



## Seaford Town Council

### Finance & General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held at **the Council Chamber, 37 Church Street, Seaford**, on **Thursday 1 May 2014** at **7.00pm**

#### **Present:**

Councillor B Burfield (Chairman)

Councillor M Brown (Vice Chairman)

Councillors S Adeniji, P Franklin, T Goodman, S Gauntlett, A Hayder, R Needham and I White.

Mr J Corrigan and Miss G Raeburn – Seaford Town Council

2 members of the public.

The Chairman introduced the Locum Town Clerk, James Corrigan, to the meeting and confirmed that the Council currently has no Responsible Finance Officer at this moment in time.

The Chairman thanked the committee for the active part they have played and support shown during this financial year on behalf of the Town Council.

#### **F&GP 51 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R E Allen and B Warren.

#### **F&GP 52 Minutes**

It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2014 be **APPROVED** and were signed by the Chairman.

#### **F&GP 53 Public Participation**

*Mr Bob Gower Expressed his hope that for item 7 on the agenda the Committee would be supporting the grant application from Sussex Community Rail Partnership.*

Chairman Noted Mr Gower's comment.

#### **F&GP 54 Finance Report**

##### **F&GP 54.1 Receipts, Payments and Bank Reconciliation for February 2014**

Members considered report 184/13.

- i. Cllr Franklin queried the payment for the cutting of the pathways at Sutton Drove Allotments.

Cllr Brown answered that during a recent meeting with the Seaford Allotment and Leisure Garden Society, it was questioned as to the possibility of the gardeners at the allotments helping to cut the pathways as part of a discussion to try and reduce costs.

This query was **NOTED** and will be looked into further.

- ii. Cllr Franklin queried the payment of £236.44 for a Hire-A-Loo at the Allotments (page 7).

Cllr Burfield explained that it is a regular figure in the report but took it as an action to get this item looked into.

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** report 184/13.

#### **F&GP 54.2 Income and Expenditure for the period 1 April 2013 to 28 February 2014**

Members considered report 185/13.

- i. Cllr Franklin wished to congratulate Mrs L Clark, Support Services Manager, for her work on the reports whilst still in training for the role.

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** report 185/13.

#### **F&GP 54.3 Virement Request**

Members considered report 188/13.

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** that £1,750.23 be transferred from the other open spaces cost centre to the Seaford Head Estate cost centre.

### **F&GP 55 Internal Control Review**

#### **F&GP 55.1 First Interim Internal Audit Report for 2013/14 – December 2013**

Members considered report 186/13.

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Internal Auditor's report as detailed in Appendix A of report 186/13 and the subsequent actions taken by officers.

#### **F&GP 55.2 Second Interim Internal Audit Report for 2013/14 – February 2014**

Members considered report 187/13.

- i. Cllr Burfield clarified that the first interim report should have been included in the agenda for the meeting in February, hence why the meeting was now considering two auditor reports.

- ii. Cllr Needham commended the Council systems; given the number of transactions entered to only have two minor errors is an achievement.
- iii. Cllr Burfield reminded the meeting of the recommendations that had come from the Independent Investigation by Sheelagh Douglas in March 2014. The committee will have to give due consideration to the recommendations and the Internal Auditor will be asked to take the recommendations into account in future audits.

Report 187/13 was **NOTED**.

#### **F&GP 56 Grant Application 2013/14**

Members considered report 190/13.

- i. Cllr Adeniji explained that the grant application from Sussex Community Rail Partnership (SCRP) was submitted to help promote and support the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations of the Seaford line on 7 June 2014.
- ii. SCRPs have requested a grant of £500 towards the celebrations.
- iii. There will be a steam train running from London to Brighton and then on to Seaford, with stalls in the station car park. The aim is to attract people to Seaford for the day. The Mayor will be present at the event.
- iv. Cllr Adeniji was to pass on the SCRPs that if needed, there is a PA system at The Base that could be used.
- v. It was **PROPOSED** and **APPROVED** that the committee provide a grant of £500 to SCRPs and delegate authority on this to the Locum Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

#### **F&GP 57 Grant Evidence 2013/14**

Members considered report 191/13

Report 191/13 was **NOTED**.

#### **F&GP 58 HMRC Penalty 2012/13**

Members considered report 189/13.

- i. It was clarified that the payments in question were for an ex-employee of the Council that should have been processed in their final pay check.
- ii. The Locum Town Clerk is to write to HMRC to ensure whether or not a reduction or repayment of this penalty of £604.80 would be available.

- iii. It was questioned whether the Council has a process in place for reclaiming penalties from the employee in question. The Town Clerk said that he has not heard of reclaiming payments due to a vicarious Council error unless it was a deliberate act. If this were the case, a claim could be made via court action.

Report 189/13 and the actions of the officers were **NOTED**.

#### **F&GP 59 New Bank Payment and Collection System**

Members considered report 200/13.

- i. Cllr Adeniji reminded the Chairman that the last meeting, the Town Clerk had said she would look into the possibility of an accounting package that would allow making direct payment to the banking system to save having to duplicate tasks.

It was **AGREED** to sign up to the Co-operative Bank's Finance Director Online.

#### **F&GP 60 Training Reports**

Members considered report 183/13.

- i. Cllr Brown shared the key point he had taken away from his Marketing Your Town workshop; to pick 1 or 2 assets to focus on rather than trying to cover numerous projects. This ties in with the Council's visioning exercise.

Report 183/13 was **NOTED**.

#### **F&GP 61 Staff Matters Update**

Members considered report 192/13.

- i. Cllr Brown wanted to clarify that Gemma Hamilton had left the Council due to being offered a better position in a field she has been aspiring to start a career in. Her resignation was not due to any negativity with the Council.

Members took all 3 points together; report 192/13 was **NOTED** and **ENDORSED** accordingly.

#### **F&GP 62 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

It was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be **EXCLUDED** from the meeting during discussion of the following two items on the agenda, in accordance with provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as the items concerned confidential Council matters.

*The press and public left the meeting at 7.37pm.*

**Extract from the Exempt Minutes:**

**F&GP 63 Hurdis House – Change of Policy**

**F& GP 63.1** Members considered report 198/13.

**F&GP 63.2** It was **APPROVED** to change the Council’s policy regarding the disposal of Hurdis House allowing the Council to lease the building to tenants.

**F&GP 63.3** It was **PROPOSED** and **AGREED** that the committee delegate to the Town Clerk, in consultation with Cllr Paul Franklin and Cllr Mark Brown, to act on behalf of the committee in this matter.

The meeting closed at 8.06pm

Cllr Barry Burfield  
Chairman

DRAFT