartram, Mr S Allen, Mrs W Bensley, Mrs J Buckley-Stevens, Mrs S Lister

Town Clerk: Mr R Bishop
Deputy Clerk: Mrs C Smith

Public: 1

1. **Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1. Cllr T Jennison – unwell
- 1.2. Cllr L Scott – family commitments
- 1.3. Cllr A Thorp

2. **Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1. None.

The meeting was adjourned at 6.32 p.m. for public participation.

See Appendix 1

The meeting was resumed at 6.41 p.m.

3. **Minutes of the previous Meeting**

- 3.1. The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 23rd July 2018 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record by the Chairman.

4. **Finance Report**

- 4.1. Accounts to 31st August 2018 for Income & expenditure analysis 2018-19.

An up-dated quarterly report for accounts to the end of September was circulated at the meeting. The report followed the quarterly review conducted by the Town Clerk where code to code transfers adjusted any compensating input errors and entered the salary figures as per the budget into the appropriate Cost Centre. Cllrs noted that the overspend on the public toilet repairs was due to the vandalism of the door. The Town Clerk agreed to investigate the overspend on the office furniture budget.

- 4.2. Street Lighting for Phase 3 of Swans Nest Development

Cllrs discussed the scheme and that some lights were turned off from 12-6 overnight in some areas of Swaffham, it was thought that these were NCC lights. It was noted that the savings would be minimal for turning off the LED new lights. Cllrs asked if it could be verified that the lights will be downlighters.

It was agreed to accept the scheme and clarify that the new lights are downlighters.

- 4.3. LoRaWAN routers/gateway – installation at Community Centre

Councillors discussed the installation and had no objection provided no damage was caused to the seedum roof. It was thought that solar panels to run the system could also be suggested.

Initials.....

It was agreed to raise no objection to the installation providing care was taken not to damage the seeded roof. Solar panels to run the gateway would also be suggested.

- 4.4. Mayor's Charity – application for a grant towards an omiVista Mobii interactive table.
Councillors discussed the precedence of a Mayor's charity, it was thought that money for charity had been raised by Mayors in the past at civic events, this money was then donated to the identified charity. In order to consider this request under the grant making policy it was agreed that more information was required, detailing the need and who might use of the equipment.

It was agreed that to consider the request more information was required regarding the need for the equipment and who was likely to use it.

- 4.5. Notification of parish precept requirement and precept guidance.
Councillors noted the new Tax base for Swaffham which has risen to 2602.9 and increase of 64.1. It was noted that the precept requirement must be agreed by the Town Council before 31st January.

- 4.6. Request for a Dog Bin on Brandon Rd
It was proposed to fund the installation of a dog bin if the installation was on highways land. It was noted that there would be collection costs to add if Breckland choose to re-charge the cost.

It was noted that some of the grit bins in the town centre were damaged and needed replacing or repair.

It was agreed to fund the installation of a dog bin if the installation was on highways land. It was noted that there would be collection costs to add if Breckland choose to re-charge the cost.

- 4.7. Cost comparisons Market, Allotments and Cemetery
Councillors noted the cost comparisons, these would be shared with the Market and Open Spaces committees so that they can make budget recommendations, these would then come back to council at the January Budget meeting.

- 4.8. Update from the Town Clerk on the following on-going issues:

4.7.1. The Shambles

Breckland Council have agreed to convey the small piece of land in the Shambles to the Town Council, the solicitor has been informed and will be taking this forward now with the Land Registry.

4.7.2. Town Pound

The Town Clerk had chased this transfer, it was hoped that a completion date would be forthcoming shortly.

4.7.3. Town Centre Works

Cllrs noted that the third monthly meeting with the Architect and contractor would be held on 1st November at 10.30 in the chamber. Cllrs were welcome to attend. The town Clerk reported that the listed building officer did not support a public art work on the electrical cabinet. Cllrs proposed to wait until the project was finished before considering the options of how to soften the impact of the building.

Cllrs agreed to wait until the project was finished before considering the options of how to soften the impact of the building.

5. Review of Policies as listed below:

- 5.1. EH (G) 001 Grievance Procedure
- 5.2. EH (M) 002 Member & Officer Protocol
- 5.3. EH (S) 003 Smoking Policy & Procedure
- 5.4. TC (C) 002 Community Engagement Strategy
- 5.5. EH (H) 001 Health & Safety
- 5.6. EH (C) 004 Confidentiality Policy
- 5.7. EH (C) 003 Complaints Procedure
- 5.8. EH (E) 001 Equal Opportunities & Dignity at Work Policy
- 5.9. EH (L) 002 Lone Working Policy
- 5.10. EH (M) 004 Maternity Policy and Procedure
- 5.11. EH (P) 001 Paternity Leave Policy & Procedure

It was agreed to accept all policies listed above with the suggested deletions in red and additions or changes in blue.

5.12. EH (I) 003 Information Security Policy

Cllrs noted that this policy relates to cardholder's data that is collected and transmitted when making a purchase. This was the standard policy recommended by Worldpay to be PCI compliant. The Deputy Clerk would add further notes where appropriate as not all of the policy was relevant – for example no data was stored or collected on the Council computer network. It was agreed to accept the policy as it stands to maintain compliance.

It was agreed to accept the policy EH(I) 003 Information Security with no amendments but this may be reviewed at the next meeting.

5.13. TC(I) 003 Grants, Matchfunding, sponsorship and donations (amended)

Cllrs discussed this policy. It was proposed to reject the amendments and keep the policy the same.

It was agreed to accept the TC(I) 003 Grants, Matchfunding, sponsorship and donations with no amendments by a majority decision with 6 for.

The Town Clerk clarified that the Councillors do not wish to have national charity applications referred to them.

6. To receive and consider a cashflow and budget report regarding the financial year 2019-20.

6.1. Earmarked Capital Reserves

Cllrs noted that a bill from NCC for the car park traffic regulation orders had been received, it was £250 over the £5000 earmarked for this project.

6.2. Market

Market figures were holding up better this year.

6.3. Events

A new cost centre had been put in place to make it easier to analyse the cost and the difference between a fundraising event, a community event a civic event. Cllrs discussed the event budget, there were very different views from retaining a £10,000 budget to having none at all.

This would be discussed as a separate item at the next full council meeting.

6.4. Outside Equipment and Vehicles

Initials.....

The major expenses for this year were now committed with the full budget being taken up by the ride-on mower. The costs of the truck would be spread over a four-year lease agreement, and so these funds were committed going forward.

6.5. Toilets & TIC

The concept of capital investment in the current premises to increase revenue income and reduce expenditure, has to be weighed up at the budget meeting in January.

6.6. Cemetery & Churchyard

Review of fees was currently in progress, there would be a recommendation to Open Spaces next month.

6.7. Open Spaces

There are a lot of Play Area expenses carried over from last year.

6.8. Amenity & Agency

Christmas Lights – Cllrs discussed the current contract and how the lights had been provided in the past. There were conflicting views on how to move forward.

It was agreed that this issue would be discussed at the next full council meeting. Cllrs were asked to send in any proposals to be considered so that they could be added to the agenda. The previously circulated information with costs of retaining the current contractor or buying the existing lights would be recirculated.

Cllrs discussed the procedure for declaring an interest, it was confirmed that it was up to each individual to decide if they needed to declare an interest.

6.9. Precept

The Town Clerk reported that it was too early to predict where the budget would be in January. The general message coming across was one of making savings and increasing income.

Standing Orders – Cllrs discussed whether a response to the public should be made by individual Cllrs, the Mayor or the Clerk. The Town Clerk would check standing orders.

7. Admissions to meetings Act (public Bodies) 1960:

Confidential business following the exclusion of the public and press.

7.1. To receive and consider draft outline GBC Business Plan.

A draft document was circulated to Cllrs to be considered at the Council meeting on 14th November.

7.2. To receive and consider a job description and clarification of the role of project officer

To avoid any misunderstanding of the role, Cllrs noted the job description and report on work undertaken so far. A number of Cllrs reported that they found the new project support officer helpful, committed and an asset to the team.

7.3. To receive and consider progress report from Town Clerk on all aspects of Days Field.

There was little new information to share as the draft application to borrow and draft cost plan were not ready. At conference the Town Clerk had met another clerk who had recently borrowed £5M. This clerk had offered to advise if required.

Due to the social media response to the public meeting and continuation of emails an extra ordinary personnel meeting had been called. Two statements had been sent out clarifying the position.

The town clerk recommended that the final decision on the disposal of the land should be taken in public as long as the Council pay attention to any confidentiality issues that may compromise such a decision.

8. Next Full Council Finance meeting
Monday 21st January 2018 at 6.30pm.

Meeting closed 9.12 pm
Appendix 1

Chairman.....

Mr Wickerson raised concerns and expressed his regret that Days Field was to be discussed below the line. He believed this issue should be discussed in public at every opportunity. His feeling was that excluding the public from hearing the debate heightened the publics concerns about the scheme.

Mr Wickerson also questioned the validity of the decision taken at the August extra-ordinary meeting to seek permission from the Ministry to borrow the money. Recent publicity had stated that it was a unanimous decision but there were only 7 Cllrs present. He felt that a decision of this importance should be considered by a more fully attended council meeting.

It was clarified that the reason the days field item was in the confidential section was because it related to a personnel matter. The Town Clerk confirmed that he would be seeking clarification from the Ministry if the attendance at the extra-ordinary meeting was sufficient to support an application. He would also be recommending that the Council considered any decision to borrow the money in public.

Mr Wickerson also asked about the timetable for the loan and when the Council might hear that permission would be granted. The Town Clerk agreed to email Mr Wickerson with details. The FAQs on the website would also be updated within the week.

Initials.....

