

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE EATONS COMMUNITY CENTRE
ON TUESDAY 22 JUNE 2010

Present:

Cllr R W Eaton
Cllr P K Ursell
Cllr S van de Kerkhove
Cllr B Chapman

1. Appointment of Chairman

Cllr P Ursell was elected Chairman.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

Cllr S van de Kerkhove was elected Vice Chairman.

3. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence. Cllr Mrs Collins was not present.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Lone Working Arrangements

The Community Centres Manager had investigated ways of improving staff safety in relation to lone working. This was especially relevant to employees locking up at the Eatons Community Centre and when staff exited the Priory Centre late at night.

Two systems had been considered: Skyguard and People Safe. A minimum requirement of 5 devices would be needed to adequately cover staff for lone working.

Members **RESOLVED:**

- (i) to instruct the Centres Manager to lease the Skyguard 500 system over three years;
- (ii) funding to come from the Priory Centre budget and that
- (iii) the Town Clerk and the Town Mayor be authorised to sign the contract.

6. Prory Centre Toilet Refurbishment

The upstairs toilets in the Centre requires refurbishment and the Centres Manager asked members for approval to seek tenders for this work.

Members **RESOLVED:**

to instruct the Centres Manager to seek quotes for fixture specifications and report costs back to the next meeting.

7. Payments

The Responsible Finance Officer presented the Financial Report for 1st-30th April (copy attached to the signed copy of these minutes).

Members **APPROVED** the payments.

8. Cemetery Fees

The Responsible Finance Officer updated members on the current pricing structure for the Council's cemeteries which she proposed to amend to a more simple system.

The Council's grave-digger had increased his fees for the financial year 2010-11 and members were asked to approve the review of the fees and implement the proposed changes with immediate effect.

In future a fee of £120 would be charged for all interments, plus the grave-digger's fees.

It was **RESOLVED:**

to accept the revised pricing structure, giving a fee of £120 for each interment and in addition to add 20% to the grave-digger's fees. (A schedule of the new fees is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes.)

9. Transit Pick-Up

The Responsible Finance Officer advised Members that the agreement on the Transit Tipper Truck ended on 17 September 2010. The vehicle is in good condition with no defects. It is currently fitted out to the Operations Team's requirements and has 8,000 miles on the clock.

Four options were available:

1. To purchase the vehicle.
2. To continue to rent for a further 1-2 years.
3. To return the vehicle and lease a new one.

4. To purchase a new vehicle.

Members **RESOLVED:**

to accept the Responsible Finance Officer's recommendation to purchase the vehicle at the end of the agreement.

10. Financial Report on Rent Reviews and Stock-taking

At 7 April Council meeting, Members had instructed the RFO to defer the rent review for one year and to ascertain whether there would be any legal implications.

The Council's solicitors had confirmed that this would not be a problem provided both parties are in agreement. They had advised that a letter be drawn up and approved by both parties to this effect.

It was **RESOLVED:**

that the Finance Officer write to both parties to confirm their agreement to deferring the rent review for one year.

The Responsible Finance Officer had initially made contact with the external stock examiner Mr Bill Middleditch. Since speaking to him at the end of March when he said that he would come out to carry out an inspection and quote within a month of his visit, she had been unable to contact him.

The Responsible Finance Officer was instructed to seek the services of an alternative stock-taker.

11. Valuation of Fixed Assets

The Finance Officer advised Members that, with the introduction of FRSSE for the production of the 2009/10 financial statements, this meant that the Council should value their assets at cost less historical depreciation. The Council are required to decide on the valuation of their fixed assets for the start of the year 2009/10. She proposed to Members that the opening valuation of the 2009/10 remain as they were shown in the 2008/09 accounts. The valuation for future additions being historical cost less depreciation as per the guidelines of the FRSSE.

Members **RESOLVED:**

to approve the implementation of the Responsible Finance Officer's recommendation and to continue with the current value of the Council's Fixed Assets.

12. To Agree and Set the Level of General Reserve Budget

The Finance Officer reported that, at the end of the 2009/10, the General Reserves would stand at between £330,000 to £340,000. She asked Members to agree the amount as sufficient for 2010/11 financial year with the intention of increasing to £400,000 in the future by continuing to make savings on the budget.

It was **RESOLVED:**

to approve the General Fund Balance between £325,000 to £350,000 for the financial year 2010/11 with the intention to increase in future years.

13. Annual Grant Awards

This item was deferred to a future meeting, date to be confirmed.

Meeting closed at 8.17pm.

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CHAIRMAN
22.06.10