

# *Kesgrave Town Council*

## **Finance and Governance Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee held on Monday 28th July 2014 at 7.15pm in the Council Chamber.

**Present:** Mr N Beecroft-Smith Mr P Mills  
Mr A Comber Mrs S Ogden  
Mr D Fairbrother Mr C Rayworth (Chairman)

**In attendance:** Mrs L Bennett (Clerk Elect)  
Mr J Ogden  
Mrs S Fairbrother  
1 member of the public

### **1. Apologies**

None. **Later:** Telephone apologies were recorded on the answerphone from Rev R Spittle (7.01pm)

**The Committee were advised that no requests to record the meeting had been received in accordance with the policy adopted at the March 2014 Town Council meeting. No recording therefore would be permitted and anyone found in breach of this would be asked to cease. If they refused to cease it would be within the Chairman's power to ask them to leave the building.**

### **2. Declaration of interests**

Members made verbal declarations, which they have recorded on the form attached at **Annex 1** to the permanent copy of these minutes.

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting held 28th April 2014**

The minutes having been circulated were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman. Not being present at the previous meeting **PMs** and **DF** chose to **abstain** from the vote.

### **4. Matters arising**

A request has been received from Martlesham Parish Council, asking if Kesgrave Town Council have a volunteer willing to be a representative on the Bike Trails Committee. As none of the Members present came forward, this request will be taken to the August Full Council meeting.

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### **An adjournment was declared:**

The member of the public present did not wish to speak.

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### **5. Auditor Checks**

#### **a. Internal Auditors Report**

Mr Farthing had been unable, for personal reasons, to undertake his inspection in time for the July meeting, but will be attending the Office at a mutually convenient time. On receipt of his report it will be issued to all Members as soon as possible and then be held on file.

## **b. Members Finance Checks**

- i. The check** The Committee carried out checks to ensure that:–  
Accounting records are up to date  
Income due is collected promptly and fully and is banked without delay  
Interest earning accounts are employed to the maximum  
Tax and NI procedures for staff are properly operated  
Cash Book and Bank Statement totals agree

## **c. Effectiveness of Internal Audit**

Members were reminded of the need to consider annually the Effectiveness of Internal Audit as advised in the External Auditors Bulletin. However, the Chairman pointed out these checks had recently been carried out at each F&G meeting. Members agreed to undertake the procedure on this occasion but revert to an Annual review in the future at the July meeting. The External Auditors Bulletin states the Review must cover the following five areas:

- i. Scope of Internal Audit** – has the scope of the Internal Audit been discussed with the Internal Auditor to ensure that the audit covers all the relevant risks areas. It was brought to Members attention that to follow the correct procedure a Committee Member should be present for the initial scoping.
- ii. Independence** – is the Internal Auditor sufficiently independent, unbiased and objective;
- iii. Competence** – does the Internal Auditor have sufficient knowledge to be able to carry out the Audit;
- iv. Relationships** – are the relevant responsibilities of Members, Clerk/RFO and Internal Auditor defined;
- v. Planning and reporting** – is the body aware of a timetable of when the Internal Audit or Audits will take place and when a report, if any, will be reported.

It was **agreed to recommend to Full Council** that procedures are effective and Committee Members are issued with a timetable of when the Internal Audit or Audits will take place.

## **6. Budgetary monitoring report**

The Chairman explained that on this occasion a trial balance has been issued instead of the budget monitoring report. Succession planning and the present work load on staff had not enabled the report to be produced in it's usual format. A copy of the trial balance is attached at **Annex 2** to the permanent copy of these minutes. As it was not possible to make comparisons against budgetary figures the Committee were unable to be fully satisfied that receipts and expenditure were generally within budgetary limits. A question was raised regarding where the payment made to the Library appeared on the report. The Clerk Elect will ascertain under which heading this payment is shown and issue the information to Members. A copy of the budget monitoring report will be issued to Members on completion.

## **7. Reserve Funds**

### **i. Transfers to and from Reserves**

It was **agreed** the transfer of £6,000 to the Election Reserve Fund as per budget.

## **8. Asset Register**

A copy of the Asset Register is attached at **Annex 3** to the permanent copy of these minutes. The entry in the Asset Register for the MJH Pavilion has been adjusted following advice from SALC. Further advice from the External Auditors (BDO) will be sought on how best to include the building at its restated cost. Building contents and sports equipment at the Pavilion will also be reassessed and the figures changed on the Register in due course.

It was also agreed Oak Meadow play equipment will be added to the Register, with an extra column for the Public Open Space in this area once the adoption has been completed.

The notice board located on Ropes Drive has recently been vandalised. An insurance claim is now being processed for a replacement. It was therefore decided not to remove it from the Register.

**The following item is to be taken after item 21, and is minuted there.**

**9. Risk Register**

**a. The Register**

**10. Resolution to exclude the Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**

**The Committee resolved that the public and the press be excluded for consideration of, 9.a.11 Risk Register, Item 11 a and b Staff, and 14 b. MJH Staffing, since publicity would prejudice staff confidentiality, and that these matters be deferred to follow item 21 on the agenda.**

**11. Staff**

**a. Clerks**

**i. Hours**

**ii. Responsible Finance Officer duties**

**iii. Staff contracts and job descriptions**

**b. Late items** None.

**12. Grants**

**a. Grants for consideration**

**i. Arts Project** Two free hall hire sessions at the MJH

**ii. SARS** £225

**iii. CFC Drop In** £800 paid in two instalments. £400 initial payment followed by a further £400 on the production of a report after the first six months.

**Later:** The decision regarding the Arts project is contrary to the manner in which payments for hirings are to be made to provide an Audit trail. This grant will therefore be reconsidered at the August Full Council meeting.

**13. Insurance Cover including New risks**

**a. Millennium Jubilee Hall**

The insurance cover has now been adjusted to include the alterations and extension to the MJH.

**14. MJH**

Mr Rayworth, as Project Manager, expanded on his MJH Cost Monitoring Report which is held on file. The Committee noted the project build has now been completed on time and under budget. The draft final account had been received and is £8,400 under budget for the build only. It was also highlighted £106,000 has been raised from outside Loans, Grants and Donations towards the project which the Committee agreed was an exceptional amount. Mr Fairbrother congratulated Mr Rayworth on this achievement. He had not been supportive of Mr Rayworth's appointment as Project Manager for the build but had stated he would be the first to congratulate him if the build was a success. The Committee fully endorsed his comments.

The Project Manager stated much of the praise should go to the Contractor, Mixbrow and all those companies involved in the project who had worked closely together and enabled the work to run smoothly and expeditiously.

**a. Hiring Arrangements including Finance** Mr Rayworth explained initial booking enquiries are to come to the Town Council Office for the staff to take contact details. A person responsible for bookings yet to be employed and having the use of an assigned mobile phone will then deal with the request. Once hirings are up and running, it is hoped this will have a minimal impact on the staff workload.

Mr Fairbrother mentioned it had been brought to his attention the Army Cadets have stated they had been advised they would not be welcome in the MJH once the building is re-opened. The Committee was informed there is email evidence to support an invitation had been sent for the Cadets to view the plans at the office. A response had not been received. The office had tried to make contact on a number of occasions and an appointment had been arranged made for a Cadet representative to attend the office, however no-one arrived.

**The following item is to be taken after item 21 and is minuted there.**

**b. Staffing for MJH**

**c. Pursuit of reparation regarding drains on original build** Following problems with the connection to the mains drains during the alterations to the building, contact had been made with those involved in the original build. A site visit had been held. Practical completion had taken place in June 2002 and would potentially be within days of the time limit to make a possible claim. The agreement had been signed "under seal". It was therefore proposed and **agreed** that, with the land owners backing and under the guidance of the architect, a letter will be sent to the contractor asking for compensation towards the costs involved in correcting the original work as this had not been carried out to the required standard. The letter will be sent to the Committee for comment/approval but with such a tight time constraint the intention is for this to be sent at the earliest opportunity.

**15. Cedarwood Green budget** Mr Rayworth explained he had originally asked for this item to be placed on the agenda for a Reserve Fund to be included in next years budget making provision for potential work that may be necessary in this area. It was explained there is £2,000 available in the Contingencies Reserve and a further possible £5,000 that had been put aside for the fencing at Oak Meadow. This funding is now not being required as SCDC have agreed to include the fencing as part of the adoption plan for this area. **It was agreed to recommend** to Full Council to accept that the £7,000 be transferred to Cedarwood Green Reserve Fund. **Later:** The Clerk will advise Full Council on how best to deal with this provision.

**16. Check list for monthly payments** At a recent Chief Executive/Town Clerks meeting attended by the Clerk and Clerk Elect, they had been informed Framlingham Town Council have a system for counter checking the on-line payments. It was considered this type of system could be beneficial to Kesgrave and the Committee agreed the Clerk will investigate how this procedure was accomplished.

Mr Rayworth stated he had suggested the bank card which is kept with the PINsentry device should be moved to a separate location ensuring maximum security.

**17. Computer Hardware and Software** Discussion took place regarding Mr Comber's proposals. The Clerk Elect had received clarification from SALC regarding Mr Comber undertaking the maintenance of the IT equipment, and read out the email which states *"there is no reason why he should not provide this service if Council wish him to do this. He would have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest under para 4 (1) of the Suffolk Code of Conduct and would have to register it with the Monitoring Officer and declare it at any meeting where the service came up on the agenda"*

Mr Comber expanded on his proposals for the IT changes at the Office and MJH. A copy of his report is held on file.

**Mr Comber left the room for the following item.**

Following discussion it was **agreed** to:

- progress with the lap top but try to find a slightly cheaper model;
- keep the mouse but do not include the monitor at present and review the situation if necessary;
- include a student package, whichever programme is best suited.

It was also agreed the specifications suggested for the youth club requirements is correct and it will be prudent to consider the after care.

It was **agreed** to progress the purchase of the items for the MJH as soon as possible.

**Mr Comber came back into the room**

Mr Comber was informed the Committee will recommend to Full Council to accept his proposed maintenance agreement which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Mr Comber accepted the terms offered.

## **18. Photocopier replacement**

Mr Fairbrother gave a brief update on the findings carried out to date. However, Members being aware that a model can be out of date as soon as it is purchased, have chosen to carry out further investigations. Mr Fairbrother will compile information on three different makes of copier and bring to the October meeting to be considered before the contract expires on the current office model. **Later:** This is to be revised to bring to the Full Council September meeting.

## **19. Kesgrave News Article suggestions**

Suggestions put forward included:

Grant for CFC drop in at the MJH on a Friday  
Supporting SARS  
Opening of the MJH

**20. To receive such other communications or matters of sufficient urgency and importance that the Chairman will allow for discussion (to be notified to the Clerk by 12.00 noon on the day of the meeting)**

**21. Date of next meeting 24th November 2014  
The next Full Council Meeting will be 11th August 2014.**

**The Members of the Public left and the Committee were able to consider the following.**

## **9. Risk Register**

**a. The Register** The Risk Register was discussed, and amendments made to:

- Item 11, Staff resignations (mass walkout), “likelihood” changed to 3 (possible) “impact” changed to 4 (major);
- Item 10.e, Photocopier failure was also discussed and it was agreed to rate this “likelihood” 5 (almost certain) with an “impact” 4 (major).

Members agreed to take Item 18, MJH build off the Register as the building works are now complete and was replaced by a new item. Councillor Resignation. It was agreed this should be added to the list with the “likelihood” being 2 (Unlikely) and the “impact” being 3 (moderate)

A copy is attached at **Annex 4** to the permanent copy of these minutes.

#### 11. Staff

##### a. Clerks

i. **Hours for 2013/14** The Assistant Clerk gave details of the average hours worked by the Clerks to date.

	Contracted hours	Actual hours worked
Mrs V R Read	<b>34.00</b>	<b>26.00 total hours over to date</b>
Mrs J Francis	<b>26.00</b>	<b>23.00 total hours over to date</b>
Mrs L Bennett	<b>22.50 to Sept, 28.00 to Dec and 34 thereafter</b>	<b>2.5 total hours over to date</b>
Mrs J Abbott	<b>16</b>	<b>Nil over to date</b>

The Committee accepted that all efforts had been made to keep hours within contracted hours, but were disappointed these had not been entirely successful. With the Clerk acting as PA to the Project Manager on the MJH alterations and extensions, her average time spent on dealing with this project had been agreed for some of the overtime payments due to again be taken from the MJH Reserve fund. The Clerk will prepare figures for consideration at the August Council meeting of the hours worked on the MJH project so far this financial year.

ii. **Responsible Finance Officer duties** No changes to update.

iii. **Staff contracts and job descriptions** It was decided Annual Appraisals must be carried out on all staff and put on the calendar for October.

Members also discussed the need to have all Clerks present at all meetings and **to recommend to Full Council** that from October only two Clerks need to be present at a Full Town Council Meetings, and possibly bring forward on the agenda the financial issues to enable the Deputy Clerk to leave the meeting on the completion of such matters in order to minimise her hours at meetings.

#### 14. MJH

b. **Staffing for MJH** Mrs Ogden and Mr Rayworth had recently carried out interviews for the caretaker position, with one of the applicants being outstanding. It was explained the hours offered for this position did not allow him the opportunity to consider accepting the post. A way in which to expand the hours/work offered to include other areas, such as handyman/litter picker duties was discussed. It was **agreed** if 30 hours per week can be sourced, a business case can be put forward to the applicant which would then allow the him to consider taking the position. This will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.03pm

Chairman