

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 23 May 2018 at 10:00am in the Council Chamber of Beccles Town Hall

PRESENT: R Stubbings (Chair and Deputy Mayor)
N Brooks
E Brambley-Crawshaw (Mayor)
G Elliott
R Kathuria

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs C Boyne, Town Clerk

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC: 1

1. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Birrell, Kenward, Harris and Walmsley.

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 ELECT A CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR FOR 2018/19

Councillor G Elliott proposed Councillor Stubbings as Chair. This was seconded by Councillor Brambley-Crawshaw. Councillor Kathuria proposed that Councillor Brooks remains Chair. There was no seconder, a vote was taken on the original proposal and it was therefore

RESOLVED That Councillor Stubbings is Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee for 2018/19

Councillor Stubbings proposed Councillor Brooks as Deputy Chair, this was seconded by Councillor Kathuria, a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED That Councillor Brooks is Deputy Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee for 2018/19

4. TO ACCEPT FOR ACCURACY AND ADOPTION THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28 MARCH 2018

RESOLVED To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 28 March 2018

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



The clerk confirmed that there was currently a S106 contribution of £956 with an expiry date of 9 August. This was allocated to the new skate park. Given that the date of construction of the park had been put back to November, it may be that the contribution could be put towards a deposit.

There were currently £3,796.13 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts available to spend. There was discussion regarding the proposed new homes near the new relief road and off London Road and the level of CIL these would attract. The council would need to start to plan how to spend these funds. Councillor G Elliott agreed to obtain a definitive answer as to how much the council could expect to receive from the CIL and what the timing of this would be.

RESOLVED That Councillor G Elliott obtains a definitive answer as to how much the council will receive in Community Infrastructure levy from the major proposed new developments in Beccles and what the timescale for payment would be

6. TO AGREE A RETENTION POLICY FOR DOCUMENTS

The clerk explained that this policy was an important part of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) that were coming into force on 25 May. It gave a clear indication as to how long the council would hold various types of documents and the reason for doing so.

It was suggested that councillors should receive training regarding GDPR and that councillor emails should be pursued.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To agree the Retention Policy for documents

7. TO AGREE A CASH HANDLING POLICY

The clerk explained that with the likely increase in cash that would be received in the office from Beccles Quay moorings and given that a new member of staff had been employed, it was important to have a clear cash handling policy in place as part of the council's internal controls.

It was suggested that a PDQ (Process Data Quickly) machine should be installed in the office in order to enable card payments and the clerk explained that this would be considered once the trust was responsible for the PDQ machine at the Quay.

RESOLVED To agree the Cash Handling Policy

8. TO RECEIVE AND RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR 2017/18

The clerk explained that the council needed to ensure that it had in place a sound system of internal control and would need to give explanations for any ticks in the 'no' boxes on the form.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To receive and approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2017/18

9. TO RECEIVE AND RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS FOR 2017/18

The clerk reported that the overall balance carried forward had reduced from £420,901 to £269,025. This was mainly due to the purchase of the car park attached to Blyburgate Hall for £150,000. As a result of this purchase, the capital reserve had reduced from £169,762 to £7,610. Earmarked Reserves had increased from £116,265 to £128,175 with the introduction of two new reserves for Devolved Assets and Services and Vehicle Activated Signs. A new reserve had also been created for the Neighbourhood Plan Grant as this was ring fenced.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To receive and approve the Accounting Statements for 2017/18

10. TO RECEIVE AND RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT 2017/18

The clerk reported that no concerns had been raised in the Internal Audit Report and the Internal Auditor had been satisfied that the council had robust procedures in place. The committee reviewed the comments highlighted in the report but no action was considered necessary at this time.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To receive and approve the Internal Auditors Report for 2017/18

11. TO REVIEW THE ADVICE RECEIVED REGARDING VAT REGISTRATION AND CONSIDER OBTAINING FURTHER ADVICE

It was agreed that council should seek further professional advice, which would be chargeable, regarding VAT Registration as the trust would be very close to the £85k threshold in respect of taxable sales at Beccles Quay and the situation at Blyburgate Hall could also become complex if expenditure on VAT exempt business activities exceeded £7,500.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To obtain professional advice regarding the merits of VAT registration

12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON COUNCIL LEASES

It was noted that the former waste site now came under the remit of the Beccles Fenland Charity Trust.

13. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The dates of the next two meetings were confirmed as Friday 22 June 2018 at 10:00am (this meeting would only go ahead if there was substantive business requiring attention) and Wednesday 25 July 2018 at 10:00am.

 11/27/18