

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 28 March 2018 at 10:00am in the Council Chamber of Beccles Town Hall

PRESENT: N Brooks, Chair
G Birrell
R Kathuria
S Kenward
J Harris
R Stubbings (Mayor and Deputy Chair)
J Walmsley

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs C Boyne, Town Clerk

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC: 0

1. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillors Brambley-Crawshaw and G Elliott.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR ANY REQUESTS FOR THE GRANTING OF DISPENSATIONS IN RELATION TO ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. TO ACCEPT FOR ACCURACY AND ADOPTION THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY 2018

RESOLVED To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 24 January 2018

4. TO REVIEW THE CURRENT S106 AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SCHEDULES

The clerk explained that once the works related to the bridge at Napier Terrace had been paid for, an amount of approximately £600 would be left on contribution number DC/12/0699/FUL which could be reallocated to the skate park.

5. TO RECEIVE THE LEGAL BRIEFING FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS REGARDING REPORTING PERSONAL DATA BREACHES

The briefing was received for information.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To receive the legal briefing from the National Association of Local Councils regarding reporting personal data breaches



6. TO REVIEW THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS TOOLKIT, AGREE THE CONSENT FORM, GENERAL PRIVACY NOTICE AND THE PRIVACY NOTICE FOR STAFF AND COUNCILLORS AND AGREE TO ENGAGE THE SERVICES OF THE DPO CENTRE AS THE COUNCIL'S DATA PROTECTION OFFICER

The clerk reported that the Suffolk Association of Local Councils had produced a toolkit for councils to work through in order to be ready for the introduction of the new General Data Protection Regulations on 25 May 2018. It was noted that it was unlikely that this would be completed by 25 May, but provided the council could evidence that it was working towards compliance by this date, this should suffice.

The Consent Form, General Privacy Notice and the Privacy Notice for Staff and Councillors were agreed. It was also agreed to engage the services of the DPO Centre to act as the council's Data Protection Officer under Category 2 of the charges schedule. The clerk explained that although the council's precept was much higher than that shown in Category 2, she felt that the requirements in respect of the Data Protection Officer would only relate to Section 2. She had contacted the DPO Centre and it was happy with this approach.

The clerk was thanked for her work to date on this.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To note the General Data Protection Regulations Toolkit, agree the Consent Form, General Privacy Notice and the Privacy Notice for Staff and Councillors and agree to engage the Services of the DPO Centre as the council's Data Protection Officer

7. TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S INSURANCE POLICY SCHEDULE FOR THE COMING YEAR

The secretary explained that she had obtained floor measurements for all of the properties that the council was responsible for insuring and had used the insurance company's valuation tool. Some buildings had reduced in value and some increased. The May Centre valuation had increased significantly and seemed disproportionate to other valuations, but the committee agreed that it should stand. Two different valuations had been received in respect of the Town Hall, one based on the whole building having two floors, the other based on only the office area having two floors. It was agreed to accept the higher valuation.

The merit of insuring benches was discussed as it was unlikely that all benches would be damaged or stolen at the same time. The bus station on Lowestoft Road was also considered as this had been knocked down and rebuilt by Suffolk County Council. Given the small sums involved, it was agreed that both items should remain on the policy. The Money cover was also reviewed.



It was noted that the policy would need to be amended again in the near future to include Beccles Quay.

RESOLVED To agree the Insurance Policy Schedule for 2018/19 subject to the above amendments

8. TO CONSIDER ENGAGING THE PAYROLL SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE SUFFOLK ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The clerk explained that, including two members of staff at the Beccles Quay, the cost for the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) to take over the service would be approximately £414 per annum, against the current cost with Sage of £272. The clerk also explained that it was not good practice for her to be responsible for paying herself and that there would also be a time saving if SALC took over the service.

RESOLVED To agree to engage the payroll services provided by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils

9. TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2018/19

The clerk reported that the council was now required to produce an Investment Strategy as its investments exceeded £100,000. The strategy confirmed the council's objectives of security, liquidity and yield in that order and that the council was now covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme of up to £85,000.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To adopt the Investment Strategy for 2018/19

10. TO CONSIDER THE REINVESTMENT OF COUNCIL FUNDS IN THE SANTANDER FIXED RATE BUSINESS BOND

The clerk reported that she had checked other rates with highly rated institutions, and the best rate on offer was from Lloyds Bank for its 12 Month Deposit Account.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To invest £77,368.20 in a Lloyds Bank 12 Month Deposit Account and agree the signatories for this new account

11. TO REVIEW THE ADVICE RECEIVED REGARDING VAT REGISTRATION

The clerk reported that it would only be necessary to consider registering for VAT if the council was likely to incur more than £7,500 in respect of its VAT-exempt business activities. The council should be aware in plenty of time whether it was likely to spend this type of sum on Blyburgate Hall in the future and so could seek further advice if required at that time.

RESOLVED That the council does not register for VAT at this time

12. TO REVIEW THE FREQUENCY AND METHOD OF DELIVERY OF THE COUNCIL'S NEWSLETTER, THE CHARTER

There was concern expressed that not many residents read the Charter and that the newsletter could be delivered online to save on costs. The total cost per annum of delivery and printing was £1,736. However, not all residents had access to the internet. The use of social media was also discussed.

After discussion it was agreed that the number of newsletters produced per year should be reduced from four to two. The mayor offered to liaise with the clerk and deputy regarding using other media platforms to advertise the work of the council and the community.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To reduce the number of council Newsletters produced from four to two per annum and for the mayor to discuss with officers how to publicise the work of the council and community in the future

13. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON COUNCIL LEASES

There were no further updates.

14. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The dates of the next two meetings were confirmed as Tuesday 24 April 2018 at 10:00am (this meeting would only go ahead if there was substantive business requiring attention) and Wednesday 23 May 2018 at 10:00am.

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