

Stonehouse Town Council



MINUTES (SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT AT THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING) of A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 14TH APRIL 2014 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE

Present:

Theresa Watt (Convenor of Committee)
Chris Brine (Chairman Town Council)
Simon Lewis (Vice Chairman Town Council)
Paul Stephens
Pam Swain (arrived during K1/110)

Also Present: Gill Jennings Town Clerk, Cllr Gary Powell, Cllr Rob Waite
Trevor Baker, John Callinan

K1/101 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Vicky Redding.

K1/102 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are reminded of their obligation within the requirements of the Adopted Model Code of Conduct to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests where applicable.

Councillor Stephens declared an interest in K1/106.6 as a Committee Member of the Navy Training Corp and left the room during discussion and the decision. Councillor Lewis declared an interest in K1/106.1 in so far as one payment related to Stonehouse Community Partnership (This item was not discussed as a single payment as authorisation had already been given)

K1/103 ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Maximum of 15 minutes – Any member of the public may speak only once in respect of any business itemised on the Agenda for a maximum of 5 minutes)

John Callinan raised several questions regarding the Code of Conduct, quorum, and inspection of the accounts, total of LCTS which he said he would put in writing. Trevor Baker asked in respect of K1/107 – How did Stroud District Council work out the amount that Cainscross could get from Dovehill development? Councillor Brine explained that due to the need for facilities being identified in the vicinity of Cainscross which also served Stonehouse the S106 officer had asked that funding was provided from the development pot.

K1/104 TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24th FEBRUARY 2014

The Minutes were approved as a correct record.

K1/105 TO CONSIDER CHANGES TO THE TOWN HALL TO INCREASE HIRE & SERVICES

Building Facilities Group to make a report – The Group had not met and a report was not available.

K1/106 FINANCE

1. To check expenditure/receipts against budget headings for all 3 Committees to Year End
Councillor Lewis identified a difference in the totals which had been corrected. The Committee did not identify any areas of concern with regard to the expenditure from budget. The Committee reports are attached to the Minutes as agreed.

2. To agree the Year End Bank Reconciliations

The final Treasury statement was not available from the bank. The reconciliations for the other accounts were made available. **The Balances at year end on the expenditure accounts were agreed at £134491.99 and £77271.52.**

3. To review Financial Regulations

A further review of financial regulations is required following the issue of new draft regulations by NALC – a report is enclosed from the Policy Working Group

The Policy Working Group had formulated a new set of regulations following changes recommended by NALC. These were agreed by the Committee for adoption by Town Council For Resolution.

4. To note changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme

Changes were being implemented from the 1st April to the Pension Scheme which would mean a revision of Town Council Policy. **Due to the amount of paperwork involved the Policy Working Group agreed to examine the changes and make recommendations.**

5. To examine current interest rates and consider further investments

The current interest rates were extremely low at 1% or .70%. **The Committee agreed to invest a further £80,000 to attract a 1% rate.**

6. To consider a Grant Application for £1080 from Navy Training Corp.

The Committee discussed the application at length and agreed to provide funding in the sum of £350. LGA 1976 19(3.a)

K1/107 S106 MONIES

To agree the release of funding £25000 to Cainscross Parish Council

The Committee discussed the confusion which had arisen due to the wording of the original request from Cainscross PC. The Committee felt that due to the Council making a decision to allow funding without restriction there was no opportunity to revisit this decision but the request for release of funding would be put before the Town Council for ratification.

K1/108 HIRE OF TOWN COUNCIL FACILITIES-SCALE OF CHARGES

To consider scale of charges for 2014/15 – Cllr Brine recommended that no changes were made until improvements had been made to facilities to warrant an increase in charges. **This proposal was considered and agreed.**

K1/109 POLICY WORKING GROUP

A report is enclosed from the meeting held on 26th March 2014. The Group recommends adoption of amended:

1. Code of Conduct – for adoption by the Council – the amended code would be put before the Council for adoption.

2. Terms of Reference for the Council and Standing Committees – for adoption by the Council
The Committee welcomed the Terms of Reference and recommended them for adoption by the Council.

K1/110 MAYORS CHAIN OF OFFICE

To consider a quotation for the addition of links – The Committee considered a quotation provided by the manufacturer of the chain. **The Committee agreed to proceed with the purchase of 9 additional links in the sum of £958.80. Funding to be earmarked from general reserve.**

K1/111 IT SUPPORT

To consider enhancements to computer system and management – Cllr Waite was present to explain the need for a cloud data system and renewal equipment. The Committee agreed a one-off fee of £99 for the installation of office 365 and Sharepoint at £139 and Trend Micro at £20.80 per month. Further costs would be obtained for renewal of existing equipment.

K1/112 VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANT POLICY

To consider a draft policy – The Committee considered the draft and agreed the policy for adoption by Town Council.

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

The Council will by resolution exclude the public from item K1/113 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest.

K1/113 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee to agree any actions resulting from the Staffing Committee Meeting held earlier this evening.

The Committee agreed the recommendations of the Staffing Committee:

1. That the Council employs a further part-time grounds person for 16 hours per week at £7 per hour for seasonal support.
2. That the Council employs temporary staff to cover the Deputy Clerk/Town Clerk's absence from the office and that the Town Clerk makes arrangements as she sees fit.
3. That the Council engages an accountant to draw up the 2014-15 draft accounts and that if time permits the draft accounts for 2013-14 are also outsourced for final scrutiny. The Committee acknowledged the tight timescale of one week in which the RFO has had to prepare the accounts in time for the Town Council meeting of 22nd April.

K1/114 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12 MAY 2014
