

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING held on Tuesday 15th January 2019, 7.45 pm at Council's Meeting Room.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Rob Bright (Chairman), Margaret Bussell, Jenny Forbes, Jonathan Samways, and Derek Wailes.

IN ATTENDANCE: Caroline Leet (Clerk)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 0

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Responsibility of

227 **Public Questions**

None.

228. **Apologies for absence**

Cllrs Loveday and Phillips' apologies were received and **resolved; the reasons were accepted.**

229. **To receive Declarations of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda**

None.

230. **To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held 20th November 2018**

The minutes were **approved as an accurate account of the meeting.**

231. **Clerk's Report**

The Clerk's report was received.

a **To receive bank reconciliations for November and December 2018**

Cllr Bright confirmed that the bank reconciliations for the Unity Trust bank account, Public Sector Deposit Fund and the FairFX pre-paid cards for November had been checked by Cllr Bussell and were in order. December's bank reconciliations were ready to be checked. MB

b **Risk assessment (RA): to receive the financial RA for the Council carried out December 2018**

The annual Financial Risk Assessment carried out by Cllrs Bright and Bussell was received; there were no questions.

c **To note: Phone and Broadband arrangements with British Telecom are at a lower rate as of December 2018 (new 2-year contract, monthly saving of £7.40)**

Noted.

d **To note: Unity Trust Bank, rates for paying cash and cheques in to current account have increased as of 5th September (letter dated 13/12/18)**

Noted.

232. **Budget 2018/19**

a **To review the predicted year-end**

The income and expenditure report (dated 9th January) was received and it was noted that the report was 78% through the year. Cllr Bright recapped on a few differences from the budget, but there was nothing unexpected. The net difference on budget to projected income and expenditure was £1,175; the budgeted carry-

forward reserves for budget 2019/20 were £34,999. There were no questions.

233. **To approve and make recommendation to the full Council the annual pay increments (as budgeted)**

19:54 The Clerk was asked to leave the meeting.

20:28 The Clerk re-joined the meeting.

Members had **agreed to recommend to the full Council that the proposed annual increments are accepted.**

It was noted that the Clerk's appraisal was still outstanding.

RB/BP

234. **To review the draft budget and precept for 2019/20 (published December 2018 on website)**

Members reviewed the 2019/20 budget. Cllr Bright said that using the revised payment increment rates (National Association of Local Council (NALC) rates published December 2018), he had prepared an updated spreadsheet for salary projections. This indicated that the budget for staffing (4000) was insufficient to meet the increase. He proposed increasing this to £37k; this would not include a contingency for any additional hours and proposed a blanket ban on all overtime hours. It was noted that 2018/19 overtime contingency hours had been used up and there was currently no overtime permitted. Members discussed the published draft budget and **agreed to recommend the following changes to the full Council:**

- Staffing (4000) – to increase to £37k to allow for the annual pay increments and with not additional hours
- Facilities Maintenance (4024) – to increase from £200 to £300 to allow for annual electrical testing
- Dog bins (4230) – to increase from £650 to £720 in view of the recent revised invoice for the 2017/18 collections which was £689
- John Pears General (4300) and John Pears Cleaning (4301) – to combine the budget into one code, still totally £200
- John Pears/Cleaning staffing (4302) – to increase from £1,300 to £2,000

This would impact on budget income and expenditure a net deficit of £804; (the draft published budget was a surplus of £1,866).

Referring to the carry-forward general reserves, Cllr Bright said that the recommended guidelines for the general reserves are usually within the range of three to twelve months of gross expenditure. With the proposed changes to the draft budget the end-of-year carry-forward reserves would be £32,180.

Looking at the precept (1076), the published draft budget recommendation was to increase from £67,000 to £68,000; this was an overall 1.4%, or a Band D yearly increase of 0.31p (total Band D £89.84 to £90.15). A majority vote **agreed to recommend to the full Council to maintain the precept increase at £68,000.**

Clerk

235. **To receive an update on General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

Cllr Wailes reported that he and the Clerk had completed a review of the audit which had highlighted a couple of action points:

- To create a business continuity plan for data.

Currently, data was stored on an external hard drive backed-up onto a portable external hard drive which was stored in a lockable safe. However, if there was a fire, the magnetic information would be damaged. Cloud storage would be

investigated.

- Lockable storage

The office would benefit additional lockable storage cabinet/s.

Cllr Wailes also mentioned using project management software which could help with performance efficiency and would allow subscribers/councillors to access; however, this raised other issues such as data protection with document attachments. He said he would look in to this further.

Finally, Cllr Wailes suggested that the GDPR agenda item was no-longer needed as a regular item. It was proposed **to recommend to the full Council to carry out the annual GDPR audit in the same period as the financial risk assessment.**

DW/Clerk

236. **Any Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda**

None.

237. **To resolve Members of the public to leave the meeting for item 12 *in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted pursuant to s.1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960***

This was not necessary.

238. **Personnel: To consider the recruitment process for Cleaner of John Pears Pavilion and the Council facilities**

The Cleaner's resignation was received. It was noted that she had worked for the Council for over 10-years (joined in 2007) and as a token of appreciation for long-service, members **recommended to the full Council to make a gift of £100 (either in cash or vouchers) using the Chairman's allowance (4011).**

Clerk

Members discussed the cleaning job and hours and whether to recruit a cleaner on a self-employed basis. The current monthly hours ranged between seven and 12 hours per month. It was noted that a cleaner on a self-employed basis could be at a higher rate to reflect no paid annual leave or sick pay. If the cleaner was employed the Council would need to allow for annual leave pay and cover any potential sick leave.

Members **agreed to recommend to the full Council to prepare an advert for a Cleaner for 7.5 hours per month on an employed or self-employed basis.**

Clerk

239. **Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 19th March (end-of-year review)

Meeting was closed at 21:10

Chairman.....

Date.....