

CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2018 AT 5.30PM

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

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

As recorded above.

24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 12 June 2018 having been circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

There were no declarations of interests relating to matters on the Agenda.

26 INTRODUCTION OF 'CYCLE TO WORK' SCHEME

The Chairman welcomed Simon Ballard, Environmental Protection Manager of Chichester District Council, to the meeting who gave a brief presentation of the 'Cycle to Work' Scheme that the District Council currently implements.

The Scheme enables an employee to lease bicycles and accessories from their employer through their salary. The Scheme is an HMRC compliant tax avoidance scheme and the contributions paid through employees' salaries do not have an impact on their pensions. The maximum value of goods is £1,000 and any bike and associated costs are paid initially by the employer and then salary deductions commence to reflect the costs. At the end of the hire period, the employee can either extend the hire period, purchase the bicycle or return it.

It was RESOLVED to support in principle and that Officers deal with the technicalities of implementing it.

Mr Ballard was asked to stay for Agenda Item 14, Cycle Racks, and to answer any questions that members may have. The Chairman took this Agenda item as this point in the meeting.

27 CYCLE RACKS

CIL Sub-Committee Minute 3(b)

To consider the following Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee :

- (i) £32,500 be allocated for this project from the CIL Receipts received;
- (ii) 182 cycle racks in the City be replaced with the new stainless steel ‘Sheffield’ style rack;
- (iii) up to 20 cycle racks in the City be replaced with the new stainless steel circular style rack subject to the extra cost incurred for these racks being funded by Chichester BID;
- (iv) the Property Manager liaise with West Sussex County Council on the current locations of the cycle racks as some of them would benefit from being relocated in the nearby area, eg, Eastgate Square;
- (v) the Property Manager and Councillor Sharp liaise on other possible sites for cycle racks.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that

- (i) £32,500 be allocated for this project from the CIL Receipts received;
- (ii) 182 cycle racks in the City be replaced with the new stainless steel ‘Sheffield’ style rack;
- (iii) up to 20 cycle racks in the City be replaced with the new stainless steel circular style rack subject to the extra cost incurred for these racks being funded by Chichester BID;
- (iv) the Property Manager liaise with West Sussex County Council on the current locations of the cycle racks as some of them would benefit from being relocated in the nearby area, eg, Eastgate Square;
- (v) the Property Manager and Councillor Sharp liaise on other possible sites for cycle racks.

28 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2018

A copy of the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to 31 August 2018 had been circulated to all members with the Agenda.

The Finance Manager advised that this report covered the first 5-months of the financial year and was currently showing a surplus of £20,520 against the budget. The Finance Manger commented on the variances to date.

29 CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2018/2019

As there had been no Capital Expenditure to date, a report had not been circulated, however a schedule outlining the New Homes Bonus Allocations was circulated to all members with the Agenda.

30 REVIEW OF EARMARKED RESERVES

A copy of Earmarked Reserves Balances as at 31 March 2018 had been circulated to all members with the Agenda.

It was RESOLVED that

- (i) the Lift Replacement, Council House and Council House Redecoration Earmarked Reserves be combined and made up to a combined figure of £100,000 with any supplement needed being taken from the General Reserve; and
- (ii) The Staff Salary Adjustment Earmarked Reserve be removed.

31 PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

A copy of the Public Realm Projects to date had been circulated to all members with the Agenda.

Councillor Galloway asked about the Social Prescribing project and was advised that this matter had been discussed by Chichester in Partnership, Councillor M Evans would forward a copy of the Minutes of the Partnership's last meeting and these would be circulated with the Minutes of this meeting.

Post Meeting Note : Councillor M Evans has provided the following :

“Having checked the unconfirmed minutes of the Chichester in Partnership Meeting here is a précis of what was said. The project has a 75% engagement rate with a high proportion of clients with a long term condition. They have been working with the clients on a basis of 8 sessions of 45 minutes to an hour and currently have 4 community referrers. There will be a Cost Benefit analysis done which will include case studies and longer term analysis and hopefully with an indication of the reasons for the referrals.”

32 REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS

A copy of the Finance Manager's report on the Review of Investments had been circulated to all members with the Agenda.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the City Council transfer a further £100,000 from the Public Sector Deposit Fund into the Local Authorities' Property Fund.

33 MAYORAL CAR PARK DECORATIVE GATES

Property Sub-Committee Minutes 15(a) refers

To consider the following recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee :

It was RECOMMENDED to the Finance Committee that the quote received from IGS Fencing in the sum of £2,886.72 to provide black powder coated steel decorative gates for the Mayoral Car Park be accepted, subject to relevant planning consents being obtained. This would be funded from the Council House Reserve budget.

It was RESOLVED that this matter be referred back to the Property Sub-Committee for further discussions on the other options available and the use and future of the car park site generally.

34 COUNCIL HOUSE ROOF

Property Sub-Committee Minute 15(b) refers

To consider the following Recommendations from the Property Sub-Committee :

For audit purposes, it was retrospectively RECOMMENDED to the Finance Committee that under Executive Powers, the Town Clerk together with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee had approved the work to be undertaken by NJS Roofing in the sum of £8,266.

It was RECOMMENDED to the Finance Committee that an external Condition Survey on the Council House roof be carried out by Fuller Associates at a cost of £3,200 and be funded from the Council House Reserve budget.

It was RESOLVED, for audit purposes, that under Executive Powers, the Town Clerk together with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee had approved the work to be undertaken by NJS Roofing in the sum of £8,266.

It was further RESOLVED that an external Condition Survey on the Council House roof be carried out by Fuller Associates at a cost of £3,200 and be funded from the Council House Reserve budget.

35 ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Property Sub-Committee Minute 16(a) refers

To consider the following Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee :

It was RECOMMENDED to the Finance Committee that the City Council enter into an agreement with MCPC Colony Allotment Software System on a 3-year contract at the cost of £5,525.05 including initial data transfer, setup and training. On-going annual costs would be for 3 user licences, data hosting and support at £1,195, (subject to inflationary increases). This would initially be funded from the Allotment Improvement Fund with on-going annual costs being funded from the Computer Improvement/Maintenance Budget.

It was RESOLVED that the City Council enter into an agreement with MCPC Colony Allotment Software System on a 3-year contract at the cost of £5,525.05 including initial data transfer, setup and training. On-going annual costs would be for 3 user licences, data hosting and support at £1,195, (subject to inflationary increases). This would initially be funded from the Allotment Improvement Fund with on-going annual costs being funded from the Computer Improvement/Maintenance Budget.

36 LITTEN GARDENS LIGHTING

Property Sub-Committee Minute 17(a) refers

To consider the following Recommendation from the Property Sub-Committee :

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee that £28,578.91 be allocated from the CIL Receipts received for the lighting project at Litten Gardens.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that £28,578.91 be allocated from the CIL Receipts received for the lighting project at Litten Gardens.

37 CATHEDRAL BELL TOWER CLOCK

The Town Clerk advised that an invoice in the sum of £900 had been received from Chichester Cathedral for works to the Cathedral Bell Tower Clock; this was in excess of the annual City Council contribution of £360.

It was RESOLVED that £500 be paid towards the Cathedral Bell Town Clock in 2018/2019.

It was further RESOLVED that the City Council annual contribution to the Cathedral Bell Tower Clock be increased to £500 in the 2019/2020 budget.

Details would be passed on to Chichester Cathedral of the alternatives that the City Council considered for reducing maintenance costs for the Market Cross Clock.

38 DRAFT BUDGET 2019/2020

The Finance Manager's Draft Budget 2019/2020 had been circulated to all members with the Agenda which was currently showing a 4.5% increase in the Precept.

The main significant variances were in the budgets of Computer Improvement and the Market House income. It was stressed that this was only a draft Budget and would be finalised at the November Meeting and approved by Full Council in December 2018.

39 VALUATION OF BUILDINGS

The Finance Manager reported that the City Cross and Council House had been revalued for insurance purposes and the figures were similar to the current insurance figures.

40 VALUATION OF CIVIC REGALIA

The Administration Manager reported that the Civic Regalia (including paintings and furniture) had been revalued for insurance purposes and had increased by just under 30%. The revaluation figure now included the Murray artefacts.

41 NEW HOMES BONUS 2018/2019

The Committee were asked to formally record acceptance of the Conditions in the Agreement relating to the New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2018/2019 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.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the Conditions in the Agreement relating to the New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2018/2019 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.

The Committee noted that Chichester District Council approved South Downs Planetarium's request for a Variation and Extension on their New Homes Bonus Application 2015/2016 which will enable the Planetarium to use the funding for wider structural improvements as opposed to using the funding for upgrading the exhibition and display areas at the Planetarium. The funding is extended by 12 months to 1 October 2019.

42 IT UPDATE

The Administration Manager's report was circulated to all members with the Agenda that outlined the problems that the City Council had faced during September following the server being hacked and viruses being detected on the City Council's generic email address.

To resolve the issues the decision was made to purchase from Microsoft ten Office 365 Business Premium licences for staff and twenty Office 365 Business Essentials licences for members. The cost of these purchases was £2,400 and was funded from the current Computer Improvement Budget. It had been the intention to introduce Office 365 in the new administration.

The Committee wished to record their thanks to the Senior Property Maintenance Officer for his help with resolving the IT issues the City Council had experienced.

The report also mentioned the possibility of changing working practices for the new administration in May 2019 by the introduction of using a Shared Drive facility and the provision of tablets for members. The budget 2019/2020 would need to be increased to accommodate the purchase of tablets and the on-going costs for subscriptions and software agreements.

This matter would be discussed further when finalising the Budget 2019/2020.

43 CITY CENTRE RANGERS - UPDATE

The Town Clerk reported that there was liaison between the City Council and the City Centre Rangers, however the City Council were still awaiting an invoice from BID for the provision of the Rangers as previously agreed which was for 20 weeks of a 43-week programme running between 1 June 2018 and March 2019.

44 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2018

The Town Clerk reported that the 2018 Remembrance Sunday would be different this year to mark the centenary of the ending of the Great War. The Service would include the firing of a 1918 field gun in New Park Road Recreation Ground, a young person reading the poem 'In Flanders Field' and the unveiling and dedication of the new statue in the Garden of Reflection and Reconciliation at Litten Gardens and of the memorial stone for Lt Col Elstob VC DSO MC.

The Mayor's Chaplain had recast the Order of Service for this year by including only one hymn. Final details would be sent to Councillors in the near future.

45 CHRISTMAS OFFICE CLOSING 2018

It was RESOLVED that the Council House would close at midday on Monday 24 December 2018 and re-open on Wednesday 2 January 2019.

46 SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS

Members noted that the Town Clerk had been awarded the John Crompton Cup, an annual Society of Local Council Clerks award, for his services to the Branch Mentoring programme.

47 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

(a) CIL Sub-Committee

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the CIL Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 September 2018 having been previously circulated, were approved and adopted.

(b) Property Sub-Committee

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 September 2018 having been previously circulated, were approved and adopted

48 FINANCE MANAGER ROUND-UP

The Finance Manager reported on the following :

(i) Pension Scheme

The Finance Manager informed the Committee that the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) will no longer be administered by Capita and will be run by Hampshire County Council from 1 April 2019.

LGPS Employer Update stated that under the current law, the State Pension age is due to increase to 68 between 2044 and 2046. However, following a recent review, the government has announced plans to bring this timetable forward meaning the State Pension age would increase to 68 between 2037 and 2039.

(ii) Ill-Health Insurance

Changes to the Ill-Health insurance has meant that the policy is now calculated as 1.52% of pensionable pay instead of 1.32% and due to the number of employees in the pension fund, the cost increased. However, this cost would be offset by a reduction in employer contributions but had not implemented on-time. Therefore West Sussex County Council payroll has agreed to backdate and refund the difference.

(iii) External Audit Update

Moore Stephens were the nominated Auditor for the City Council's accounts this year. The Audit should have been completed by the 30 September 2018. Although Moore Stephens have been contacted a response was still awaited.

49 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

- (a) Monthly Reconciliation with evidence of Bank Statements to the end of April, May, June, July and August 2018

RESOLVED to note the monthly reconciliation with evidence of Bank Statements to the end of April, May, June, July and August 2018.

- (b) List of Cheques paid for April, May, June, July and August 2018

RESOLVED to note the cheques paid for April, May, June, July and August 2018.

- (c) List of Barclaycard Payments for April, May, June, July and August 2018

RESOLVED to note the Barclaycard payments for April, May, June, July and August 2018.

50 ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- Budget 2019/2020
- Market House

51 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Proposal to resolve that the public and press be excluded from this meeting for Agenda Item 5 only because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted namely financial matters.

52 MARKET HOUSE - UPDATE

The Finance Manager reported that Orion Southern had informed the City Council that they will be appointing two new Marketing Agents in connection with Unit 1 that had been empty since 18 July 2018.

53 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 27 November 2018 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.15pm