

Minutes of the Meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at the Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks on Monday 25th July 2016 at 7pm.

PRESENT

Cllr S G Raikes (Chairman)

Cllr J M Canet

Cllr M Chakowa

Cllr A Eyre *[ex officio]*

Cllr R M C Hogarth

Cllr R L Piper [Vice Chairman] *[arrived 7:01]*

Cllr R J Parry

Cllr P E Towell

Cllr Mrs P C Walshe

(09)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive/Town Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer and Committee Clerk

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public were present for the duration of the meeting.

173 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED: Apologies received from Cllr N J L Busvine OBE, Cllr A S Clayton, and Cllr E Parson be noted and accepted.

174 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs J M Canet declared an interest in Agenda Item No 8 and minute Number 180 relating to a half plot allotment in the Quakers Hall Lane Allotments.

175 DISPENSATION

No requests had been received or approved.

176 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27th June 2016

RESOLVED: the Minutes be adopted and signed as a true record.

177 FINANCE REPORTS

(a) The Finance reports were received and considered. The statement of accounts to 31st May 2016 and to 30th June 2016 (draft) together with the Responsible Finance Officer's report be received and adopted. It was **NOTED** that:

- i. The Vine Café's income was rising steadily over the summer
- ii. The Town Clerk to update the committee on the ticket sales of the No 8 bus
- iii. The staff be congratulated for the Wellbeing show, which was highly profitable. The Town Clerk advised that this was the first time such a show was held and going forward would be used as a benchmark be in place to calculate budgets. Space was limited with a waiting list for space, which bodes well for the new Sevenoaks Community Centre's business plan.
- iv. A new power supply for events and market traders had been installed in the High Street near Lloyds Bank

(b) Suppliers Accounts

RESOLVED: to authorise the accounts listed in the schedules:

- i. to 31st May 2016 (£51,886.85)
 - ii. to 30th June 2016 (£92,843.39)
- having been inspected and compared with the invoice listings.

(c) **Payroll Account**

RESOLVED: to confirm the payments from the account to:

i. to 31st May 2016 (£60,295.81)

ii. to 30th June 2016 (£61,506.33)

having been compared with the schedules be accepted

(d) **Petty Cash Account**

RESOLVED: to confirm the payments from the petty cash account listed

i. to 31st May 2016 (£854.28)

ii. to 30th June 2016 (£669.58)

having been inspected and compared with the schedule be accepted.

(e) **Financial Regulations**

A revised internal report was received from the Responsible Finance Officer referring to the Financial Regulations for the period 2016/2017.

RESOLVED: replace the wording "finance officer" with Responsible Finance Officer [Appendix A].

(f) **Hospitality and Gifts Register**

RESOLVED: to note that no Hospitality or Gifts were received by the Councillors or employees of Sevenoaks Town Council for the period ending 30th June 2016.

178 SEVENOAKS TOWN PARTNERSHIP

RESOLVED: to receive and note the minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Partnership meeting held on 13th July 2016.

179 CAPITAL RESERVES – CAPITAL RECEIPTS

RESOLVED: it was formally noted and approved that:

£135,000 be transferred at the year end [2015/2016] to the Capital Receipts Reserve to cover capital expenditure during the year 2015/16 in accordance with the Responsible Finance Officer's Report, Finance & General Purposes [F&GP] Meeting Minute No 108 and F&GP meeting on 22.02.2016 Minute 396 (e).

180 SEVENOAKS ALLOTMENTS HOLDERS ASSOCIATION [SAHA] LEASE FOR QUAKERS HALL ALLOTMENT SITE

The Quakers Hall Lane Allotment Site has been operated on behalf of the Town Council by the Sevenoaks Allotment Holders Association (SAHA).

The Town Council has been negotiating with SAHA arrangements for a new 10 year lease to enable this arrangement to continue and it was hoped that a new lease would be signed in July. The current lease ended on 30th July 2016.

The Town Council's aim was to move from an historic form of lease to a modern lease recommended by the National Allotment Society and successfully used by local councils across the country to lease allotment sites to allotment associations.

A meeting and subsequent email discussions had been held to discuss concerns of both parties and try to work through these to reduce or eliminate them. From the Town Council's perspective it was able to agree to some of the suggested variations and these had been amended in the proposed lease.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed a modest static rent for the lease at its meeting of 26th June 2016 of £260 per annum for the duration of the 10 year lease.

A letter was received from SAHA the previous week (copied to Town Councillors) which stated that it could not sign the proposed lease and introduced an alternative lease with new conditions and clauses. This included the Town Council being liable for up to £12,000 costs if SAHA was to wind up. The Town Council would not sign up to and commit ratepayer's money to such a clause, particularly as such a clause had not formed part of the original 50 year lease or within the National Allotment Society template.

It was noted that if the lease was not agreed the allotment site would revert to the Town Council. This would not affect existing allotment holders who would continue to be able to garden their allotments and the Town Council would honour their current tenancy agreement until the autumn when they would be invited to renew them via the Town Council.

Sevenoaks Town Council would continue to welcome discussions with SAHA as an allotment holder's association regarding its operation of the trading hut and events for allotment holders.

RESOLVED: Subject to three small amendments outlined in the report to Councillors and conveyed to SAHA the lease be approved for signature.

181 CURRENT MATTERS & PRIORITIES

RESOLVED: the list of current matters and priorities be received and noted.

It was noted that Kippington Road had been written to reference the removal of Farnaby street lights. Developers and Sevenoaks District Council were currently discussing s106 terms regarding the Raleys site.

Note aside for further discussion at the next Planning Committee meeting to be held on Monday 1st August 2016:

- The buyers have withdrawn from the sale of Cemetery Lodge. Viewings have recommenced. Use of auction for sale could be considered.

182 PRESS RELEASE

No item was considered worthy of a press release.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:51 pm

Signed by the Chairman **Dated**

