

CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 5.30PM

- PRESENT : Councillors Budge, Dignum, M Evans, T French and Scicluna
- EX OFFICIO : The Mayor (Councillor Bell)
Councillors Galloway and Kilby
- APOLOGIES : The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Tupper)
Councillor Keyworth
- ALSO PRESENT : Councillor Plowman and Sharp
David Fanchi & Laura McKay - Irwin Mitchell Solicitors
(For Market House Item only)
- IN ATTENDANCE : Town Clerk, Administration Manager, Finance Manager and Property Manager

54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

As recorded above.

55 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 23 October 2018 having been circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

Councillor Scicluna declared a Personal Interest as Trustee and Deputy Chairman of the Festival of Chichester.

57 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

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

58 MARKET HOUSE - UPDATE

The Chairman introduced David Fanchi from Irwin Mitchell Solicitors. Mr Fanchi was asked to attend the meeting to advise members on the various matters raised by Orion Developments (Southern) Ltd in connection with the Market House.

The Committee considered the following options :

- (i) The City Council sells the Freehold to Orion Developments (Southern) Ltd
- (ii) The City Council purchase Orion Developments (Southern) Ltd's current lease

It was noted that Orion Developments (Southern) Ltd could sell the Lease to a third party; this would be a decision for them to take. Any new owner would have to agree to the Letting Strategy and other requirements.

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that Options (i) and (ii) were not supported by the Committee.

It was further RESOLVED that Officers investigate all aspects of action required by the Council if the Lease is sold to a third party, including obtaining expert assistance with due diligence.

59 DISCRETIONARY GRANT BUDGET 2018/2019

The Committee were reminded that the Discretionary Grant Budget 2018/2019 was allocated, in full, at the July 2018 meeting of the Community Affairs Committee. The February 2019 meeting of the Committee that would customarily deal with the allocation of the unexpended balance had been cancelled and this had been displayed on the City Council's website.

However, representation had been received from the Festival of Chichester expressing their disappointment that 2018/2019 budget had already been expended and that their Discretionary Grant application would not now be considered.

A Discretionary Grant application had also been received from another organisation.

It was RESOLVED that a meeting of the Community Affairs Committee be held on Monday 1 April 2019 (ie, in the new financial year) to discuss Discretionary Grant Applications. The second meeting of the Committee to discuss Discretionary Grant Applications would be in October 2019.

60 PUBLIC REALM PROJECT - CITY BOUNDARY SIGNS

To consider Recommending to Full Council that the 4 existing City Boundary Signs be replaced and 5 new City Boundary Signs be installed at a cost of £2,988.40 (excluding VAT) and that this be funded from the Public Realm Budget.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the 4 existing City Boundary Signs be replaced and 5 new City Boundary Signs be installed at a cost of £2,988.40 (excluding VAT) and that this be funded from the Public Realm Budget

61 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The Town Clerk's report on Remembrance Sunday had been circulated to all members with the Agenda. The report commented on three aspects relating to Remembrance Sunday, namely the Civic attendance at the Parade and Service, action taken between the Town Clerk and the Chairman to pay a sum of £300 as a damage waiver deposit to Chichester District Council for the use of New Park Road by the Garrison Artillery Volunteers and the addition of a World War I soldier's name on the War Memorial.

It was RESOLVED that the current practice of inviting the Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex (or representative), the High Sheriff of West Sussex, the Chairmen of District and County Council's and the Chichester MP, together with their partners, continue. No other individuals would be added to the Civic Procession. Guidance notes about the conduct of the Civic Procession would be issued in future years.

62 BUDGET 2019/2020

A copy of the Budget 2019/2020 and the Finance Manager's report had been circulated to all members with the Agenda. The report included the Earmarked Reserves Balance at 27 November 2018, the Planned Maintenance Programme for 2017 to 2026 and a Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2019/2020.

The Budget 2019/2020 was showing a 5.47% increase in the Precept. The draft tax base figure received from Chichester District Council had increased this year by 0.48%.

For 2019/2020 the Band D Council Tax will be £52.48 which was an increase of £2.72 per annum (5p per week) on last year's figure.

Councillor French expressed his concern on the increase being over 5% and he considered this to be unnecessary and suggested there were areas where savings could be made to keep the increase below 5%. The Finance Manager explained that all budgets had been examined and with the possible loss of income in a number of areas, the budget for 2019/2020 was considered realistic.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that

- (i) the City Council's Budget for 2019/2020 be £782,530 resulting in a Precept Demand of £574,867 and a Band D Council Tax Payment of £52.48 (an increase of 5p per week); an overall increase of 5.47% increase on the Precept;
- (ii) the Earmarked Reserves Balance to 27 November 2018 be approved;
- (ii) the Planned Maintenance Programme for 2017 to 2026 be noted; and
- (iii) the Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2019/2020 be approved.

63 PLAY EQUIPMENT AT BREWERY FIELD USING S106 MONEY

The Chairman explained that there was Section 106 monies available for play equipment and that the Brewery Field site may be a possibility for installing new play equipment. The Committee noted that for various reasons this would not be feasible. No further action would be taken.

64 WW1 SOLDIER MAURICE PATTEN

The Committee considered Vincent Gray's desire to gift the above statue as a resin casting to the City, should the City see merit and value in having it.

The Committee noted that the resin statue could be located outside although some remedial work would need to be carried out before the statue could be on permanent display outdoors.

It was RESOLVED to accept Vincent Gray's kind offer of the World War One Soldier, Maurice Patten, and the Town Clerk report back to the next Finance Committee in January 2019 on possible locations for the statue.

65 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 15 January 2019 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 6.45pm