

## SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Finance Committee** meeting on **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020** at **6.30pm** held via virtual media link.

Present: Cllr I Pilcher (in the Chair),  
Cllrs J Anscombe, S Bell, J Skinner, G Edwards, K Sandle, J Skinner.

Town Clerk: R Bishop  
Minute Taker: C Smith

In attendance Cllr P Darby

### 1. **Apologies for Absence**

1.1. Cllr B Holmes

### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

2.1. None received.

### 3. **Finance related issues form Non-Member Cllrs**

3.1. None were received.

### 4. **Late Items at the Chairman's Discretion**

Supplementary funding for VJ Day commemorative bench installation – Following a recommendation from the events committee, it was agreed to allow a further £270 for the bench and planting scheme to commemorate VJ Day.

**It was agreed to add £270 to the VJ day commemorate bench and planting budget from general reserves.**

Action

RB

### 5. **Minutes of the previous Meeting**

5.1. The minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and would be signed by the chairman when next in the office.

### 6. **Report on outstanding actions agreed at the last meeting**

6.1. Cost centre codes – Councillors confirmed there were no current queries on codes.

6.2. Outside Maintenance Expenses – The Estates committee had not yet completed their investigation into this matter and so this item would be carried over to the next meeting.

6.3. Confirmation of the 30 day period for notice of public rights to start on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September

**It was agreed that the 30 day period of public rights would start on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September and end on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October.**

RB

6.4. Match Funding request from the Cricket Club referred from Full Council February 2020 meeting received before lockdown – It was reported that the cricket club had not yet started back, this item would be held over until the Cricket Club got back in touch and could be considered at the next meeting.

### 7. **Policies for Review**

7.1. 001-009 Financial Risk Assessments – Cllr Anscombe would work with the Town Clerk to update the financial risk assessment to include assessments of the severity of risk and calculations to highlight the likelihood of any risk occurring. Meanwhile the amended policy was considered. Changes included:

Initials.....

- F007 Under control measures – note public toilets at the Rec and BACS could be added to the method of receiving payments.
- F008 Under Risk Description – question: a link to the Asset Register would be added.

**It was agreed to adopt the amended policy until new style Finance Risk Assessment is ready to be adopted.**

RB  
JA

7.2. 003 Grants, Match funding, Sponsorship & Donations

The grants policy was discussed and it was agreed that as this did not tie in with any budget heading it would be reviewed when the budget was being set. It was recommended to accept the current policy with one change requiring monies to be paid by BACS.

**It was agreed to accept the current policy with one change requiring monies to be paid by BACS.**

7.3. 001 Twinning Policy

Cllrs discussed the twinning policy, it was agreed to accept the policy although Cllrs raised concern about the relevance of Twinning and how this could be expanded to included opportunities for young people to develop social and cultural links. It was agreed that Cllr Edwards would attend the next twinning group meeting and report back on plans for twinning activities. The Town Council would then review their involvement.

GE

**It was agreed to accept the policy without change.**

7.4. 0001 Asset Management and Register

**It was agreed to accept the asset register as drafted.**

7.5. 004 Gypsy and Traveller Policy and Procedure

References to ESCC needed to be changed and links updated.

**It was agreed to work with Cllr Anscombe to update the policy.**

JA  
RB

7.6. 002 Investment Strategy

**It was agreed to accept the Investment Strategy as drafted.**

7.7. 001 Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Effectiveness of Internal Audit Controls

Cllrs discussed the terms of reference for internal audit and it was recognised that Cllrs may want to include projects or other areas in the scrutiny process. Cyber security and reputational risk had not been reviewed and should be included. It was agreed to inform Cllrs when the auditors would next be in so that any relevant topics could be added.

**It was agreed to inform the committee when the auditors would next be in so that any relevant questions or issues could be added to the list for scrutiny.**

7.8. 001 Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor Protocol Guidance

Cllrs discussed some minor changes including that the chains are to be worn at Full extraordinary meetings and Town meetings.

**It was agreed to accept the policy with minor changes to when chains should be worn.**

## 8. Finance Report

### 8.1. Internal Auditors Report for 2019-20

Cllrs noted the internal auditors report, the report confirmed that adequate controls existed, the only comment was that there was a large general reserve and a move away from earmarked reserves.

### 8.2. Income and Expenditure and Bank Rec to June 2020

Cllrs noted the first quarter figures which are through the lockdown period, this highlighted reduced rents received from Market traders and Sues News. The situation would be clearer at the end of the second quarter.

The following queries were raised and actions agreed:

Code 1000 Office rent – it was established that this code needed to remain so that adhoc income could be reported.

Car Charging – it was confirmed that income was received quarterly and that as this period covered lockdown very few cars charged in this time period.

Street lights – it was confirmed that there were two payments per year.

Allotments – it was confirmed that most income was received in October.

Market Income – it was confirmed that all regulars were now being billed and casual income would show from next quarter. The extent of the income drop would be clearer after the next quarter.

Water rates – these appeared high and would be investigated.

Photocopier - as the office move to using less paper this contract needed to be reviewed.

ICO systems – the Town Clerk and Cllr Sandle were looking at the contract and recommendations made by ICO following the virus. The outcome would be shared with the committee at the next meeting. It was noted that having the expertise of Cllr Sandle was a great advantage and welcome help.

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| RB<br>KS<br>CS |
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| <b>It was agreed to accept the first quarter accounts.</b> |
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### 8.3. Consolidation of peripheral accounts

Cllrs discussed the bank accounts with small or no balance, it was agreed to close these accounts and transfer the balances into the deposit account.

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| <b>It was agreed to close the Sk8 park and Muga, Capital Reserves and Mayor's Charity Accounts, balances to be transferred to the deposit account</b> |
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### 8.4. Swimming Pool Land

It was noted that there had been no contact with de Merke Estates, the fence was still intact.

### 8.5. Councillors Expenses

It was confirmed that Cllrs could claim expenses to be reimbursed by the office on the production of a receipt. Car travel expenses of 45p per mile could be claimed.

### 8.6. Impact of Home working costs or savings

The Town Clerk reported that although the home working allowance had been paid, the cost was around £500. He expected a saving overall, one of the larger expenses saved was on travel expenses as meeting were held by zoom. A breakdown of costs and savings would be presented at the next meeting.

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### 8.7. Loan Options and progress with permission to borrow

The Town Clerk reported that the application had been made but a response would be delayed until after the public consultation was out. The consultation would be

available on line and by questionnaire, it would be publicised on line and in the press. Once the consultation was done the Council would decide if they wanted to borrow, at this point the Council could also go back to the town again. The Council would also need to consider consolidating the loans, the Town Clerk would get up to date information at that point to inform the decision.

8.8. S106 Discussions re-streetlights, play areas and open spaces

The Town Clerk reported that an amount needed to be negotiated to take on the management of these facilities. One formula suggested by a developer was a payment per streetlight ranging from £1750 to £2500. Barretts had confirmed that they would utilise a management company, other developers have expressed a preference to come to an agreement with the Town Council. Cllrs discussed what might be an appropriate amount and concluded that further work assessing this outside the meeting was needed. It was agreed that Cllrs Pilcher and Anscombe would work with the Town Clerk to come up with a viable formula.

RB  
IP  
JA

8.9. Report from Estates Committee regarding outside equipment and contractors

It was reported that this work was ongoing.

9. **Date of the next Finance Committee meeting – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 6.30pm**

Meeting closed 8.10pm

Chairman.....

DRAFT