

SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes meeting on Wednesday 28th July 2010 at 7.00p.m. in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: Mayor Mr I. Sherwood (in the chair)

Councillors: - Mr P. Darby, Mr C. Gunner, Mr D Harman,
Mrs T Jennison, Mrs. S. Matthews.

Town Clerk:- Mr R. Bishop.
Assistant Town Clerk:- Mrs R Noble

Public: - 0

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

- 1.1. Cllr Frank Sharpe - holiday.
- 1.2. Cllr David Wickerson – work commitments.
- 1.3. Internal Auditor Tony Lawler – only just back from holiday.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – for items included on the Agenda.

- 2.1. There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES of Finance & G.P. meeting held on 10th May 2010.

- 3.1. The Minutes of 10th May 2010 were agreed and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT from RFO to include:-

- 4.1. Report on Accounts to date Income & expenditure 2010/11.

The trial balance showing Income and Expenditure for the first three months of the financial year was circulated prior to the meeting. Due to time restraints this was circulated without the normal quarterly checks taking place; this will be completed before the end of the week prior to the Deputy Town Clerk going on leave. There are some journal transfers between cost centre headings that need to take place for salaries etc. Progress has been made in that the report was circulated at the time of sending out the agenda, it is intended to improve this a step further at the next meeting by having the quarterly checks completed. The VAT return has been completed on line for the first time today.

- 4.2. Report from Mr. Tony Lawler Internal Auditor. See appendix 1.

The Internal auditor's report has been circulated this evening, he gives his apologies as he arrived back from holiday only this afternoon.

- 4.3. Issues arising out of the year end Accounts to 31st March 2010

The Council must ensure that:

- a) Reserves are returned to a level which it deemed adequate to meet its requirements. (The replenishment of the revenue reserves cannot be funded through capital receipts.
- b) There is a clear audit trail to explain and support movements in capital and revenue funds going forward.

Other Matters;

- c) The Council must ensure that it maintains proper control over the sales ledger in future, adjusting unrecoverable debts, as appropriate, on a timely basis and regularly reconciling the sales ledger to the accounts.
- d) There is a need to ensure consistency between assets recorded in the asset register and the insurance schedule.
- e) The Council should formally review the appointment of the internal auditor on an annual basis and should ensure that timely action is taken to address matters raised by the internal auditor.
- f) The Council must review and approve the risk assessment on an annual basis.
- g) The level of fidelity guarantee cover should be reviewed, to ensure it remains appropriate.
- h) Please ensure all information required for audit is submitted in future years (one bank reconciliation was not provided) and that all boxes are completed on the Annual Return (Council name omitted from Sections 2 and 4)

5. FINANCIAL ISSUES:-

5.1. List of contractors for 2010/11.

The list of contractors was circulated to all Councillors for consideration, amendment and approval.

5.2. Report from the Town Clerk regarding CCTV costs and consider paying survey cost for CCTV of £600 for Merryweather Road.

Following a meeting on 20th July between the Town Clerk, Cllr Shirley Matthews, Inspector Ady Porter and Breckland CCTV Officer Graham Green; there are some issues to consider as follows:-

Breckland have one spare permanent camera which they could locate at one of the five locations put forward by the Town Council. The costs of bringing the site up to a standard whereby the camera can be located was circulated to the full Council at their July meeting, these costs are the same for a re-deployable camera. They vary between £3,500 to £4,500 depending on the level of work required at each site.

The Police view is that they would favour the sites in order of preference:-

1. Merryweather Road or Northwell Pool road
2. Haspall's Road Recreation Ground or the Community Centre
3. London Street adjacent to the mini-roundabout.

If the Merryweather Road location is to be considered there has to be a survey carried out at a cost of £600. Cllr. D Harman proposed and Cllr. C Gunner seconded for the survey to be done at a cost of £600.

It was agreed with 4 votes for for a survey to be carried out at the Merryweather Road location at a cost of £600.

It was agreed for the Re-deployable camera to be sited on the Merryweather Road site.

The only one of the locations which has an earmarked budget for CCTV is the Haspall's Road Recreation Ground (£5,000); all the other four locations would need to have a Council decision to allocate capital funding for the siting of the camera. Cllr. Paul Darby proposed and Cllr. T Jennison seconded for the location of a permanent camera to be placed on the Recreation Ground, Haspalls Road.

It was agreed with 4 votes for for the location of a permanent camera to be placed on the Recreation Ground, Haspalls Road.

The advantage of this particular camera is that once the preliminary costs were covered there is no capital cost for the camera itself, thus saving £10,000 and no on going revenue costs for monitoring.

The issues regarding monitoring costs and capital investment in the CCTV system were largely set aside for another day; however it was established that there would be monitoring costs charged for any CCTV equipment purchased for exclusive use by Swaffham, whether re-deployable or permanent. Monitoring costs are £2,000 per year per camera. Grahame Green was attracted to an idea of the five towns collaborating together to purchase a re-deployable camera to add to Breckland's camera stock and it was confirmed that there would be no monitoring charge applied to the five towns. This might be an approach worth pursuing in the future as the police were largely in favour of having more cameras that could be moved around at short notice.

It was agreed for the Town Clerk to talk with the Clerks from the other 4 towns regarding the purchase of a re-deployable camera to add to Brecklands stock and to explore the £2000 option for monitoring costs.

5.3. Report for cash-flow actual and projections 2010/11.

The Town Clerk has not produced a detailed cash-flow and projections report for this meeting as the priorities have been elsewhere on the agenda. There are currently no cash-flow difficulties to manage. The Town Clerk has a meeting with the area manager of the Nat West Bank on 10th August; it is not envisaged that the current overdraft facility would need to be renewed, so this will cease at the end of August.

Page 618

5.4. Baseline amendments to the 2010/11 budget.

A report has been circulated for consideration which gives three options to discuss. A further issue of repayment of Loans is also offered for discussion. Any policy changes would need to be referred back to full Council in September or October.

5.5. Early budget considerations for 2011/12.

All Committees are encouraged to put forward their budget requirements for the year 2011/12 at the earliest opportunity. This will enable the budget working group to collate the information they need for the budget later this year. It was suggested the Town Clerk explore cost of Street Lighting.

It was agreed for the Town Clerk to explore the cost for Street Lighting.

A discussion took place relating to Section 106, and it was suggested for the Town Clerk to produce a breakdown of where the money has been spent.

It was agreed for the Town Clerk to produce a breakdown of where the money has been spent.

5.6. Timetable for 2011/12 budget.

In the next month or so the estimates will be sought from contractors and where necessary these will come to the full Council meeting on 8th September or 13th October. The Finance meeting on 20th October is the final deadline for receiving last minute budget requirements. Staffing issues relating to the budget will be discussed at the 13th October or 10th November full Council meeting. The budget working group will start work with the Town Clerk shortly after the full Council meeting in September, there will be meetings every two to three weeks through to the circulation of the draft budget in November.

6. Date of NEXT MEETING on Wednesday 20th October 2010 at 7pm and to give consideration to the format of a new DRAFT AGENDA.

The combined draft agenda for the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Open Spaces & Amenities Committee has been circulated for discussion and agreement in principle.

It was agreed in principle for the combined draft agenda for the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Open Spaces & Amenities Committee.

The meeting closed at 8.50p.m.

Chairman