

Minutes of the Meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at the Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks on Monday 24 February 2014 at 7:00pm.

PRESENT

Cllr R L Piper (Chairman)

Cllr J M Canet
Cllr A S Clayton *[arrived 7:10pm]*
Cllr Mrs M E Crabtree
Cllr A Eyre

Cllr R J Parry
Cllr S G Raikes (Vice Chairman)
Cllr P E Towell
Cllr Mrs P C Walshe

(12)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive/Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk
Responsible Finance Officer
Committee Clerk
1 member of public

APOLOGIES

Cllrs N J L Busvine OBE, G R S Clack and R M C Hogarth

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr Ray Russell thanked Sevenoaks Town Council for 10 years sponsorship for the Sevenoaks Summer Festival.

423 DISPENSATION

No requests from Members regarding any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any items on the agenda were received [S31 & 33 Localism Act 2011 refers].

424 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr R J Parry declared a non-disclosable interest in all matters relating to Kent County Council.

Cllrs J M Canet and A S Clayton declared a non-disclosable interest regarding the grant application to be received from 'The Friends of Pontoise' [Minute 426 (a) refers].

Cllrs A S Clayton and Mrs M E Crabtree declared a non-disclosable interest in all matters relating to Kent County Council and the grant application to be received from 'The Friends of Rheinbach' [Minute 426 (a) refers].

Cllrs A S Clayton and Mrs P C Walshe declared a non disclosable interest in all matters relating to the grant application to be received from 'The Friends of Rheinbach' [Minute 426 (a) refers].

Cllr A S Clayton declared a non Disclosable interest in all matters relating to the grant application to be received from the 'Sevenoaks Citizens Advice Bureau' [Minute 426 (a) refers].

Cllr R L Piper declared a non disclosable interest in all matters relating to the Stag as landlord of the Stag Community Arts Centre and to the grant applications to be

received from the Sevenoaks Art Club and Community Futures [Minute 426 (a) refers].

Cllrs J M Canet, A S Clayton, Mrs M E Crabtree, R J Parry, R L Piper, S G Raikes and Mrs P C Walshe declared a non disclosable interest in all matters relating to the STAG Community Arts Centre in their capacity as Trustees.

425 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 10 February 2014 be adopted and signed.

426 GRANTS

a) the Grant applications were received and considered. It was **RESOLVED** that the following sums be awarded under the General Power of Competence [Localism Act 2011 sections 1-8 refers]:

i) for the financial year 2013/2014 to:

Organisation	Sum
Stag Community Arts Centre (Youth Outreach)	£2,500
Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	£500
Sevenoaks Literary Celebration	£300
Friends of Pontoise (Twinning Support)	£250
Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival- (Piano)	£600
Friends of Rheinbach (Twinning Support)	£250
South East Open Studios	£250
Sevenoaks Art Club	£250
West Kent Mediation	£300
Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra "KYJO"	£500
Sevenoaks Summer Festival Committee – children's entertainment	£450
Sevenoaks Summer Festival Committee – Stage (Youth Outreach)	£2,500

ii) for the financial year 2014/2015 to:

Organisation	Sum
Sevenoaks Citizens Advice Bureau	£1,628
Sevenoaks Home Library Service	£150
Stag Community Arts Centre (Youth Outreach)	£7,500
Sevenoaks Summer Festival Committee	£5,000

Cllrs J M Canet and A S Clayton did not partake in the grant discussion relating to the Friends of Pontoise. Cllrs Mrs M E Crabtree and Mrs P C Walshe did not partake in the grant discussion relating to the Friends of Rheinbach. Cllr A Eyre did not partake in any grant discussion relating to the Stag Community Arts Centre. Cllr R L Piper did not partake in any discussion relating to the Sevenoaks Art Club and Community Futures.

It was **AGREED** that conditions of the grant be outlined to the above organisations.

b) It was **RESOLVED** that the grant reports be received and noted.

427 INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW and STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

It was RESOLVED that the effectiveness of the Town Council's

- a) internal audit
 - b) statement of internal control
- be received, noted and adopted.

428 STATEMENT OF RISK ASSESSMENTS

It was RESOLVED that the

- a) Risk Management Assessments
 - b) Risk Management Register
- be received, noted and adopted. The committee congratulated the Responsible Finance Officer and team for their work.

429 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update regarding the Town Council's submission to Government to campaign for a return of a percentage of Business Rates to the Town and Parish Councils.

430 BLIGHS MARKET STALLS

The committee received the Town Clerk's report on market stalls in Blighs.

It was RESOLVED that the following RECOMMENDATIONS be received and adopted:

- a) Sevenoaks Town Council continues with negotiation with Ignis to take over the management of Blighs Markets stalls as per terms shown in the report.
- b) Sevenoaks Town Council continues with the provision of the current stall holders at the same rates.
- c) Sevenoaks Town Council develops the facility into a 'Farmers Market'.
- d) Sevenoaks Town Council negotiates with Sevenoaks District Council an agreement regarding the storage of the market stalls.
- e) Subject to the above, and practical operational matters put in place Sevenoaks Town Council re-opens the Blighs Market facilities in March 2014.
- f) the Town Clerk be congratulated on negotiation and arrangements on this matter.

431 LOCAL AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The policy consultation of the 'Local Audit and Accountability Act – Openness of Local government Bodies Draft Regulations' received from the National Association of Local Councils [NALC] be noted. **It was RESOLVED that** the Town Clerk ask the government to set the same mandatory level for all councils with gross income or expenditure over £6.5 million turn over in alignment with the Local Authorities (Data Transparency) Code 2013 and setting out the reasoning.

432 REPEAL OF S150 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

It was RESOLVED that the Financial Briefing from NALC and practicalities to cheque signing etc be received, adopted and welcomed. **It was AGREED that** new internal Financial Regulations be brought to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

433 CURRENT MATTERS

A list of current matters was received and noted as follows:

- a) Raleys Development
Noted
- b) Additional Resources
Noted
- c) Cemetery Frontage
Noted
- d) Council Priorities List
noted
- e) Wall at Rear of Chamber
Noted
- f) Cheque Signing
Noted – please Minute No 432 refers
- g) Street Lighting
Noted
- h) Kaleidoscope
Noted
- i) Process Efficiency Review
Noted
- j) Markets
noted – please Minute No 430 refers
- k) Stag Lease
Noted
- l) World War I
noted - external grant applications currently being processed.

434 PRESS RELEASE

It was RESOLVED that press releases be issued regarding the Grants and Blighs Market when practical operational matters are in place

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT under the Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for the following item by reason of the confidential nature of the business.

435 COUNCIL TAX REBATES

A verbal status update from the town Clerk was received and considered.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk respond to support Westerham Parish Council as follows:

- a) Sevenoaks Town Council will express support to Westerham Town Council in its initiative to challenge Sevenoaks District Council decision not to pass on the governments Local Council Tax Support Grant to town and parish councils.
- b) Sevenoaks Town Council will encourage town and parish councils within Sevenoaks district to support the Westerham Town Council initiative.
- c) Sevenoaks Town Council will encourage any dialogue to take place between Sevenoaks District Council and town and parish councils to resolve this matter
- d) Financial matters relating to the above decisions to be addressed within delegated authority powers to Chairman of Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Town Clerk.

The meeting closed at 9:20pm

Signed by the Chairman

