

FINANCE, ASSET & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Asset & Resources Committee held in Ellesmere Town Hall on Thursday 25th April, 2019 at 10.30am.

PRESENT: Councillors: Cllr R Hartley (Chair), G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne and D Lunn
Jo Butterworth – Acting Town Clerk
Phil Smith – Assistant Clerk

FAR-20/18 **To Receive Apologies and Reason for Absence.**

RESOLVED - that the apology received from Councillor Mrs A Wignall – holiday - be approved.

FAR-21/18 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Items on the Agenda**

None

FAR-22/18 **Grant Dispositions**

None received.

FAR-23/18 **Minutes**

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2019 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

FAR-24/18 **NALC Pay Scales 2019/20**

The Acting Town Clerk reported that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services had agreed new pay scales for local council staff, with effect from 1 April 2019. A copy had been circulated.

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr D Lunn and

RESOLVED – that the new NALC pay scales for 2019/20 be adopted.

FAR-25/18 **Request for Donation**

The Acting Town Clerk read out a request from Shropshire Playing Fields Association for the Town Council to continue its membership, and to make a small donation towards its work.

It was moved by Cllr D Lunn, seconded by Cllr G Elner and

RESOLVED – that a donation of £30 be made to Shropshire Playing Fields Association for membership in 2019/20.

FAR-26/18 **Review of Standing Orders**

The Town Council's Standing Orders are reviewed annually, and a copy of the existing document had been circulated.

There was a discussion regarding the provision in the Standing Orders for a time limit to the length of Council meetings, and whether two and a half hours was sufficient. It was felt that on balance the time limit was appropriate, and that there was provision to extend the meeting if necessary.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – to RECOMMEND to Council that no changes are required to the Standing Orders.

FAR-27/18 **Review of Financial Regulations**

The Town Council's Financial Regulations were reviewed annually, and a copy of the existing document had been circulated.

The Acting Town Clerk reported that the Council's Internal Auditor was satisfied that the existing Regulations were compliant and up-to-date. Reference was made to the Cemetery Working Group accounts, and it was confirmed that these were now fully embedded in the Town Council accounts and reflected in the Financial Regulations. The Acting Town Clerk reported that the grounds maintenance contract for the Cemetery was due to finish at the end of May 2019. Two quotes for the new contract had been received, and the Working Group had identified the contractor who had submitted the lowest quote would provide the best value.

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr J Frost and

RESOLVED – to RECOMMEND to Council that

(a) no changes are required to the Financial Regulations;

(b) the new Grounds Maintenance contract for the Cemetery be awarded to Groundforce Ltd in the sum of £13,450 per annum.

FAR-28/18 **Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit and Internal Audit Plan**

The Acting Town Clerk reported that it was not believed that any changes were required to the audit arrangements and Plan. In response to a question, she stated that a new Internal Checker would be appointed at the next Town Council meeting, and that the last two quarters of the 2018/19 financial year would need to be checked.

Reference was made to recent problems with the Council's bank, and whether there was a case for moving the Council's accounts to a different bank. The Acting Clerk reported that this could be something the new Town Clerk (when appointed) might want to review. Members also felt there was a case in sending a letter of complaint to the bank in due course.

It was moved by Cllr J Frost, seconded by Cllr D Lunn and

RESOLVED – to RECOMMEND to Council that no changes are required to the Effectiveness of Internal Audit and Internal Audit Plan.

FAR-29/18 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr G Elner and

RESOLVED - that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1992, the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.

FAR-30/18 **Shropshire Council Payroll Services**

Further to the decision at the 1 April Town Council meeting to pay staff salaries by the BACS system, the Acting Town Clerk reported that the Council's bank had indicated that it was not able to offer this service. It was therefore necessary to look at the other option. Shropshire Council will provide a list of the salary payments for each employee to be made each month and they will need to be paid via on-line banking.

It was also necessary to review the arrangements for the provision of payroll services. The current provider, Shropshire Council, had indicated that their fee of £56 per month would be unchanged in 2019/20.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED - to RECOMMEND to Council that:

(a) that the payment of salaries be arranged via on-line banking;

(b) that Shropshire Council be retained to provide Payroll Services for 2019/20.

FAR-31/18 **Ellesmere Market Hall**

The detailed accounts for the Tuesday Market had been circulated, and were considered by Members. There was a discussion about the arrangements for the Tuesday Market and its set-up.

RESOLVED - to RECOMMEND to Council that a Task and Finish Group consisting of 4 Members be established to look at the future of the Tuesday Market.

FAR-32/18 **Town LED Street Lighting Conversion**

The Acting Town Clerk provided an update on the tendering process for the contract to convert the Council's street lights to LED. It was hoped that a decision could be made at the 3 June Town Council meeting.

The report was noted.

FAR-33/18 **Town Hall Roof**

The Acting Town Clerk reported on recent incidences of leaks in the Town Hall roof, and the need to look at further remedial action.

AGREED – that further recommendations/quotes be sought for the most cost effective way of securing the necessary improvements/repairs to the Town Hall roof.

The meeting closed at 11.47am

Chair: 

Date: 17/10/2019