

**MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Committee meeting)**  
**of a meeting of THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**May 2017 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE**

**Present:**

Jo Byrne (Committee Convenor)  
John Callinan  
Pam Swain (Vice Chairman/Deputy Town Mayor)  
Theresa Watt (Chairman/Town Mayor)

Also Present: Town Clerk/RFO

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Attendees are reminded that the Proceedings of this meeting may be recorded, filmed or photographed but that any person requiring such a record is asked to give polite notice at the start of the meeting.

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**K1/378 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES**

Paul Stephens (Deputy Convenor) was absent due to a meeting of Park Junior School Governors, his apologies were accepted.

**K1/379 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.

None declared

**K1/380 ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

An adjournment of 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda (3 minutes per person max)

There was no requirement for an adjournment

**K1/381 TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**APRIL 2017**

The Minutes were proposed by Cllr Watt, seconded by Cllr Swain as a true record. All in favour.

**K1/382 TO RECEIVE A PROGRESS REPORT FROM HIGH STREET EVENTS WORKING**  
**GROUP**

Cllr Byrne gave a report:

Goodwill - Will obtain quotations for lighting and sound.

Looking for sponsorships and volunteers and loaned equipment.

Sports Active Day - Psalms, Young Gloucestershire, Leagues4You, Stonehouse Wheelers were providing activities and there would be boules and tables tennis available. Looking for loaned equipment. To be publicised.

### K1/383 GENERAL POLICY WORKING GROUP

1. At the last meeting The Committee agreed that the General Policy Working Group should draw up an events management policy and consider the scope of council administration - This item was being progressed.
2. Councillors responses on social media - Cllr Byrne reported that some councillors were still making unofficial responses. The Chair of Town Council to remind councillors of the Communications Policy. If councillors persist they will be ask to attend a meeting with the Chair.

### K1/384 FINANCE

1. To check and agree expenditure/receipts totals against budget headings  
March  
Proposed Cllr Watt, Seconded Cllr Swain Expenditure to the year end £126167.53 and Income £18584.19 was agreed against budget. Other payments totalling £510041 and receipts £707060 were agreed as correct. All in favour
2. Agree amendment to the bank reconciliation 31 March 2017  
Cllr Watt proposed, Cllr Swain seconded that the closing balance of the Business Account be recorded as £110947.39 and that the overall balance of deposits was agreed at £531217. All in favour. **For Resolution**
3. Receive a report from the council's internal auditors - Cllr Byrne gave a report which was noted.
4. To consider whether the council's internal controls are adequate and identify where they need to be strengthened. - The clerk gave a report. The Committee agreed to the measures.
5. Agree amendments to the earmarked reserves and consider whether these are suitable for resolution by the Town Council.  
Following discussion of the void premises costs at the last town council meeting (TC1854) the clerk had made adjustments to the earmarked reserves.  
Proposed for acceptance by resolution Cllr Callinan, seconded Cllr Watt:  
Reserves are adjusted to a total of £384000:  
Elections £3000 Pensions & Gratuities £10000 Oldends Lane New Community Facilities £243500 Land Acquisition £7000 Street Furniture £5000  
Carpark surfacing & architects Fees £70000 Replacement vehicle £10000  
Town Hall security & improvements £12000 Mowers & Equipment £12000  
Feasibility Studies £5000 Void Premises Costs £6500 All in favour. **For Resolution**
6. Receive draft unaudited accounts for the year ending 31 March 2017 and consider whether these are acceptable for resolution by the Town Council.  
The Committee considered the draft accounts and schedules. With minor amendment to dates and notes these were proposed by Cllr Callinan/seconded Cllr Swain as acceptable for resolution by the Town Council. All in favour. **For Resolution**
7. To agree payments to date in April - Payments in the sum of £9018.92 were proposed by Cllr Callinan, seconded by Cllr Swain. All in favour

8. Update on investments and required action- The clerk reported that the investment with Aldermore could not go ahead as they had withdrawn the account. An alternative with Melton Building Society would offer .60%. **Proposed Cllr Callinan, seconded Cllr Swain that an account in the sum of £85000 be opened with Melton Building Society. All in favour.**
9. VAT Inspection Report - Not received.
10. Consider a grant request from Arrive Alive for £500 towards the purchase of an emergency response vehicle - **The Committee discussed this at length and agreed that the request did not meet Stonehouse needs.**
11. Consider a grant request from Bandit Music Project for £500 towards band rehearsals and associated equipment - The applicant had not provided accounts. Consider a quotation for cleaning costs - The Committee were advised that there was some disappointment with the current standard of cleaning. **It was agreed a period of monitoring would take place over a 2 month period following which alternative providers would be considered.**

### **K1/385 TOWN HALL/POST OFFICE PREMISES**

Running costs/building dimensions have been provided to GCC, in the meantime Committee may want to consider alternative plans. Cllr Callinan suggested that the Council takes advice from a local letting agent who acts in an advisory capacity. **The Committee agreed to wait upon GCC. Clerk to follow up.**

### **K1/386 FUTURE OF TOWN CENTRES**

At a meeting with Stroud District Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> April the following suggestions were discussed:

Businesses must be open to change i.e. cafes mobilising their business out to local employment areas, Businesses need to be encouraged to network and use social media to promote themselves i.e advertising offers. Businesses would benefit from joining forces in a Chamber, Shop Front grants could help, funding for community led events, change of planning policy, free parking, town centre manager, gourmet food offer and link to the canal.

The Committee may want to consider whether there should be active dialogue with local businesses to prevent the issue becoming Stroud centralised, or whether to await the report, and to agree to pursue the issue of free parking.

**The Committee discussed the matter at length and agreed that businesses should be kept informed and invited to comment. Communications Working Group to devise an article for the next newsletter.**

### **K1/387 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Proposed Cllr Swain, seconded Cllr Callinan, all in favour The Committee passed a resolution excluding the public from Item K1/388 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest

K1/388 To receive Minutes from the Staffing Committee Meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and consider any recommendations

The Committee agreed the appointment of Mr Croose and staff training plans.

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