

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Corporate Services Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
28th February 2022 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman
C Copleston
S Goodchild
M S Kennedy
C Slough
K Wattingham

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 1

Remote attendance: Councillor: J Carroll
T McMahan

11953 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

11954 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

11955 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

11956 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2022.

The Chair gave his thanks to Councillor Kennedy for standing in for him due to his absence, for the meeting held on the 22nd November 2022.

Members requested that an amendment to minute number 11867 was noted: The new developments in Houghton Regis were currently not included in Op Hana patrols due to budget constraints and the council requested this be looked into however, the police would need to be approached to provide costings for additional patrols.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

11957 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting of the 11th October 2021 and New Office Sub Committee on 15th February 2021.

11958 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members received, for information, the income and expenditure report, which highlighted significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date.

Members requested clarification on communications cost at 123%. It was advised that this cost had been incurred due to the necessary replacement of obsolete phones.

It was highlighted that budget constraints had prevented some remedial work to improve I.T. and connectivity relating to hybrid meetings. It was hoped that this could be addressed in the new financial year.

11959 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members received the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for October, November and December 2021 and January 2022.

Members queried the amount on the reconciliation statement relating to petty cash. Members were advised that this would be clarified with the Town Clerk.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for October, November and December 2021 and January 2022;**
- 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the Council's RFO.**

11960 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Members received a list of payments for the period November 2021 to December 2021 (inclusive).

It was queried why a number of payments and adjustments were shown, but without the need for any payment to be made. Members were advised that this would be clarified.

11961 INVESTMENT REPORT

Members received a report for information.

In accordance with Committee Functions, Financial Regulation 8 and Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements.

The Corporate Services Committee were to oversee and manage the financial obligations of the Council, including:

To receive quarterly reports on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including where length and amount.

It was clarified to members that investments were overseen, internally, by the Town Clerk with advice from CCLA.

Members attention was drawn to a section in the report stating the notice period of 90 days for withdrawals.

11962 BUDGET FOR 2022/23

Members received the approved budget and explanation for 2022/23 for information.

The following new committee project was highlighted for information:

- Budget provision for the digitalisation project of council records

Members suggested that this be allocated to a specific cost centre rather than professional fees.

11963 INSURANCE CLAIMS

Members were advised that there had been one insurance claim from the 1st November 2021 to date.

Members received a report for information.

Claim number:	Details:	Repair cost:	Date settled:
27211391303	Repairs to Kubota	£1,512.38	4 th January 2022

11964 PUBLIC WORK LOAN BOARD – BORROWING

For members to consider the terms and requirements for the council seeking borrowing approval from the Public Work Loan Board.

It was queried whether the 2nd recommendation was necessary. It was highlighted that albeit unlikely to be needed, it put the council in a better position if funding were to be required without having the need to hold an emergency meeting.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To recommend to Town Council that an annuity loan over 28 years be applied from the Public Works Loan Board as this offers a consistency of repayment costs with repayments matching an existing capital budget provision.**
 - 2. The Chair and Vice Chair of Corporate Services Committee be authorised to liaise with the Clerk should funding be required from the CCLA Property fund.**

11965 INTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT

The Council had a statutory duty to complete an Annual Return each year. Within the Annual Return there was an annual internal audit report that provided assurance on a range of prescribed control objectives.

The internal audit testing programme was designed to focus on the areas where assurance is required for completion of the Annual Return.

The Town Council had previously, and for a number of years, used the services of Greenbiro Ltd to undertake their internal audit. As members were aware, Greenbiro Ltd had informed the Clerk that they were no longer able to provide this service.

Therefore, the Town Council was required to appoint a new internal auditor.

Members clarified and confirmed that the references from Company 'A' had been satisfactory.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council, at the meeting to be held on 21st March 2022, that Company 'A' (IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd) be appointed, for a period of 3 years, as the Town Councils internal auditor provider.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.45pm
Dated this 23rd day of May 2022.**

Chairman