

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22nd MARCH 2017 AT 7.25PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD

Committee Members present: A Cooper (Chairman)

Mrs S Bundock

B Collier

Mrs M Cooper

S Hayes

Mrs J Hyde

Also present: the Assistant Clerk

13/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Saunders.

14/17 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON ITEMS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA

There were none. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

15/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None present.

16/17 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Matters for information. Minute 56/16. Councillor Mrs Bundock asked if the review of the Council's Public Works Loan Board outstanding loans has been carried out to establish whether it would be cost effective to settle one or more loans, considering the early settlement penalties that will apply. Investigations will go into this and if not able to complete this financial year, to be looked at next financial year. Councillors agreed it should be considered that any money from the eventual sale of the Simpson Centre should go towards clearing down the loan amount if this were proved to be cost effective.

17/17 STAFF TRAINING – SLCC LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Members were asked to approve attendance at the SLCC Leadership in Action conference for the Clerk, 6th to 8th June 2017, Stratford-upon-Avon. £430 plus vat, plus mileage. Intense management training - agenda: difference between leadership & management, devolved functions, development of the Clerks profession, delivering innovation in local councils, managing sickness absence, managing key projects on time and on budget, role of RFO in strategic management of a local council, preparing and delivering a successful Corporate Plan, managing future change, community infrastructure levy, successful leadership

RESOLVED that the Clerk is permitted to attend the SLCC Leadership in Action conference, 6th to 8th June 2017 at a cost of £430 plus VAT, plus mileage.

18/17 OFFICE FURNITURE

Members were asked to approve a budget of up to £5,000 to provide office furniture and supporting items for the new Greenacre Centre offices. The current desks are not in great condition and it was felt that moving into a new and prestigious building, new office equipment would improve the staff environment for working. This is to include under desk units to fit under the new bespoke reception desk. It was noted that there is already a budget in place for the office move that has been approved. The furniture is noted to be only one level up from budget quality and in total may come in at less than £5,000.

RESOLVED that the cost of approximately £5,000 be approved to provide office furniture and supporting items for the new Greenacre Centre offices. Earmarked reserves to be used.

19/17 BUDGET & RESERVES REVIEW

Members received a budget update and reserves status. It was noted that some budgets were actually up on their figures for the year. Members were keen to closely monitor the budgets next year with the new running costs for the Greenacre Centre. Any money left at the end of the year was agreed to be added to the general reserves, bearing in mind changes in levels of business rates. It was also noted that this will impact on other buildings. Discussion regarding the Greenacre Centre and the running of the building brought up the future consideration of there being a management company formed to deal with the financial running of the site.

20/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

The Chairman proposed that, under Standing Orders, the press and public were temporarily excluded from the meeting whilst matters pertaining to staff are discussed.

Passed by Members

21/17 FINANCE ASSISTANT – PROBATIONARY PERIOD AND INCREASE IN HOURS

Councillors received a report on the probationary period of the Finance Assistant and a request to increase working hours from 12 hours per week as it was felt that the hours were not sufficient to carry out the increased work. Councillors were asked to consider a request by the Town Clerk to give her authority, after consultation with the Chairman, to increase working hours for the Finance Assistant to 15 per week (from 12), if felt required – this will follow the trial period of increased working hours and satisfactory completion of probationary period.

RESOLVED it was felt that whilst the current arrangement in the offices were not ideal due to the office being packed and awaiting relocation to the Greenacre Centre Councillors would prefer to monitor the progress of this position and wait until the office is relocated fully to the new office before agreeing the need for increased hours on a permanent basis. Any overtime agreed to be needed in the meantime by the Clerk and Chairman will be paid for on an Ad hoc basis.

22/17 FINANCE ASSISTANT – PAYMENT OF HOURS

Members considered a request to make a one-off payment to the Finance Assistant for five days holiday which she has been unable to take, due to completing her training on the finance software, catching up on the back-log of outstanding accounts, and ensuring that they continue to be kept up to date before the end of the current financial year.

RESOLVED To make a one-off payment to the Finance Assistant for five days holiday which she was unable to take.

The meeting was opened again to the public.

23/17 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Councillor Hyde referred to the Establishment meeting held on 21 December 2016. During this meeting it was agreed that £10,000 that was originally in the Cemetery Budget was moved to General Reserves. It was noted that if necessary in the future, this could be moved back to the Cemetery Budget.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.55pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED