

Minutes of the Meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at the Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks on Monday 13 January 2014 at 7:00pm.

PRESENT

Cllr R L Piper (Chairman)

Cllr N J L Busvine
Cllr J M Canet
Cllr G R S Clack *[arrived 7:07pm]*
Cllr A S Clayton *[arrived 7:24pm]*
Cllr A Eyre

Cllr R M C Hogarth (*ex officio*)
Cllr R J Parry
Cllr S G Raikes (Vice Chairman)
Cllr P E Towell
(10)

APOLOGIES

Cllrs Mrs M E Crabtree and Mrs P C Walshe

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Cllrs S L Arnold and C L L Baker
Chief Executive/Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk
Responsible Finance Officer
Committee Clerk
19 Members of the Public

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None

345 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

Cllrs A Eyre, R M C Hogarth, R L Piper, S G Raikes and P E Towell declared a non-disclosable interest in all matters relating to Sevenoaks District Council.

Cllr J M Canet declared a non-disclosable interest being a member of Sevenoaks Senior Citizen Forum.

346 MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 16 December 2013 be signed and adopted subject to the amendment being noted that under Public Question Time "*District Councillor Mrs E Purves asked if the Town Council had thought of smaller home units*".

347 SUB COMMITTEES

It was RESOLVED that:

Community Centre User Group

The minutes of the Community Centre User group meeting held on 11 December 2013 be received and adopted noting an error in dates of meeting in minutes and action to promote hearing loops and to investigate the cost of high speed Wi-Fi.

FINANCE REPORTS

It was RESOLVED that the:

- a) Statement of Accounts
Statement of Accounts, together with the Finance Officer's report from 1 to 30 November 2013, be received and adopted.
It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the funds of £36,000 currently earmarked for the replacement Community Centre Roof be released back into the Capital Reserves to be utilised against future identified capital projects in view of the current redevelopment plans for the Sevenoaks Community Centre site.
- b) Suppliers' Accounts
Accounts listed in the schedules from 1 to 30 November 2013 (£37,202.96) having been inspected and compared with the schedules be authorised for payment.
- c) Payroll Account
Payments from the account listed in the schedules from 1 to 30 November 2013 having been compared with the schedules be confirmed.
- d) Petty Cash Account
Payments from the petty cash account from 1 to 30 November 2013 (£327.62) having been inspected and compared with the schedules, be confirmed.
- e) Internal Auditors
The Internal Auditor's letter dated 21 November 2013 was received and noted.
It was AGREED that the Responsible Finance Officer's Recommendations be adopted:
 - i. A £50 individual cost petty cash transaction limit be set with the proviso that amounts in excess of £50 be approved, prior to purchase, by the Departmental Manager/Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk or Responsible Finance Officer.
 - ii. Staff be informed that payments on behalf of the Council should be made in the first instance using cash or a debit card and that personal credit cards should only be used when these are not available.
 - iii. The responsible Finance Officers make a formal note when undertaking spot checks of petty cash
 - iv. Officers be reminded to ensure that more supporting evidence is obtained for credit card payments in the future
- f) Hospitality and Gifts Register
It was AGREED that the Hospitality or Gifts received by the employees of Sevenoaks Town Council and Town Councillors during the period from 1 to 30 November 2013 be noted.

PRECEPT

A report by the Town Clerk relating to the determination of the 2014 - 2015 Precept and deferring a decision to the newly scheduled meeting on 10 February 2014 was received and noted. **It was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the**

- a) Determination of the 2015-2015 Precept be deferred until 10 February 2014
- b) Town Council joins the town and parish councils across the Country who are lobbying their MPs and billing authorities to ensure that the funding is passed on to parish and town councils as per the government's intention.
- c) Town Clerk be authorised to firmly request the release of the Government's Revenue Support Grant, which in 2013 was £36,803, by Sevenoaks District Council to the Town Council at the Parish Clerks Forum to be held at the District Council offices on 14 January 2014.

350 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2014/2015

The Local Government Finance Settlement Consultation was received and considered. **It was RESOLVED that the** Town Council's response be as recommended by the Town Clerk, namely:

	Pg No	Question	Recommended STC Response
1	10	Do you agree with the Government's proposal to remove the capitalisation holdback and re-allocate the funding?	Supported
2	11	Do you agree with the Government's proposal to reduce the New Homes Bonus holdback from £800m to £700m?	Supported
3	13	Do you agree with the Government's proposal to increase and roll in funding for rural authorities?	Supported
4	20	Do you have any comments on the impact of the 2014-15 settlement on protected groups, as set out in the draft Equality Statement?	Indirect impact on town and parish councils needs should be considered. In particular in relation to the passing on of revenue support grants. Should any referendum principles be introduced these be set for town and parish councils above the £6.5 million threshold as per Audit Regulations and Data Transparency Regulations.

In addition, a letter would be sent regarding the difficulties in understanding the consultation document.

351 DEFIBRILLATOR

A report from the Town Clerk concerning the possible installation of a defibrillator at the bus station was received and considered.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk continue investigating insurance and liability issues in respect of the Town Council for this piece of equipment. **It was AGREED that** the Town Clerk be authorised to proceed with being responsible for the equipment only when satisfied there are no liability issues for the Town Council regarding the workings or failings of the defibrillator.

352 CURRENT MATTERS & SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Town Council's current matters and priorities were received and noted.

353 PRESS RELEASE

It was RESOLVED that a press release be issued regarding Sevenoaks District Council not passing on the Government's Revenue Support Grant to Sevenoaks Town Council, which last year equated to £36,803.

The meeting closed at 8:21pm

Signed by the Chairman