

PATCHWAY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance committee meeting held on 12th November 2019 at Callicroft House, Rodway Road, Patchway at 19:00.

Councillors: S Scott (chairman) Mrs E Martin, P Cottrell, K Dando, R Loveridge, B Hopkinson, R Walker.

In attendance: J Turner (Deputy Clerk and RFO)

Members of the Public: None

Members of the public were asked to sign the visitors' book and the Chairman advised every one of the fire-exits and the mustering location at the far end of the side car park. Meeting was informed Cllr Hopkinson was delayed.

12/11/2019-No 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr Shambhu (working away) and Cllr T Scott (working).

12/11/2019-No 2. Declarations of Interest

Any member having a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed should declare it during the meeting as specified in the Code of Conduct required by the Localism Act 2011 Section 27 and should leave the room while the matter was discussed. There were no requests for dispensations.

12/11/2019-No 3. To receive a presentation from the Patchway Festival Committee.

The committee welcomed Sandra Smith and Les Brooks from the Patchway Festival Committee to discuss why they were applying for an increase of grant monies from £3500 to £7000. The committee were pleased that the festival was still thriving and evolving with the modern times. The committee noted that lots of 'one time' grants were given for the 2019 festival, which the committee could not apply for again which mean funds for the 2020 festival could be low. The committee noted that the festival grant would include the grants to Patchway Garden Society and the Festival quizzes. The committee were pleased to note that events would be held throughout the year instead of just in the summer and that most events were low cost or free. The committee agreed to consider the increase in grant for the budget setting process.

12/11/2019-No 4. To approve the minutes of the Finance committee on the 8th October 2019 and to note any issues.

The committee noted that the Deputy Clerk and Accountant had moved items to the correct codes and the year to date for all codes were now correct. The committee also noted that the bank reconciliations to bank statements were not signed last meeting due to the copies not being clean, however this was rectified under this item.

RESOLVED: Unanimously agreed to approve the minutes with the amendment on item 8 to show 'decide' rather than 'decided'.

12/11/2019-No 5. To receive an update from the finance committee working group and updates on the strategic plan.

12/11/2019-No 6. To initiate the budget setting process for 2020/2021.

It was agreed items 5 and 6 were connected and should be considered together.

The committee noted that the chair of Finance and the Deputy Clerk had met to discuss the budget with the Clerk. The Deputy Clerk and the Clerk spent Tuesday with the accountant preparing a very accurate budget. It was noted that the draft budget would be going to Finance, Personnel, Parks and Planning committees in November and then back to Finance committee in December. The committee also noted that once the budget had been set, the chairman and vice-chairman of the finance committee would meet to discuss a three- and five-year plan which would help the council develop a 'vision' for Patchway.

The committee were presented with the budget at the meeting and this draft budget would be circulated to all members. The committee noted that the budget matches the precept and at present would only be a small increase on last year's precept. Questions were raised over inaccuracies of the staff salaries, pension and employer NI contributions, which the Deputy Clerk would investigate with the accountant. The committee noted that the budget for 'Protective Clothing' has moved to a more sophisticated and appropriate budget called 'Staff Uniform'. The cost

of elections was raised and as no invoice for either election had been presented it would be hard to predict what the projected spend would be. The committee noted that the ground rent to South Gloucestershire Council for the land at Coniston Community Centre would be increasing as per the lease agreement.

The committee also noted that regular grants such as 'Patchway Festival' and 'Patchway People' have been moved to the Youth and Community grant heading rather than the other general grant heading. The committee raised concerns over the library contract and the Deputy Clerk confirmed that the library will be coming to speak to council before the budget is set. The committee also asked for the 'dead headings' (ones that contained zero value) to be replaced with a guide of where to look for that item in the new budget headings, which would be actioned.

RESOLVED: To send the draft budget to the Personnel, Parks and Planning committees for review for each of their specific budgets and then return to Finance committee in December with any amendments for review.

12/11/2019-No 7 To consider the proposal for DCK accounting to provide once monthly checks over the financial systems and agree any actions.

The committee noted that no other quotations had been obtained due to DCK already being engaged by the council and are the council's preferred accountant.

RESOLVED: Unanimously agreed to recommend to the Full Council to agree the proposal and the costs associated.

12/11/2019-No 8. To consider the proposal for server migration and agree any actions.

The committee noted that only two quotations had been obtained although numerous companies had been approached.

RESOLVED: Unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council to agree the quotation from IONET Solutions LTD and the costs associated.

12/11/2019-No 9. To consider the proposal for upgrading equipment at Callicroft House and agree any actions, if available.

This item will be deferred to next week's full council meeting.

12/11/2019-No 10. To consider the appointment of an internal auditor and agree any actions.

Cllr S Scott declared an interest and left the room, Cllr B Hopkinson assumed the chair for item 10.

The Deputy Clerk explained the report to the committee and advised that it is good practice to change your internal auditor to ensure a thorough audit is taking place. The committee noted that only two quotations had been obtained despite a third company being asked.

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council that the council engages South Gloucestershire Council on a one-year basis and will review who they use after the audit has taken place. This was voted for with two councillors voting against the motion.

12/11/2019-No 11. To receive an update on the utility searches carried out and the preinstallation requirements for the community centre redevelopment.

This item will be deferred to next week's full council meeting.

12/11/2019-No 12. To receive an update from Cllr Shambhu's internal controls check.

The committee noted the report from Cllr Shambhu for the internal controls check for quarter 3. The check highlighted that the cheque signing process for councillors needs to improve. The committee also noted that any payment schedules should be signed and dated at the meeting they are agreed. Cllr Hopkinson would undertake the check in quarter 4.

12/11/2019-No 13. To receive and consider the monthly summary of income, expenditure and bank reconciliation for October.

RESOLVED: To unanimously agree the monthly summary of income, expenditure and bank reconciliation for October. The cheque for Denmans would be cleared from the system as it is over 11 months old.

12/11/2019-No 14. To receive and consider the monthly summary of accounts for October.

The committee noted that current projections were projecting a £25,000 overspend at least however most of this would have been capital expenditure (one-off costs)

RESOLVED: To unanimously agree the monthly summary of accounts for October.

12/11/2019-No 15. To note that an account with Unity Bank will be opened to move a small amount of money in as a trial.

Noted.

12/11/2019-No 16. To note the date of the next Finance Committee meeting will be on Tuesday 10th December at 7pm.

Noted.

The meeting was closed at 20:27

DRAFT