



MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Committee meeting)
of a meeting of THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 16th JANUARY 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 Gill Jennings

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.

K1/339 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Paul Stephens (work commitment)

K1/340 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.
There were no declarations of interest

K1/341 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 public participation

K1/342 TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14th NOVEMBER 2016

The Minutes were agreed as a true record

K1/343 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE YOUTH WORKING GROUP

Cllr Swain reported that the pod sign was now up and new furniture purchased with the old furniture transferred to the hub. The Working Group will meet at the premises to prepare a report on repairs and to discuss renewal of the Service Level Agreement.

K1/344 TO RECEIVE A PROGRESS REPORT FROM HIGH STREET EVENTS WORKING GROUP

The Group proposed table top sales in the Post Office premises charging £5 per table starting on the 1st Saturday in February, to run a Sports Active Day on Laburnum during May Bank Holiday and Celebration Day in September. The In Bloom Group will run car boot sales. Clerk will need specific date of proposed activities for insurance purposes.

K1/345 TO CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

Cllr Byrne reported that the Newsletter would be ready for distribution on the 20th January. A Report It link had been added to the website and the Pavilion was now being advertised with new photographs.

K1/346 TO CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE GENERAL POLICY WORKING GROUP

1. Following adoption of amendments to the Communications Policy to nominate a Media Champion. The Committee agreed that Cllr Byrne would be the most suitable person and was therefore nominated. **For Resolution**
2. Consider amendments to the Co-option Policy and Code of Conduct for recommendation to Town Council - **Deferred until February meeting**

K1/347 FINANCE

1. To check and agree expenditure/receipts totals against budget headings November & December.

November Expenditure £15802.60 and Receipts £87122.45 were agreed as correct by the majority (1 abstention)

December Expenditure £8521.07 and Receipts £8671.07 were agreed as correct by the majority (1 abstention)

2. To agree the bank reconciliation November & December

Reconciled balances November £86253.69 and December £68071.94 were agreed unanimously

3. To agree payments, including election costs and works to the Post Office, due to date - January

Payments amounting to £6305.29 were agreed unanimously

4. Update on investments and required action

The Clerk reported that Nat West have finally opened an account with a compensatory payment. In order to make a deposit, funds would have to be transferred from Business Instant Access. The Clerk will provide a cheque for signature when there are sufficient funds.

5. To receive feedback from External Auditor to queries raised - They have advised notice referred to was 2014-15. There appears to have been an error in the notice allowing three extra days for inspection of the accounts.

This has been noted by the clerk and will be monitored in the future.

6. To consider draft budgets from all three Committees and to make a recommendation to Town Council on the level of precept required for 2017-18 and earmarked reserves

The Committee considered its own budget and voted in the majority to make further allowance for:

Staff Contingency Fund £2000

Precept Referendum Costs £2000

The Committee considered the budgets presented by all three Committees which would result in a precept request of £254,000 divided by the tax base = £107.54 Band D (an increase of 0.08p per week on last year) These budget figures were agreed by the majority as realistic due to the loss of income from the Post Office and were recommended for resolution to Town Council. 1 vote against the proposal. **For Resolution**

The Committee omitted to discuss the earmarked reserves. **Refer to Town Council.**

K1/348 POST OFFICE PREMISES

1. Discuss services currently provided at the Town Hall and the scope of a community hub The Committee considered further services which might be provided by the general power of competence i.e. business support (IT café), mobile banking, travelling theatre etc. **Building Facilities Working Group to be tasked with drawing up proposals.**

2. Receive quotations for letting fees - The Committee were advised that letting fees would be in the region of 10% of the annual rent or the first month's rent.

K1/349 Local Council Award Scheme - Gold

Discuss whether to apply for a Gold award. The Clerk advised the Committee that they had an opportunity to apply free of charge during this financial year. The Committee considered the work involved and agreed to defer the application.

K1/350 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

20th February 2017

Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960. The Committee will pass a resolution excluding the public from Item K1/351 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest

K1/351 To receive Minutes from the Staffing Committee Meeting of the 9th January 2017 and consider any recommendations

The Committee agreed by unanimous vote to increase the Town Clerk's pay to SCP38 backdated to 1st September.

The Committee considered the recommendation to restructure staff to create a new administrative post and new premises management post. It was agreed by the majority to proceed with restructure discussed with all 3 committee Chairs, and to reduce risk to the Council by providing a staff contingency fund (K1/347). 1 vote against the proposal.

The Committee considered the recommendations of NALC to increase the pay rates from 1st April 2017. This recommendation to be put to Town Council. For Resolution
