

## SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **FINANCE FULL COUNCIL** meeting held on **Monday 28nd January 2019** at **6.30pm** in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: Mayor Cllr C Houghton (in the Chair)

Councillors: Mr R Bartram, Mrs W Bensley, Mr P Darby, Mrs T Jennison, Mrs S Lister, Mrs S Matthews, Mr L Scott, Mrs A Thorp, Mrs J Buckley-Stevens, Mrs J Skinner

Public: 1

Town Clerk: Mr R Bishop

Deputy Town Clerk: Mrs C Smith

### 1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1. Cllr Mrs B Bowler– Illness.
- 1.2. Cllr T Jennison - Illness.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1. There were no declarations of interest.

The meeting was closed at 6.32pm to take any questions from the member of the public attending. There were no questions to answer and the meeting resumed at 6.33.

### 3. Minutes of the previous Meeting

- 3.1. The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record by the Chairman.

### 4. Finance Report

- 4.1. Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 for Income and Expenditure analysis 2018-19  
The clerk reported that accounts for December and vat return had been completed. Councillors noted the accounts and bank reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

**It was agreed to accept the accounts and balances report.**

### 4.2. Match Funding for the Oaklands Pocket Park grant application.

The Town Clerk reported that the application for £24k pocket park funding to the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government had already been submitted including a match funding element from Swaffham Town Council of £3,283.81. It was noted that this bid was put together at short notice and had to be submitted before the Council had an opportunity to review the bid. Cllrs were asked to ratify the decision to make the bid, alternatively the bid could be modified to a match funding contribution of £943.81, this would mean that there would be no benches or sign included in the scheme.

Cllrs discussed the scheme and concluded that the project would be more attractive and practical for families with benches and agreed unanimously to set aside £3,283.81 from the Revenue Reserve Play Area Fund to match fund the project.

**It was agreed to match fund the pocket park bid with £3,283.81 from the Revenue Reserve Play Area Fund.**

### 4.3. Outline Planning Application for Days Field

Cllrs considered the costs and merits of renewing the outline planning permission for Days Field. The Town Clerk confirmed that these costs were included in this year's budget. Whilst

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concerns were raised that the application did not need to be made at this time, it was thought that any renewal would last for two years and that all existing reports would remain current and not need to be redone. Also, by having current planning permission this would protect the value of the land. It was agreed to appoint J Stacey (fee £2,600) to apply for renewed outline planning permission, the planning fee would be £4,620. 8 votes for, 1 against, 1 abstention.

**It was agreed to appoint J Stacey (fee £2,600) to apply for Outline Planning Permission (fee £4,620).**

**5. Policy Review**

5.1. EH (E) 002 Employers Pension Policy

**It was agreed to accept the Employers Pension Policy with no changes.**

5.2. TC (C) 005 Code of Conduct

**It was agreed to accept the code of conduct with no changes.**

5.3. TC (F) 002 Freedom of Information – Model Publication Scheme

**It was agreed to accept the Freedom of Information – Model Publication Scheme with no amendments.**

5.4. TC (M) 003 Members Allowance Policy

**It was agreed to accept the Members Allowance Policy with the change in the second sentence to omit ‘it is recommended that,’ the sentence would then read ‘any amount of the Town Mayor’s allowance remaining unallocated at the end of the term of office can be donated to a local charity of the Town Mayor’s choice.’**

5.5. TC (T) 001 Twinning Policy

**It was agreed to accept the Twinning Policy with the new declaration signed at the last twinning meeting replacing the old declaration.**

**6. Budget Presentation**

6.1. The Town Clerk introduced the budget documents that had been circulated. Some Cllrs had previously discussed ideas at an informal meeting and forwarded comments to the clerk, these had been considered when preparing the draft budget.

6.2. The Town Clerk then introduced the budget. Each cost centre was reviewed individually, and 30 recommendations considered. Staff and salaries, the largest expense was considered on an on-going basis by the personnel committee.

6.3. Un-earmarked capital reserves R1

To approve the un-earmarked capital reserves budget for 2019-20 of £8,645.

**It was agreed to accept R1 un-earmarked Capital Reserve expenditure budget of £8,645.**

6.4. Un-earmarked capital reserves Income R2

To approve un-earmarked capital reserve income for 2018-19 of £0. Cllrs noted that the sale of Days Field could occur within this financial year depending on the option the new council takes forward.

**It was agreed to accept R2 un-earmarked capital reserve income budget of £0.**

6.5. Earmarked Capital Reserves R3

Expenditure £92,214. – Cllrs noted that there was an outstanding s.106 claim with Breckland for £140k, to reimburse the Town Council for works carried out in the Town Centre. This left £53, 608 for the refurbishment of the public toilets. Work on this project needed to be completed by the end of 2019 as the money could not be reclaimed after that date.

**It was agreed to accept R3 earmarked Capital Reserve budget of £92,214**

6.6. Earmarked Capital Reserves Capital projects

Income - £55,001; **R4** to receive S106 £53,608 for the public toilet project. **R5** - Museum Loan, Councillors noted that £1,393 would be re-paid by the museum in 2019-20. **R6** – to prepare grant applications for various projects as opportunities arose.

**It was agreed to accept R4 to receive Section 106 monies £53,608. It was agreed to accept R5 Swaffham Museum will repay £1,393 from their loan. It was agreed to accept R6 grants to be applied for as opportunities arose.**

6.7. Earmarked Revenue Reserves

Expenditure £116,430; **R7** Councillors noted the Land and property fund within this cost centre was topped back up to £40,000. This also includes a contingency for elections expenses that is likely to be used this year. Cllrs discussed setting aside a budget for highways projects. In recent years issues had arisen that had not been addressed as NCC had no budget for projects or additional improvements, all focus appeared to be on immediate maintenance. It was agreed to budget £4075 for highway projects.

**It was agreed to accept R7 Earmarked revenue reserves totalling £116,430**

6.8. Town Hall

Expenditure **R8** £29,622 Councillors discussed the maintenance of the building and agreed to accept R8.

**It was agreed to accept R8 expenditure for the Town Hall of £29,622.**

6.9. Town Hall

Income £2,290 **R9** All hiring fees for offices and Council Chamber to be increased by 2% the Town Clerk confirmed that this was a competitive rate when compared to other facilities locally.

**It was agreed to accept R9 all hiring fees to be increased by 2% for the Town Hall giving projected income of £2,290.**

6.10. Administration and Misc.

Expenditure £216,467 **R10**.

**It was agreed to accept R10 Admin & Miscellaneous expenditure of £197,176.**

6.11. Administration and Misc.

Income £660 **R11** this had reduced as the council tax support grant was not available any more.

**It was agreed to accept R9 Admin & Miscellaneous income of £660.**

6.12 Market

Expenditure £30,165 R12 Cllrs noted that the full plan for the new market stalls would come to full council for consideration.

**It was agreed to accept R10 Market expenditure of £30,165.**

6.13 Market

Income £34,600 R13 market rents would rise by 2%, casual rate to be £15 for 10ft with £1 per foot for each additional foot.

**It was agreed to accept R13 Market income of £34,600.**

6.14 Events

Expenditure £4,200 R14 Cllrs discussed the necessity or more flags. It was confirmed.

**It was agreed to accept R14 Events expenditure of £4,200.**

6.15 Events

Income £4,800 R15. It was noted that some of these events would run on a cost neutral basis.

**It was agreed to accept R15 Events Income of £4,800.**

6.16 Northwell Pool

Expenditure £2,336 R16, Income £1,555 R17. It was noted that this area is maintained by the Town Council. Anglian Water contributes to these costs the Town Clerk would catch up with this reclaim. Concern was expressed regarding the safety of the embankment wall, the Town Clerk would get an estimate for a structural engineer to examine and assess the wall.

**It was agreed to accept R16 expenditure of £2,336 and R17 and income of £1,555. It was agreed to get an estimate for how much it would be for an engineer to assess the wall.**

6.17 Outside Equipment and Vehicles

Expenditure £14,976 – Cllrs felt that this the introduction of this cost code was helpful.

**It was agreed to accept R18 Outside Equipment and Vehicles expenditure £14,976.**

6.18 Allotments

Expenditure £9,641 R19, Income £6,930 R20. In order to get closer to a balanced budget it was recommended that rents go up by approximately 10% bringing rents to £55 for the largest plots. Cllrs discussed the necessity of having rules on the cultivation of the allotments.

**It was agreed to accept R19 expenditure for the allotments of £9,641 and R20 projected income for the allotments of £6,930 based on an increase of 10%.**

6.19 Public Toilets

Expenditure £18,417 R21

**It was agreed to accept R21 public toilets overall expenditure £20,032.**

6.20 Cemetery and Churchyard

Expenditure £36,680 **R22**, Income £20,400 **R23** it was recommended that burial fees and chapel hire prices increase by 5%. The cemetery prices would be reviewed by Open Spaces committee and if price comparisons were significantly different expected income may change. The path to the ashes section in the churchyard would be considered at the next full council. Cllrs would also consider a request for lighting along the churchyard path to the kissing gates.

**It was agreed to accept R22 expenditure for the Cemetery & Churchyard of £36,680 and R23 projected income for Cemetery and Churchyard £20,400.**

6.21 Open Spaces

Expenditure £65,496 **R24**, The Town Clerk would contact Rev S Nairn, a representative of the diocese, regarding the digitalisation of the Town Clock. Income £510 **R25** – Recreation Ground fees.

**It was agreed to accept R21 expenditure for Open Spaces of £65,496 and R22 income £510.**

6.22 Amenities, Agency and Civic

Expenditure £36,969 **R26**, Cllrs discussed the contribution to Relief in need administration costs. It was proposed to cut the subsidy and ask Relief in Need to pay the full cost of administration support. This motion was defeated by 6 votes to 3 and it was agreed to accept reimbursement of £1,540. Cllrs asked to see Relief in Need accounts before next years budget meeting so that the level of subsidy could be decided based on more information.

**It was agreed to accept R26 expenditure £36,969**

6.23 Amenities, Agency and Civic.

Income £10,736 **R27,28,29** Cllrs discussed the rent for the shop and agreed to keep it at the current level in this difficult economic climate for the high street.

**It was agreed to accept R27 Relief in Need income £1540 + vat.**

**It was agreed to accept R28 Income £5,690 Annual Rent of former TIC – It was agreed to keep the rent at the same level.**

**It was agreed to accept R29 Amenities, Agency and Civic income £10,736.**

6.24 Precept

In the light of all the previous considerations, Councillors discussed an increase to the precept for 2019-20 to £407,500; an increase of 1%.

It was proposed by Cllr Lister, seconded by Cllr Buckley-Stevens to increase the precept by 1%. This was carried in a vote by 9 votes to 2.

**It was agreed to set a Precept of £407,500 for the year 2019-20.**

7 **Date of the Next Full Finance Meeting**

The next Full Finance meeting was scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 6.30pm.

Meeting closed 9.10pm

Chairman.....

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