

Finance and Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 25th September 2019, held at 7.00pm in the Town Hall, Market Deeping. Cllr Miss Collins (Chairman) presided over Cllrs Brookes, Broughton, Lester and Shelton. The Clerk was also in attendance.

17. Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Miss Collins welcomed the members to the meeting

18. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

19. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

20. Notes of minutes from the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting 24th July 2019

Cllr Miss Collins asked the committee if they were to accept the minutes of the meeting dated Wednesday 24th July 2019. It was proposed by Cllr Broughton, seconded by Cllr Brookes and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes could be signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were signed accordingly.

21. Clerk's Report

The Clerk provided a report prior to the meeting which included the following updates:

1. The clerk has re-enrolled all relevant pension scheme members with the Pensions regulator as instructed by the Pensions Regulator.
2. The deputy clerk has attended a new clerk's training day, and LALC have reiterated the additional compliance responsibilities that councils must adhere to. This includes data protection and Health and Safety requirements.

22. Correspondence

| Correspondence F&P committee – September 2019 | | |
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| Date Received | Subject | Committee Response |
| Various | Changes to the public sector deposit fund rates of interest (0.72% latest) | Noted |
| 05/09/2019 | WYPF – Notification that April 202 – March 2023 contribution rates will be advised in November | Noted |
| 11/09/2019 | Expenses claim | Agreed to pay without prior notice on this occasion only |

23. Review of the Council Policies

Members reviewed each policy in turn and agreed on the following updates:

- Lone Working Policy – it was agreed to retain the existing policy with the addition of the Lone Worker's checklist

- Sickness Absence Policy – it was agreed to retain the existing policy
- Changing of office policy – it was agreed to retain the existing policy
- Communications Policy – Town Councillor details section - it was agreed to state ‘contact details’ rather than address and telephone details
- Civic Duties policy – it was agreed to change references to the Council Handbook to the Good Councillors’ guide, and for the Civic Budget to be paid in advance ‘if so requested’
- Council constitution – additions were made to reflect the current Responsibilities and activities of the council
- Chair job description – it was agreed to retain the existing policy
- Information and data protection policy – The paragraph relating to the Quality and ICT policy was deleted, together with the reference to the data protection act 1998 which has been superceded. It was noted that the Code of Recommended Practice on Transparency was not always followed due to time constraints
- Trust fund policy – Grammatical adjustments only were made
- Capability policy – The Short Term sickness reference to return to work was amended to refer to the Sickness Absence policy
- Community engagement policy – Cllr Broughton requested that an addition be made to include the Wednesday morning councillor’s surgery at the Town Hall and this was done

24. Council Finances to include budgeting and precept preparation

The Clerk had issued members with an update on Council Finances prior to the meeting. Cllr Miss Collins asked the members if there were any questions and there were none. Members were happy with the information provided. Members then discussed and agreed initial requirements for the 2020/21 financial year, and these will be entered into the precept calculation spreadsheet for the November meeting.

25. For members to consider adjusting the Committee Terms of Reference to include spending powers in line with the Council’s Financial Regulations

Members noted that the Council’s Financial regulations indicate that ‘duly delegated’ committees could be awarded spending powers and these spending powers are not detailed in the current Committee Terms of Reference. It was agreed that a scheme of delegation is required detailing what each committee and the clerk has delegated powers to do and acknowledged that current council documentation is not consistent. Cllr Brookes volunteered to come back to the next Finance committee meeting with some suggestions and all members were happy with this approach.

26. For members to receive reports from the internal auditor

The clerk had issued members with copies of the June and July reports prior to the meeting. Sample transactions audited had all been handled correctly and members were satisfied with the reports. The clerk asked members if there were any questions and there were none.

27. For members to receive an update on the provision of Council email addresses

Members considered providers and agreed that it would be beneficial to sign up to a corporate service so that email addresses could be maintained following any change of provider. Stamford Town Council is using a cloud based server and the clerk was asked to find out more details and report back. Cllr Brookes will speak to the clerks separately about this issue, and Cllr Lester advised members that it

would be wise to precept for any software licences that may be required. Members also agreed that the email address issue should be put on the next Full Council agenda. Further to minute 24 above, it was agreed to create a new budget line with a £10,000 allowance for a 'Digital council'.

28. Personnel – Consideration to go into Closed Session. To include

Staff matters

It was proposed and unanimously **RESOLVED** to go into Closed Session to members of the press and public in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, which included: staff matters. It was **RESOLVED** to close the Town Hall office to members of the public on Fridays to allow the clerks to catch up with heavy workloads. It was then unanimously **RESOLVED** to come out of Closed Session.

The Chairman thanked all members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8.37pm.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday November 27th 2019 at 7pm in the Town Hall chambers.

Chairman's signature.....

Date.....