
MINUTES of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING OF STANLEY TOWN COUNCIL held at Stanley Civic Hall on Tuesday 11th June 2019 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr J Stephenson* Cllr G Binney** Cllr H Clark Cllr M Davinson
Cllr J Kane Cllr B Nair Cllr J Nicholson Cllr D Tully

*Chairman **Vice-Chairman

OFFICERS: Alan Shaw (Town Clerk)
Alan Tubman (Deputy Town Clerk)
James Harper (Operations Manager)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Gordon Fletcher (Internal auditor)

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Hampson, Cllr D Marshall, Cllr J McMahon, Cllr L Timbey were accepted by Committee.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

20 PROCEDURAL AND APPROPRIATE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

The Town Clerk reminded Members to turn their mobile phones off or switch them to silent and informed them that meeting was being recorded by the Council.

The Town Clerk requested consideration be given that the meeting moves back one week, to the third Tuesday of the month, to allow time for preparation of minutes from working groups which take place in the first week of the month. **MOVED** by Cllr Davinson for full Council to agree.

21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

22 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr M Davinson, seconded by Cllr G Binney and **RESOLVED** that Committee **APPROVE** the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes meeting held on 15th May 2019. The Chair signed them as a correct record.

23 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Gordon Fletcher presented his final internal audit report for 2018/19. He reported 12 audits had been carried out during the financial year of which 9 had received full assurance and 3 substantial assurance. Of the 3 receiving substantial assurance he was happy controls had been put in place and is to revisit the payroll, in 2019/20.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Davinson and seconded by Cllr Stephenson that an internal audit be carried out on the Strategic Grants Procedure, first round, in August 2019 prior to commencement of the second round as a review of procedures to ensure any necessary improvements are made for round two.

The Committee **ACCEPTED** the report from the Internal Auditor.

24 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT & BANK RECONCILIATION

It was proposed by Cllr M Davinson, seconded by Cllr J Kane and **RESOLVED** that the Committee **APPROVE** the payment of accounts and **NOTE** the Bank Reconciliation for May 2019.

25 WORKING GROUPS

The Town Clerk gave the following updates:

- (i) **Policy Working Group** - The policy working group continues to make progress with the policies. A register of all policies is being updated and policies will be ordered and numbered for easy reference. Policies are available to all staff either through the staff dropbox folder or by way of hard copy. Officer member protocol is to be reviewed and DCC. The policy working group will commence work on reviewing the risk register after recess in September.
- (ii) **Events Working Group**
 - (a) *Armed Forces Day* - Due to concerns over the potential lack of attendance from serving armed forces, additional attractions and entertainment has been arranged for the event. This means the budget for armed forces day event is currently in excess of what was initially projected, however it is still anticipated that the overall events will remain on budget.
 - (b) *Miners Sunday* - Progress has been made on the Miners Sunday event and seems on track.
 - (c) *Christmas Event* - Planning has started on the Christmas event, it is planned this year to not provide the additional market stalls, and to put on a show for the residents which climaxes with the lighting of the Christmas tree. Details of the show are to be made available for members to view. Officers have had report that the current electric Christmas tree will likely require extensive servicing if it is to be used again this year. Subsequently the decision was taken by the group to not go ahead with the tree and look for a new location for a real tree. DCC

have been contacted regarding a potential location in front street. Members requested the old tree is offered to lighting companies for potential reuse.

- (iii) **Civic Hall Working Group** - The group has now split their meetings into 'Operations' led by James Harper and 'Structural' lead by Alan Tubman. The 'Operations' meeting discussed:
- (a) *Publicity* of the hall and events - All comms and publicity has been centralised into one budget. The Civic Hall staff have been working with Creo to build up design collateral and develop the website, and promotional literature. This could provide a significant cost/implication to the overall budget reducing what is available for other Town Council comms. It was decided to look to potentially fund this works from sources in addition to the allocated coms budget. Boosting facebook posts is done only occasionally, though this has proved a cost effective way of advertising, events.
 - (b) *Decoration* - the group had discussed carrying out some decoration to the Civic Hall in particular the Bamburgh Suite and Theatre to make it more marketable in the short term. It is also planned to get quotes for upgraded blinds and sound system in the Cinema/Theatre.

The Committee **NOTED** the minutes of the Policy Working group and **RECOMMENDED** that the Council approve the following proposal of the Civic Hall Working Group:

1. Funds be released to enable the Bamburgh Suite to be redecorated (including new carpet and curtains)
2. Authority be granted to redecorate the main hall;
3. Quotes be obtained to upgrade the PA system in the Hall for surround sound for cinema and blackout curtains.

26 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC *

*Recording of proceedings was stopped at this point.

It was **RESOLVED** that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Justification for excluding the public and press from consideration of the following items: General Data Protection Act (Item 15); Legal Privilege (Item 16)

27 STRATEGIC GRANTS POLICY

The Town Clerk went through the full list of grant applications giving a brief comment on the decisions made by the panel in each case. It was discussed that, some applications had not been of the highest quality with all the relevant information provided. It was agreed that support could be offered to groups in the future to assist with their applications. The successful applicants will be notified from week commencing 17th June, including any requests for any additional

information required and feedback will be offered to unsuccessful applicants who may be able to reapply in the second round of applications.

The Town Clerk explained that while some applications had not been fully completed within the full detail of the stated policy requirements the Town Council still had the authority to approve these applications under sections 137 & 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 and in line with the Town Councils stated pledges within the medium term plan.

Cllr Davinson requested a mapping exercise be carried out to look at which areas may require more support with applications.

Cllr Binney stated that some applications had not been refused, but deferred requesting further information.

It was **RESOLVED** that the applicants are informed and grants awarded from week commencing 17th June.

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DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16th July 2019, 6.30pm, Stanley Civic Hall.