

## HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

### Corporate Services Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on  
4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman  
J Carroll  
S Goodchild  
S Thorne Substitute

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk  
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: C Copleston  
K Wattingham  
M Kennedy

Absent: E Cooper

#### 12197 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Copleston, M Kennedy and Cllr Wattingham (Cllr Thorne substituted)

#### 12198 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

#### 12199 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Carroll advised members, in relation to agenda item 18, that he was in receipt of a Local Government Pension.

Cllr Goodchild advised members, in relation to agenda item 18, that she was in receipt of a Local Government Pension.

It was advised that agenda item 18 would not be quorate for consideration.

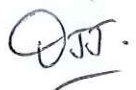
#### 12200 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

**Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

#### 12201 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Personnel Sub-Committee: 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022.



**Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting of the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022.**

## **12202 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Members received the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date. An addendum had also been received outlining concerns over 191 4005 Staff Overtime.

It was confirmed to members that feedback regarding the budget for overtime would be fed back to Events Working Group at their next meeting.

Members were advised of the Town Council's re-subscription to CPRE (Countryside Protection for Rural England) after several years of non-subscription.

Members discussed the overtime budget and ways to mitigate the impact of the overtime costs.

The status of the consideration of casual contracts for staff working at events was queried, it was advised that these contracts had been put on hold for the time being.

The need for councillors to provide more support at events to mitigate the need for paid Marshalls was suggested. It was highlighted that events would still require the significant support of staff members to ensure the smooth running of each event.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To provide feedback to the Events Working group of the deliberations and concerns of the Corporate Services Committee on the budget strain that the Overtime budget was facing and to seek their assistance in limiting additional overtime pressures;**
  - 2. To review the overtime budget at Corporate Services in February when the council would have more certainty over the scope of other codes in 191 to cover the overtime budget.**

## **12203 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS**

Members received the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for April, May, June and July 2022.

The amount of £10,000 in the Liquidity Manager was queried, it was highlighted that although the sum was not required to be a specific amount, a sum of money was transferred to ensure there were enough funds for any outgoing payments when the council's accounts company completed the accounts and made payments.

DJJ.



- Resolved:**
- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for April, May, June and July 2022;**
  - 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed and dated by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the Council's RFO.**

#### **12204 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS**

Members received a list of payments for the period April to July 2022 (inclusive).

*Members received this report for information.*

#### **12205 INVESTMENT REPORT**

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.

Members queried the dividend yield falling and the impact this had on the councils return. The Town Clerk agreed to send the CCLA quarterly Property Fund reports to members of this committee.

*Members received this report for information.*

#### **12206 PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD REPAYMENTS ANNUAL REPORT**

In accordance with the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference and Financial Regulations, Members were presented with an annual report which provided detail on the council's loans including current value, repayments and early settlement options as they stood as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

**Resolved: To note the Public Works Loan Board Repayments Annual Report.**

#### **12207 INSURANCE CLAIMS**

Members were advised that there had been no insurance claims from the 1st June 2022 to 31st August 2022.

Members noted that there had been some vandalism across the parks, and requested clarification as to whether this would go through the councils insurers, it was confirmed that these would be dealt with by the insurance company.

*Members received this report for information.*

*D.J.J.*

**12208 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS, INVESTMENTS STRATEGY & INVESTMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

This committee was required to review the Town Councils Banking Arrangements, Investments Strategy & Investments on an annual basis.

Following the recent internal audit, the Internal Auditor raised concerns in regard to single person authorisation for online payments. Currently one person has full access to all online payment services. The Internal Auditor raised this issue and recommended the Town Council consider introducing a dual authorisation payment method, as a high priority. Members were provided with a report.

In addition to this the Banking Arrangements, Investments Strategy & Investment Arrangements policy had been updated to include reference of investments being placed in CCLA or PSDF (Public Sector Deposit Fund) accounts. Members were advised of an amendment as highlighted in section 2.3 (iv) of the policy.

Members suggested some further amendments within the document.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To recommend to Town Council that the Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements policy be approved.**
  - 2. To support the upgrade to the Town Councils banking arrangements.**

**12209 INTERNAL AUDIT PLANNING, REPORTING & REVIEW POLICY AND INTERNAL AUDIT SPECIFICATION**

Historically this document had been presented annually at a full Council meeting. Moving forward, it was thought that this policy should be added to the Policy Review list in order that this Committee had sight of it, for comment, before being presented to Council. Members received a copy of the approved document. There had been no changes in legislation therefore, it was suggested that it remained suitable and fit for purpose. Members of this Committee were asked to consider the Internal Audit Planning, Reporting & Review Policy and Internal Audit Specification and make a recommendation to Town Council for approval.

- Resolved:** **To recommend to Town Council that the Internal Audit Planning, Reporting & Review Policy and Internal Audit Specification be approved.**

**12210 WORKING SAFELY WITH CORONAVIRUS POLICY**

Members received a draft policy on Working Safely with Coronavirus. This policy had been adapted from a version provided by the town councils HR consultant. It had been shared with all staff with an opportunity for staff to feedback with any comments and questions. Two questions were raised, both of these questions were referred to HR

QJJ.



for their advice and both staff members have confirmed they have received satisfactory responses. Members were requested, if agreeable, to recommend that this policy be presented to Town Council at the meeting to be held on the 3rd October 2022, for adoption, to allow staff to have suitable guidance in time for the Autumn/Winter season. For information, staff had also received an up-to-date risk assessment.

Members requested some amendments to be made within the policy.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Working Safely with Coronavirus Policy.**

#### **12211 MENOPAUSE POLICY**

Members of this committee were requested to consider supporting the introduction of a new policy which sets out how the Town Council could support employees who were undergoing the menopause.

Members requested some amendments to be made within the policy.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Menopause Policy.**

#### **12212 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND MODEL SCHEME OF PUBLICATION**

The Town Council was required to review annually the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and the Model Publication Scheme. These documents were last reviewed by this committee on the 21st September 2021.

Members received a copy of the approved document. There had been no changes in legislation therefore, it was suggested that it remained suitable and fit for purpose.

Members of this Committee were asked to consider the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and Model Publication Scheme and make a recommendation to Town Council for approval.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and the Model Publication Scheme be approved.**

#### **12213 LATE PAYMENTS & BAD DEBTS POLICY**

Members of this Committee were required to annually review the Town Councils Late Payments and Bad Debts Policy and make a recommendation to Town Council for its approval.

There had been no amendments made to this policy and therefore was considered suitable and fit for purpose.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Late Payments and Bad Debts Policy be approved.**

*DTS.*

**12214 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME: STATEMENT OF LOCAL DISCRETIONS**

Members received the Town Councils Local Government Pension Scheme: Statement of Local Discretions.

Councillor J Carroll and Councillor S Goodchild declared an interest in this item as both were in receipt of a Local Government Pension.

This item was deferred to the next meeting for consideration.

**12215 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

- Staffing matter
- Ongoing staffing matter

**Resolved:** In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**12216 STAFFING MATTER**

Members received a report that in part was presented to the Personnel Sub-Committee at the meeting held on the 11th July 2022. Members were being requested to support the next steps as detailed in the report.

**Resolved:** To support the next steps as set out.

**12217 ONGOING STAFFING MATTER**

Members received a report relating to this item.

**Resolved:** To agree the recommendation set out in the report.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.17pm**

**Dated this 28<sup>th</sup> day of November 2022**

*D. J. Jones*

**Chairman**