

Finance and General Purposes Committee
24th May 2021 7.30pm
Meeting held online at zoom – meeting as a
temporary working group



Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this Committee.

Present:

Councillor J Moody (Chair)
Councillor P Siggers (Vice Chair)
Councillor A Dearlove
Councillor A Sandiford
Councillor V Haval
Councillor D Chandran
Councillor A Thompson

Officer: Mrs J Wheeler, Town Clerk

Also present:

Cllr D Macdonald (Leader); Cllr E Hards (Deputy Leader) and two members of the public.

1. Nominations for the appointment of Chair to the Committee

Cllr P Siggers proposed Cllr J Moody as Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. There were no further nominations and Cllr J Moody was elected.

2. Nominations for the appointment of Vice Chair to the Committee

Cllr A Sandiford proposed Cllr P Siggers as the Vice Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. There were no further nominations and Cllr P Siggers was elected.

3. Apologies

There were no apologies.

4. Declarations of interests

None declared.

5. To review the terms of reference for the F&GP Committee

It was proposed by Cllr J Moody and seconded by Cllr P Siggers and RESOLVED to approve the terms of reference with no further amendments.

6. To approve the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 26th April 2021

It was proposed by Cllr J Moody and seconded by Cllr P Siggers and RESOLVED to approve the minutes as an accurate record.

7. Questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item

There were no questions.

8. To note the end of year unaudited accounts as at 31st March 2021

The end of year accounts were noted without comment. It was clarified that the sums owed by the PCN needed to be removed as they had received manual invoices. Training was needed to help staff be able to perform this action. This will be rectified in the May accounts.

9. To review the accounts and payments for April 2021

The accounts and payments for April 2021 were noted.

10. To note the Asset Register

The Town Clerk circulated spread sheets detailing the lists of Council assets. It was noted that the £293,500 related to the future disposal of the old pavilion at Edmonds Park. Valuations for insurance purposes were conducted in November 2020 on all DTC buildings. It is not necessary to adjust the insurance cover but it is necessary to reflect the revised value in Box 9 of the AGAR. The Committee AGREED to this adjustment to show the value of the Town Council assets.

11. To consider the attached strategic risk assessment

The Councillors were invited to page through the risk assessment and come back to the Town Clerk with any comments; suggestions or amendments.

12. To appoint two Councillors to work on the next stage of the Edmonds Park Pavilion project

It had been agreed that whilst the planning application was being consulted on and determined it would be prudent to review the quotes given by the architect for grounds works. It was noted that there may be the opportunity to make cost savings with the grounds works required for the splash park. There would be two Councillors from the Property & Facilities Committee; two from the Environment & Climate Committee and two from Finance & General Purposes Committee. It was proposed by Cllr J Moody and seconded by Cllr P Siggers and RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Councillor J Moody and Councillor D Chandran would join this working group.

13. To note the progress report on items not on this agenda

The Progress Report was discussed in detail and the projects would continue to be worked on by Council Officers. The Town Clerk would share the professional report on the Ladygrove football pitches for their information. The Property and Facilities Manager will visit the Fleet Meadow Community Centre and report back on the condition of this building. The Town Clerk would report back after the next CCTV Management meeting in June on the additional camera.

14. Exclusion of the press and public

RESOLVED: pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

15. To consider the report and Officer recommendations for the replacement of the telephones at the Town Council offices and Civic Hall

The Chair up-dated the new Councillors on the background to this project. The Chair was concerned over the risk of using Office 365 and losing internet and phones at the same time. Cllr D Chandran stated that the Council should secure as fast a connection as possible and as long lasting as possible. He felt that Office 365 can be very usable, accessible and reliable. It was AGREED to refresh the quotes and bring this back to the agenda in June.

16. To consider the advice for assistance with procurement of tenders for Willowbrook and the options open to the Council

A lot of papers were circulated from different consultants but the view was that the papers were not comparable. Cllr V Haval said that there were some common themes amongst the information but the Council need to decide what it is we want them to do. It was agreed that the Council needs to specify a brief against which the consultants could provide like for like quotes. This item would go to the Property & Facilities Committee on Wednesday and these comments would be passed on.

17. To consider the quotes for decoration of Willowbrook

Three quotes were presented to the Committee. The Councillors requested further information such as a detailed method statement; the brand of paint and whether they will be using a roller or brush before they could make a decision. One quote also included renovating the doors on the boiler room. This item would be deferred to the June meeting.

18. To discuss the manning of the Didcot Civic Hall

The Town Clerk spoke about the future manning of the Didcot Civic Hall as lockdown eases. The building is too large for one person to host hall users and lock up without support therefore the Town Clerk requested that further recruitment be allowed to ensure the safety of the staff and the building. The Councillors referred the matter to the Property and Facilities Committee and the Personnel and Administration Committee.

Meeting closed at 8.47pm

Signed _____ Chairman Date _____