

# *Kesgrave Town Council*

## **Finance and Resources Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on Monday 2nd December 2013 at 7.15pm in the Council Chamber.

**Present:** Mr Beecroft-Smith (Chairman) Mr P Mills Rev R Spittle  
Mr A Comber Mrs S Ogden Mr C Rayworth  
Mr G Lynch

**In attendance:** Mr M Amoss  
Mr J Ogden  
Mrs V R Read (Clerk to the Town Council)  
Mrs L Bennett (Assistant Clerk to the Council)  
Mr M Percy (MYP) – arrived 7.19pm

### **1. Apologies**

None.

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

Mr Comber declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 7, 2013/2014 Draft Budget with regard to the website maintenance as the Website manager, and remained in the meeting while consideration and discussion of the matter took place.

Mr Comber declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 7, 2013/2014 Draft Budget with regard to the Market as a Director of Rupert Fison Centre and as a Kesgrave Scout Group Leader, and remained in the meeting while consideration and discussion of the matter took place.

Mr Comber declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 7, 2013/2014 Draft Budget with regard to Kesgrave News as Chairman of the Committee and remained in the meeting while consideration and discussion of the matter took place.

Mr Mills declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 7, 2013/2014 Draft Budget with regard to financial assistance to Community Services as Chairman of the Spark Committee, and remained in the meeting while consideration and discussion of the matter took place.

Mr Rayworth declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in item 17, MJH, Project Manager Report, being the Project Manager, and remained in the meeting during consideration and discussion of the matter took place.

Reverend Spittle declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 7, 2013/2014 Draft Budget with regard to Kesgrave Youth Club being a Youth Worker Employer, and remained in the meeting while consideration and discussion of the matter took place.

Reverend Spittle declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 7, 2013/2014 Draft Budget with regard to the Help Centre, being the Chairman, and remained in the meeting while consideration and discussion of the matter took place.

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting held 29th July 2013**

These minutes having been circulated were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### 4. Matters arising

##### a. Standing Orders

A new model set of Standing Orders has been received and will be brought to Full Council in January.

##### b. Council Office Building Window replacement

Some of the windows have now been replaced, with the rest being completed in the New Year. Already staff have noticed a significant difference in noise levels and the drafts.

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#### An adjournment was declared:

The one member of the public present, asked for consideration to be given within the draft budget for money to be set aside for speeding issues, especially on Ropes Drive.

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#### 5. Audit Checks

##### a. Internal Auditors Report

Mr Farthing had been unable, for personal reasons, to submit a report for the July meeting, but visited the office in September and November and undertook checks on both occasions. Therefore two reports were available and précised by the Clerk. The reports are held on file.

##### b. Members Finance Checks

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
- and the Chairman signed the records accordingly.

##### c. Risk Register – Annual Review

Members considered the Risk Register and agreed changes should be made at items 2.d and 18. The revised Register is attached at **Annex 1** to the permanent copy of these minutes.

##### d. Effectiveness of Internal Audit – Annual Review

Members were reminded of the need to consider annually the Effectiveness of Internal Audit as advised in the External Auditors Bulletin. This states that 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 bought to Members attention that to follow a 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.

- vi. **Councillor rota** The Clerk apologised for this item being included on the agenda, the rota having been dispensed with in 2012.

## **6. Budgetary monitoring report**

The October 30th report was issued at the meeting and is attached at **Annex 2** to the permanent copy of these minutes. The Committee having examined the reports, were satisfied that Receipts and Expenditure are broadly in line with budgetary limits. The layout of this report has incorporated changes requested by the Committee but will change again when the 2014/15 Budget is in place.

## **7. 2014/2015 Draft Budget**

The Committee had been issued with copies of the prepared Draft Budget. The Clerk explained there were a number of figures which had already been identified for adjustment and that further changes may be necessary. It is quite possible the Budget will need to be considered at both the December and January Full Council meetings before a Precept is agreed.

The Committee considered the Budget page by page and the changes made are documented at **Annex 3** to these minutes (pages 1-12, with the necessary calculation adjustments on the subsequent pages).

It was noted:

- there is some funding still being made available from Central Government in compensation for the housing benefit changes but this is on a sliding scale;
- the £50,000 loading for the MJH is in its second year;
- provision should be made to enable the Town Council to take responsibility for such issues that are divested from the higher tiers.

The adjusted **Draft Budget will be taken to Full Council for consideration.**

## **8. Transfer of Reserve Funds**

It was **agreed to recommend to Full Council** that with the new play equipment being installed on Oak Meadow a new Reserve Fund needs to be set up to establish a clear Audit trail for the payments.

## **9. 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 Item 11 Staff, Hours monitoring report and Succession planning, since publicity would prejudice staff confidentiality, and that these matters be deferred to follow item 21 on the agenda.**

The following item was taken after item 22 and is minuted there.

## **10. Staff**

- a. **Hours monitoring report**
- b. **Succession planning**

## **11. Grants**

- a. **4YP Suffolk Young People's Health Project £100**
- b. **Kesgrave Friendship Club Nil**

**The Committee resolved that in accordance with its powers under Sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, it should incur expenditure with respect to grants to a above which, in the opinion of the Committee is in the interest of the area or its inhabitants, is cost effective and within budget.**

## **12. Insurance Cover including New Risks**

The benches on Pergola Piece have been added to the Policy and the Clerk will be in contact with Zurich to arrange for changes to be made as the MJH project progresses.

## **13. Asset register**

Members considered and accepted the Asset Register, which also denotes those items which are not covered by insurance because their replacement value is £250 or less. On completion of the installation of the play equipment at Oak Meadow, these items will have to be assessed and added to the register. A copy is attached at **Annex 4** to the permanent copy of these minutes.

## **14. Five Year Plan/Succession Planning**

This was covered, for the main part, at Item 10 and is minuted there.

## **15. Model Publication Scheme**

The Committee were reminded that Policies already in place will be looked at over the coming months however Filming and recording the Council proceedings (Item 16) must take precedence.

## **16. CiLCA recommendations for meeting procedures**

Mrs Bennett advised the Committee on the following which she had learned when attending the CiLCA training.

- Adjournment minuting: Advice from NALC is that the adjournment does not need to be minuted. Names and addresses of speakers should not be recorded, with minuting restricted to items brought to the public forum, which Councillors have been asked to discuss or consider;
- Filming of meetings where it is suggested a Policy should be put in place. With Councils supporting the principles of openness and transparency NALC have suggested an extension to a Media policy to cover the filming and recording of meetings would be beneficial with prior written consent given to the intention to film, record or photograph at a meeting. It was noted SCDC have also been discussing this issue and a copy of their policy has been obtained. This and the model from NALC will be used to prepare a Policy for KTC to adopt as soon as possible.

It was **agreed**, these two issues will be taken to Full Council for discussion.

## **17. MJH**

Mr Rayworth, as Project Manager, reported a difficulty had been identified with the specification of the steel works in place in the original building. Structural Engineers are establishing the effects of this before tenders can be issued, hence the delay which is outside the control of the Project Manager. However an article is being submitted for January Kesgrave News promoting the availability of the building for hire in the second half of 2014.

## **18. Photocopier replacement**

The Clerk explained the Photocopier lease expires in the last quarter of the coming financial year and a replacement will be needed. She asked that Members with some expertise in IT form a working party to consider and investigate the alternatives of buying or leasing. The Committee agreed to discuss the formation of a working party at the next Council meeting.

**19. Youth Club investigations**

The Clerk explained the way forward for the Youth Club need to be investigated. The alternatives open to Council are an Unincorporated Charitable Association, an Incorporated Charitable Organisation or a Social Enterprise Group. She suggested a Working party be formed to consider which would be the best set-up for Kesgrave and to take a recommendation to Full Council. The Committee agreed to discuss the formation of a working party at the next Council meeting.

**20. Kesgrave News article suggestions**

It was suggested articles should be submitted for the January issue on:

- the successful Children's Evening;
- the Persimmon presentation and the lateness KTC had notice of this.

**21. To receive such other communications or matters of sufficient urgency and importance that the Chairman will allow for discussion**

None.

**22. Date of next meeting 28th April 2014**

The next Full Council Meeting will be held 16th December 2013.

**The Members of the Public left.**

**10. Staff**

**a. Hours monitoring report**

The Clerk gave details of the average hours worked by the Clerks in the current financial year.

	Contracted hours	Average hours worked
Mrs V R Read	<b>34.00</b>	<b>34.56</b>
Mrs J Francis	<b>26.00</b>	<b>28.77</b>
Mrs L Bennett	<b>22.50 to Sept and 28.00 ff</b>	<b>Please see below</b>
Mrs J Abbott	<b>10</b>	<b>10.07</b>

With the formula used by the Clerks to check on their average hours a true average for Mrs Bennett is difficult to establish at present because of the change during the year. It was recognised with Mrs Read acting as the Project Managers PA and Mrs Bennett currently studying for the CiLCA, hours are difficult to keep within those contracted. The Committee agreed to **recommend to Full Council** that in order for Mrs Bennett to shadow Mrs Read's work her hours should be increased to 34 per week on average until the MJH project has been completed and for a review to be taken at that time. The budget figure to be adjusted accordingly. It was noted that funds are available to cover this expense.

**b. Succession planning**

The Committee considered the future and how and when the Staffing structure will be altered. No specific date is yet set for the Clerk to retire and she expressed her hope to stay in that post until the MJH Project is completed and on a stable footing. She also reiterated she would be happy to take on a less significant staff role and for her experience to still be available by doing so.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.50pm.

**Chairman**