



Chichester City Council

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes

Date 13 September 2022

Time 2.00pm – 4.02pm

Location The Council Chamber - The Council House • North Street • CHICHESTER • West Sussex • PO19 1LQ

PRESENT: Councillor Scicluna (Chairman) and Councillor J Hughes

EX-OFFICIO: Deputy Mayor (Councillor Plowman), Councillor Quail (Chairman of Planning & Conservation)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Carter, Councillor Corfield, Councillor Gaskin, Councillor Gershater, Councillor Sharp, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Property Manager and Finance Assistant

The Chairman called for a minutes silence in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and also in remembrance of Councillor Kevin Hughes who had recently passed away unexpectedly.

33. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED to accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence from the meeting from Councillor Harry, Councillor Barrie, Councillor Apel and Councillor Dignum.

34. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING**

Councillor Plowman declared an interest as a Member of Chichester District Council and the Chichester Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Councillor Scicluna declared an interest as a Member of the Chichester Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Councillor Quail declared an interest as the Chairman for the Westgates Residents Association.

Councillor Sharp declared an interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council and Chichester District Council.

35. **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2022 and the Special Meeting of Finance Committee held on 8 August 2022, having been circulated; be approved and signed as a correct record.

36. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960)

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from this meeting for agenda item 22 and item 1 of the Supplementary Finance agenda due to the nature of the business to be transacted, namely confidential business and staffing matters.

At this point the Chairman took the item from the supplementary agenda.

37. RESIGNATION OF PROPERTY MANAGER

The Committee were informed that the Property Manager would be leaving the City Council's employment on Friday, 7th October 2022 to work for a national house building company in a senior management position.

The Committee, whilst sorry to hear this news, fully respected his decision.

The Committee thanked the Property Manager for his sterling work over the past 8 years and his many achievements during this time. They wished him and his family every happiness for the future.

The Property Manager recommended that one of the Property Maintenance Officers could be given an opportunity to 'act up' in the role of Property Manager for a trial period. The employee in question had substantial building, practical and management experience. The trial period would be until a final decision was made by Council.

It was noted that, during the trial, there would be a cost saving in the short term.

Members were advised that, if the proposal was agreed, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk would carry out a monthly assessment and offer advice and guidance in other areas beyond the technical aspects of the job.

The Committee was assured that, despite any rebalancing of workloads, the Property Team would continue to maintain its high standards of work in respect to all aspects of the City Council's assets and ensure that project work continued should the proposal be approved.

The Property Manager flagged up the potential need for administrative support for the Property Team.

After a short further discussion, it was RECOMMENDED to Council on 28 September 2022 that the identified Property Maintenance Officer 'act up' in the role of Property Manager for an initial period of six months, with the situation being monitored by the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

It was agreed that the matter would be reconsidered in March 2023 when a decision would be made on future arrangements for the Property Manager post.

It was further agreed that the concerns about administrative support to the Property team be noted and kept under review and considered by the Personnel Sub Committee before the six month review date if deemed necessary.

At this point the Chairman took agenda item 22.

38. COUNCIL HOUSE BOILER REPLACEMENT

The Property Manager advised Members that four quotes for the replacement of the Council House boilers had been received as part of the tendering process. These quotes ranged from £23,831.34 to £41,605.00.

The Property Manager summarised the details of the quotes and it was then agreed to RECOMMEND to Council on the 28 September 2022 that an order be placed with Saunders Specialised Services Ltd for the replacement of the boilers in the amount of £27,918.00 to be paid from the City Council's CIL allocation.

The meeting then returned to public session.

39. **UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

a) Minute 7(a) refers – Speed Indicator Device

The Town Clerk advised that the SID (Speed Indicator Device) had proved to be valuable in its position on St. Pancras and it would be moving shortly to another location in the North Ward.

b) Minute 7(c) refers – Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Plowman referred to his report and advised Members that the recent Minutes would be updated and a regular report from the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan would be received at meetings of the Planning and Conservation Committee.

c) Minute 15 refers – Council Chamber, damp in Town Clerk's office, hopper and downpipe repairs, carpet in lift lobby and Lion Street corridor, Litten Gardens CCTV

The Town Clerk noted these works had been carried out.

d) Minute 16 refers – IBabs Agenda and Minuting Software

The Chairman updated Members and informed them that the decision had been made to not proceed with the IBabs Agenda and Minuting Software.

e) Minute 18 refers – Remembrance Sunday

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that 'save the date' emails had been sent out and that momentum would increase in the coming weeks.

She further advised that there would not be a ceremonial gun involved in this year's Remembrance Sunday's events due to problems obtaining the necessary licence.

40. **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO JULY 2022**

The Deputy Town Clerk summarised her report of the Budget Monitoring to the end of July 2022 and advised there was a large surplus of £113,173.

Included in this surplus was the unspent balance for the next round of Discretionary Grants and the Public Realm budget, with a combined total of £60,000.

She further advised there was a surplus on cemetery charges and the large surplus of £113,173 would reduce significantly.

41. **EARMARKED RESERVES**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised there was nothing to report on Earmarked Reserves at this time.

42. PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

The Deputy Town Clerk summarised her report which had been previously circulated.

She advised that the balance currently stood at approximately £35,000.

At this point the Chairman took item 12 on the agenda.

43. ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCHEMES

The Deputy Town Clerk referred to Minute 53a of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on Monday 22 August 2022 and the decision to combine a number of energy efficiency schemes and request these funds from the CIL allocation.

It was RECOMMENDED to Council on 28 September 2022 that the City Council amend the CIL Infrastructure Plan to include an allocation of £200,000 for energy efficiency schemes at the Council House.

44. MINUTES OF THE PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on Monday 22 August 2022 were noted and it was further noted that the recommendation regarding the creation of a Council House energy efficiency CIL allocation (Property Sub-Committee minute 19a refers) had already been discussed under minute 43.

45. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED to approve and adopt the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings held on Thursday 21 July 2022, Monday 8 August 2022 and Thursday 1 September 2022, having been circulated; be approved and signed as a correct record.

46. CHRISTMAS CLOSURE OF CITY COUNCIL OFFICE

It was agreed that the offices be closed at 12 Noon on Friday, 23rd December 2022 and reopen on Tuesday, 3rd January 2023.

47. TO CONSIDER A SUGGESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PLOWMAN FOR RECOGNITION OF COUNCILLORS' PAST SERVICE

Councillor Plowman suggested that it would be appropriate for some form of recognition to be given to members of the City Council for past service. This would be for Councillors would not be seeking re-election in May 2023 and there was the unknown factor of Councillors who would not be returned to office.

The Town Clerk suggested that certificates could be presented at the Annual Meeting of the City Council in May 2023.

Councillor Plowman suggested that a group consisting of the Mayor, the Chairman of Planning & Conservation, the Chairman of Finance and the Chairman of Community Affairs come together to decide how best to proceed with this idea. Members agreed with this approach.

48. S106 ALLOCATIONS FOR PUBLIC ART

Councillor Sharp summarised the contents of her report on public art in South Ward and distributed pictures to Members to accompany her report.

The Committee agreed to grant Councillor Sharp an extension of time in order to progress further on her work on this item.

49. THE CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

The Town Clerk advised that this national project was being led at Parish level by the National Association of Local Councils, the Society of Local Council Clerks and One View Wales.

He explained that this was not some form of 'buzz word' project, that within parts of the Parish sector bullying, intimidation, and harassment were still a real issue and that signing the pledge was a commitment to standing up to these issues to in an effort to enact positive changes which supported civil and respectful conduct.

A package of measures was proposed including a programme for Councillor training, good governance arrangements, including a Dignity at Work Policy (which would need to be developed), learning from best practice and continuing to lobby for legislation to support civility, respect and appropriate sanctions.

Although it was agreed that the City Council had a good track record of Councillor/Officer working relations, the Committee felt it was important to support this national initiative and it was agreed that the Civility and Respect Pledge be signed.

50. TWINNING WITH SPEYER

The Committee noted that at the recent Community Affairs Committee meeting held on 5 August 2022 (minute 59 refers) it was recommended that the City Council formally twin with Speyer, Germany. This was seconded by Councillor C Hughes.

The Chairman referred to the successful visit by representatives from Speyer in August. It was noted that Speyer was also twinned with the cities of Ravenna and Chartres and the benefits of such a link, especially for schools and young people, was emphasised.

RECOMMENDED to Council on 28 September 2022 that a formal twinning link with Speyer, Germany be established, and that Speyer City Council be so advised.

51. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

This item was discussed under agenda item 4b.

52. OPTION TO OPT OUT OF THE SAAA CENTRAL EXTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Deputy Town Clerk summarised the benefits of opting in to this arrangement and advised it would be cheaper for the City Council to maintain the status quo and that it meant that there would be appropriate expertise available.

The Deputy Town Clerk further advised that she recommended the City Council not opt out of this arrangement and Members agreed.

53. CHICHESTER WARM NETWORK AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

Members noted the discussion held at the Community Affairs Committee held on 5 September 2022 (minute 57 refers).

After a short discussion, Members RESOLVED to bring forward the idea of establishing a Chichester Warm Network to the Chichester Community Network (CCN).

Members agreed with the Town Clerk that this would likely involve the City Council's Committee and Community Officer and that the possibility of temporary resourcing for

this should be considered given that the post holder would shortly be starting maternity leave.

The Committee agreed and it was RECOMMENDED to Council on 28 September 2022 that maternity cover be sought for the Committee and Community Officer post.

54. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY (reports attached)**

a) MONTHLY RECONCILIATION WITH EVIDENCE OF BANK STATEMENTS TO END OF 31 JULY 2022

RESOLVED to note the monthly reconciliation with evidence of bank statements until the end of 31 July 2022.

b) LIST OF PAYMENTS MADE FOR APRIL, MAY, JUNE AND JULY 2022

RESOLVED to note the list of receipts and payments made for April, May, June and July 2022.

c) LIST OF BARCLAYCARD PAYMENTS FOR APRIL, MAY, JUNE AND JULY 2022

RESOLVED to note the list of Barclaycard payments for April, May, June and July 2022.

55. **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960)**

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from this meeting for agenda items 21 and 23 due to the nature of the business to be transacted, namely confidential business matters.

56. **MARKET HOUSE UPDATE**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that Bill's Restaurant and Bar would not be extending their space in the Market House.

57. **TRAFFIC CONSULTANT QUOTES**

The Town Clerk advised Members that three traffic consultation quotes had been received as part of the tendering process. These quotes ranged from £1,250+VAT to £11,930+VAT.

It was RESOLVED that the three companies that had tendered for the project be invited to a meeting at the Council House to present their proposals to Members so that a more informed decision could be reached.

58. **ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

- Draft budget
- Section 106 Public Art
- Traffic consultants quotes

59. **DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING**

DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: 18 OCTOBER 2022

The meeting closed at 4.02pm