

**CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD ON TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2016 AT 5.30PM**

- PRESENT : Councillors Bell, Dignum, T French and Scicluna
- EX OFFICIO : The Mayor (Councillor P Budge)
- ALSO PRESENT : Councillors Apel, Plowman and Sharp
- APOLOGIES : The Deputy Mayor (Councillor P Evans)  
Councillors M Evans, Galloway and Keyworth
- IN ATTENDANCE : Town Clerk, Finance Manager, Property Manager and Administration Manager

36 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 25 July 2016 having been circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING

The Mayor and Councillors Apel and Dignum declared their Interests as members of Chichester District Council.

Councillor Plowman declared an interest as a Chichester District Councillor and Chairman of Friends of Priory Park.

38 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 31 August 2016

A copy of the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to 31 August 2016 was circulated with the Agenda.

The Report showed a surplus of £27,440 against the budget to the end of August 2016.

The Finance Manager explained the variances and that this surplus would be reduced as there were outstanding invoices to be paid.

Councillor Bell thanked Councillor T French for initiating the block booking of Cards for Good Causes at the Council House.

39 CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2016/2017

A copy of the Capital Monitoring Report 2016/2017 was circulated with the Agenda and noted.

40 MARKET CROSS CLOCK

Property Sub-Committee Minute 29(d) refers

To consider the Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee that the quotation received from Smiths of Derby in the sum of £9,786 be accepted for works to automate the Market Cross Clock.

It was RESOLVED that the quotation received from Smiths of Derby for the sum of £9,786 be accepted for works to automate the Market Cross Clock. This would be part funded from the existing budget (£7,000) and the balance (£2,786) from the General Reserve.

41 THE BREWERY FIELD

Property Sub-Committee Minute 21 refers

To consider the Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee that a picnic table and 3 or 4 benches be provided on the field.

The Property Manager advised that a quote had been received for a picnic table and 4 benches at a cost of £435.00 and £240.00 each respectively. There would be no installation costs if the work was undertaken in-house by the Property Team. The table and benches could be relocated elsewhere if they were no longer required at The Brewery Field but consultation would take place first with the Friends of The Brewery Field about preferred locations.

It was RESOLVED that £1,598 be expended from The Brewery Field budget.

At the Property Sub-Committee meeting the matter of providing a gate or a bollard to the entrance of the field would be investigated further with West Sussex County Council. The matter of supplying a BBQ unit and area would not be progressed.

42 LITTEN GARDENS

Property Sub-Committee Minute 22(a) refers

To consider the Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee that Andy Stedman Garden Design be appointed to carry out the works in connection with the hard landscaping of the Garden of Reflection and Reconciliation at Litten Gardens. It was confirmed that this sum would be met from New Homes Bonus Scheme allocations in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 and from budgeted provisions in 2016/2017 and 2017/2018.

It was RESOLVED that Andy Stedman Garden Design be appointed to carry out the works in connection with the hard landscaping of the Garden of Reflection and Reconciliation at Litten Gardens for the sum of £15,214.50.

43 SEATS IN THE CITY CENTRE

Property Sub-Committee Minute 23 refers

To consider the Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee that the quotation received from Neptune Street Furniture in the sum of £14,500 be accepted for the replacement of 20 seats in the City Centre.

The Property Manager advised that the sum quoted was for supply and delivery and another £5,000 would need to be added for the installation costs.

It was RESOLVED that the quotation received from Neptune Street Furniture in the sum of £14,500 be accepted for the replacement of 20 seats in the City Centre and that the installation costs by a contractor would be an additional £5,000. This would be funded from the Earmarked Reserve for Benches.

The replaced seats would be salvaged with the possibility of them being used elsewhere.

It was agreed that any new seats/benches should be identifiable as being the responsibility of the City Council by a small plaque depicting the Coat of Arms and appropriate wording. A generic style plaque could be used on all City Council assets, for example, flower tower bases.

44 DISUSED BURIAL GROUNDS

Property Sub-Committee Minute 24(a) refers

To consider the Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee that Berry Middleton be appointed to carry out the works to St Paul's North Wall and that the works do not exceed £6,620. This work to be funded from the Disused Burial Grounds Earmarked Reserve

It was RESOLVED that Berry Middleton be appointed to carry out the works to St Paul's North Wall and that the works do not exceed £6,620. This work to be funded from the Disused Burial Grounds Earmarked Reserve.

It was further RESOLVED that money be set aside each year for re-pointing work of boundary walls associated with Disused Burial Grounds to avoid high expenditure at any one time.

45 PROVISION OF A SEAT AT THE BUS STOP IN SPITALFIELD LANE

Property Sub-Committee Minute 25 refers

To consider the Recommendation of the Property Sub-Committee that the City Council arrange and fund the installation of a seat at the Spitalfield Lane bus stop (nr Bishopsgate Walk) at a cost of £955.

It was RESOLVED that the City Council fund the supply and installation of a seat next to the bus shelter in Spitalfield Lane at a cost of £955. However if the cost did exceed the quoted figure this could be funded from Capital.

46 DRAFT BUDGET 2017/2018

A first draft copy of the Budget 2017/2018 report was circulated to all members with the Agenda.

The Finance Manager explained that this draft Budget report was very provisional with many unknowns, for example the exact reduction in the Council Tax Grant from Chichester District Council, the tax base, Employers' pension fund contribution rates, Market House rent reviews, confirmation of staffing changes. The current draft budget indicated an 8.75% increase which was based on an assumed increase in the tax base and equal to £4.28 increase on a Band D.

The Finance Manager went through the draft Budget 2017/2018 and members discussed various items. The following amendments would be made to the draft Budget :

- the costs for one additional Property Maintenance Officer to be included
- £10,000 be set aside for the Council House Maintenance Reserve
- increase the Staff Training Budget to £1,500
- include £100 for the Murray maquette display case
- the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and District Councils on Public Conveniences be reviewed as the MOU review date was April 2017 and with the likelihood of the public conveniences in Priory Park being used more if the Guildhall was to be marketed as a hire venue for events by the District Council

The Committee briefly discussed the City Council's investments and with low interest rates, the Chairman suggested that the Local Authority Property Fund be investigated again and that this be discussed further at the next Finance Committee meeting.

The Finance Manager was thanked for her work to date in providing a draft 2017/2018 budget; a final version of which would be presented to the Finance Committee meeting on 29 November 2016.

47 WESTS WAR MEMORIAL

Councillor Scicluna had asked for this item to be discussed before she had to leave the meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that he had been in contact with Marstons Brewery who have the responsibility for the Duke of Rye (formerly Wests) in West Street and had been advised that their lease did not include any formal obligation to maintain the War Memorial and that this was the responsibility of their landlord (Principality Holdings Ltd) who were the freehold owners. However, Marstons had recently carried out some maintenance works to the area to make it more presentable. Discussions between the Town Clerk and Marstons would continue.

Councillors Apel, T French and Scicluna and the Property Manager left the meeting.

48 DISCRETIONARY GRANT BUDGET (PROVISION FOR PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS)

The Committee were advised that the Discretionary Grant Budget of £50,000 did have the provision to allocate up to £20,000 from this budget for Public Realm Projects if required.

49 UPDATE ON PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

The Town Clerk reported on a recently held meeting with West Sussex County Council Highway Officers who were offering the maintenance of four roundabouts (plus the adjacent land), namely Via Ravenna (nr Westgate Leisure Centre), Westgate, Oaklands Way/Spitalfield Lane and Westhampnett (nr Sainsburys) to the City Council. Appropriate training and the loaning of equipment was also being offered.

RESOLVED that City Council Officers continue discussions with West Sussex County Council on this matter and report back to the next Finance Committee meeting.

50 CHICHESTER VISION

This item was deferred from the July 2016 Finance Committee (Minute 23 refers)

This item was withdrawn.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk write to the Chief Executives of both Chichester and West Sussex County Councils informing them of the value already contributed to Chichester Vision in the City Centre by the monies that has been committed by the City Council, namely works to the Council House (£16,000), works to the Market Cross (£28,600), floral displays within the City Centre (£25,000), contributing to the maintenance of the Chichester Cemetery (£38,000), an annual contribution to Community Wardens (£40,000) and assisting with Pound Farm Road access (£3,000). The total expended in the financial year 2016/2017 totalled £162,100.

51 NEW HOMES BONUS 2016/2017

The Committee were advised that five of the six New Homes Bonus 2016/2017 applications submitted had been successful.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the City Council formally record acceptance of the Conditions in the Agreement relating to New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2016/2017 between Chichester District Council and Chichester City Council and that the Town Clerk be authorised to sign the Agreement on the City Council's behalf.

Councillor Sharp left the meeting.

52 CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS AWARDS

A report had been circulated with the Agenda outlining concerns that Officers had raised with the introduction of City Council Business Awards.

It was RESOLVED that this initiative would not be progressed.

53 CHICHESTER BUS SERVICES

(a) Sunday and Bank Holiday 55 Bus Service between Chichester and Tangmere

The Committee noted that Stagecoach would initiate this route from October 2016 half term and the timetables would be released in early October 2016.

(b) Bus Services in Chichester

The Committee also noted a schedule received from Stagecoach listing the Bus Services in Chichester had been circulated with the Agenda. It was agreed no further action would be taken on this matter.

54 CHICHESTER BID - NOTICE OF BALLOT

The Committee noted that notice had been given that a ballot was to be held on the proposal of the Chichester City Centre Business Improvement District (BID). The ballot would be conducted entirely by post by the Electoral Reform Services and the Ballot paper had to be returned no later than 5pm on 3 November 2016.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the City Council vote in support of the Chichester City Centre Business Improvement District (BID for the next 5-year term.

55 PROTOCOL FOR APPOINTMENT OF A CHAIRMAN IN THE ABSENCE OF BOTH CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Town Clerk advised that in such a situation whereby the Chairman or Vice Chairman is absent from a Committee the law relating to Parish Councils states that “the members of the Council present shall choose who shall preside.”

56 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

(a) CIL Sub-Committee

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the CIL Sub-Committee held on 21 September 2016 having been previously circulated, were approved and adopted.

(b) Property Sub-Committee

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Property Sub-Committee held on 3 October 2016 having been previously circulated, were approved and adopted.

57 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(a) Monthly Reconciliation with evidence of Bank Statements to 31 July and 31 August 2016

RESOLVED to note the monthly reconciliation with evidence of Bank Statements for 31 July and 31 August 2016.

(b) List of Cheques paid for July and August 2016

RESOLVED to note the cheques paid for July and August 2016.

(c) List of Barclaycard Payments for July and August 2016

RESOLVED to note the Barclaycard payments for July and August 2016.

(d) FINANCE ROUND-UP

The Finance Manager advised the Committee on the following :

- Audit of Accounts 2016/2017  
These had been signed off by PKF Littlejohn.

- West Sussex Pension Advisory Board  
The Finance Manager would be a representative on the West Sussex Pension Advisory Board
- New Banking Mandate  
Bank accounts with Unity Bank had been established and the transition period between the old and new accounts would now commence.
- Precept Consultation  
This would be attached to the Minutes for information purposes.
- Smaller Scheduled Bodies Pool  
The City Council would remain in the Smaller Scheduled Bodies Pool. This had been agreed between the Finance Manager and the Chairman of the Committee.

58 ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING

- Budget 2017/2018
- Local Authority Property Fund
- Public Realm

59 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT) 1960

It was RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely staffing matters.

60 STAFFING MATTERS

(a) Property Maintenance Officer

To formally confirm in post the Property Maintenance Officer, Stephen Le Gallez and that an honorarium be awarded

(b) Casual Facilities Officer

To formally record thanks to Yatin Bhatt, Casual Facilities Officer, who had submitted his resignation after 9 years of work with the City Council.

61 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 29 November 2016 at 5.30pm to discuss the Budget 2017/2018.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm