



Needham Market Town Council
Governance & Finance Committee
Minutes – 9th November 2021

Present: Chairperson Cllr Annis, Cllrs Cave, Darnell, Lea, Mason, Norris, O'Shea, Norris and Stansfield.

The Town Clerk was in attendance.

GF010/21 To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr Ost and Cllr Phillips

GF011/21 To receive any Declarations of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests by Members.

Cllr Annis - Payment of Accounts (Community Centre)

Cllr Lea – Payment of Accounts (Reimbursement of Expenses)

Cllr Stansfield - Payment of Accounts (Community Centre)

GF012/21 To approve any dispensations with respect to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

There were none.

GF013/21 The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Governance Section held on 10th August 2021 were tabled. Cllr Lea proposed the Minutes be adopted. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

GF014/21 To consider Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

Cllr Annis referred the Committee to the Accounts for Payment and Confirmation document that was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minutes and confirmed he had checked all items contained therein and was satisfied they were appropriate to pay.

Cllr Darnell proposed the Accounts for Payment and Confirmation be approved. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

GF015/21 Update on Governance and Finance Arrangements.

- a) To receive Council's Annual External Audit Report 2020/21

The Annual External Audit Report 2020/21 was tabled.

Cllr Lea proposed the Committee adopt the Annual External Audit Report 2020/21. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

- b) To monitor the Council's approved Budget 2021/22 against actual expenditure.

The Clerk tabled a high-level Income and Expenditure Account (up to 30th September 2021). Councillors had also been provided with more detailed accounts showing Income and Expenditure against each individual Council Section Budget and Income and Expenditure against each of the Council's Committees Budgets (the Committees having replaced the Sections in year).

Cllr Annis proposed the Committee adopt the Income and Expenditure Account (up to 30th September 2021). Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

- c) Review of the Council's Financial Management procedures.

Cllr Annis gave an update on the operation of the Council's recently introduced on-line banking facility. The Committee discussed authorisation, backup and security arrangements.

- d) Consideration of the allocation of grants and donations for the current financial year.

The Clerk referred the Committee to the allocations of grants and donations already made for the current financial year and confirmed the unspent budgeted for balance available.

The Clerk referred the Committee to two requests for donations. The first was from the Stowmarket Citizen's Advice Service in relation to their operational costs and, the second was from Needham Market Library, seeking funds to allow purchase of large cushions to be used in their Baby Bounce and Tot Rock sessions.

Cllr Annis proposed Stowmarket Citizen's Advice be granted £1,500 and Needham Market Library £240. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

- e) Review of Council's Community Infrastructure Levy priorities and expenditure.

There were no issues for review.

- f) Review of Council's Policies.

The Clerk reported on the draft General Privacy Notice and Subject Access Request Policy which has been provided to Councillors and which will be the subject of

consideration for adoption at Council's next full meeting to be held on 17th August.

Cllr Darnell raised a question regarding email addresses. The Committee asked that more information be provided at a future meeting, if appropriate.

g) Review of the Council's Risk Assessment.

The Clerk reported the overall review is not yet complete but that, in the meantime, all matters which require a Risk Assessment are assessed as they arise including the forthcoming Needham Market Remembrance Service 2021.

GF016/21 To consider and propose an annual budget for 2022/23.

The Clerk explained the various factors that influence the Council finances looking ahead in setting an annual budget. These include inflationary pressures, Council Tax Base calculation and either drawing from, or adding to, Council's Reserve Fund. The Council is also setting an annual budget for the first time whilst operating under its Committee structure and there are also matters relating to the COVID19 period that continue to impact on the Council's finances. Taking all circumstances into account and, adopting a cautious approach, the Clerk recommended the Council set an annual budget for 2022/23 of £133,560, which represents a 5% increase on the current 2021/22 annual budget.

Cllr Mason proposed the Committee set an annual Town Council budget of £133,560 for 2022/23. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

G017/21 To scrutinise any matters referred from, or to, Council's Community & Assets Committee and/or Planning Committee.

Cllr Lea described some of the activities being planned for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, next year and, also confirmed there would be no Civic Service in the current Mayoral year.

Cllr Darnell referred to the lack of a Town Council News item in the November edition of the Needham Market Newsletter.

The Clerk gave an update on actions being taken in support of the Needham Market Skateboard Park Committee.

G018/21 Date, location and timing of the next Governance & Finance Committee meeting.

Cllr Annis confirmed the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 8th February 2022 at 7pm in the Green Room, Needham Market Community Centre.

G019/21 To consider whether, pursuant to Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public should be excluded from the meeting for the business specified below on the grounds that if the public were present during this item, it is likely that there would be the disclosure to them of exempt information. The presenters of the reports proposed to be considered are satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cllr Lea proposed the next item be held in Camera. Cllr Stansfield seconded the

proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

- a) To receive an update from the Employment Committee.

Cllr Annis gave an update on the Council's employment issues.

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.

Chairman **Date**

