

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2017
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL AT 6.00pm

Present: Councillor P. Clatworthy (Chairman), C. Danter (Deputy) P. Aldridge, S. Raywood, P. Workman, M. Sztymiak, H. Burns, M. Poxon, M Sztymiak

Also present: Cllr J Raywood and A Snarey

1. Apologies

Cllrs P Workman and K Brennan.

Cllr Aldridge asked whether Cllr Sztymiak had been formally appointed to this committee. It was proposed that the minutes of the appropriate meeting be checked.

There was no form objection to the attendance of Cllr M Sztymiak at the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Name	Interest
Cllr M. Sztymiak	Tewkesbury Borough Council

3. Dispensations

None received.

The Chairman advised that the order of the Agenda be changed to discuss items 16, 17 and 18 during the early stages of the meeting.

16. To receive the Clerk and RFO's recommended version of Financial Regulations

Received, although it was generally considered that the Clerk's recommended version of the Financial Regulations were not received by Councillors in sufficient time for them to examine thoroughly in advance of this meeting. A Councillor commented that the Financial Regulations had in fact been sent out with the Finance & Staffing Agenda. Lisa Netherton, Administration Support Officer emailed all members on 25th September to inform them that copies were being left in their pigeon holes and Councillors collected these copies with the Agenda. She also attached a copy of the draft Financial Regulations.

17. To note the comments of the Financial Regulation working group, following their consideration of this document.

Cllr Poxon raised several points following his research of Bishop Cleeve Town Council's Financial Regulations.

It was noted that the Financial Regulations can only be accepted, linked to Standing Orders but the new form of Standing Orders has not yet been accepted.

Cllr S Raywood proposed that the Committee recommend acceptance of the Financial Regulations, subject to the changes suggested by Cllr Poxon and linked to the current Standing Orders. Cllrs Poxon and Burns proposed that the regulations should then be presented to the next Full Council meeting. This was agreed.

4. To approve the minutes of the Clerk for the Finance & Staffing meeting held on the 6th July and the minutes of Cllr Brennan for the Extraordinary Meeting held on 31st August 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2017, Cllr Poxon proposed that they should be approved and this was seconded by Cllr Raywood. Cllr Danter said that in the meeting the sum of £1,000 was discussed, as the maximum amount available during this year to spend on the Diversity Biz contract and proposed that the words “with a budget of up to £1,000” be added to the first sentence of item 14. Cllr Aldridge seconded this. Carried 3:1 (2 abstentions).

Subject to this modification, the minutes were approved and signed.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31st August 2017, Cllr Sztymiak had sent his apologies but these had not been recorded.

Cllr Poxon stated that these are not the original minutes and that they don't reflect what was said with regard to item 4. He suggested that the Minutes had been modified by members of staff. Cllr Burns proposed that item 4 of the minutes should be deleted, thus making item 5 the new item 4 where it should be. Seconded by Cllr Danter. Carried.

Subject to this modification, the minutes were approved and signed.

18. To identify the membership, terms of reference and allocated budget of a group of Councillors who have met to discuss the role of the Clerk and Administration Support Officers.

This is called the Staffing working group. As it is a working group it has no budget.

The members of the group are Cllrs Brennan, Danter, Aldridge and Burns. Cllr Clatworthy has attended some meetings.

Terms of reference – Cllr Danter reported that the working group was formed during the tenure of the previous Clerk to look at the processes that needed to be put together to search for a new Clerk. However, Helen Railton-Price was appointed to the role of both clerk and RFO before the process was completed. The working group halted their work but was revived when it appeared that the demands of current working patterns might be causing an overload of work, not

only for the Clerk but for the Administration Support Officers also. The group now need to review the job description and terms and conditions including financial information for all staff. The new proposed Personnel Committee will assume responsibility for some aspects of this working group's remit.

5. To receive an update from the internal audit working group members

Cllrs Aldridge and Poxon reported that there are 5-6 internal checkers, of whom they are two. The first audit took place in July, after which a report was produced and distributed. Several recommendations were discussed.

6. To receive an update from members of the Local Council Award Scheme working group

Cllrs Sztymiak and Poxon have not yet met in respect of this.

7. To confirm the Chairmanship of the Personnel Sub-committee and arrange a meeting with the Clerk. Including an update on the appraisal training

The Sub-committee members are Cllrs S Raywood, Workman, Danter and Aldridge. The Chairperson is Cllr Danter

Cllr Danter observed that, as a Sub-Committee of the Finance and Staffing Committee, that status makes it difficult for the committee to operate within the six weekly meeting schedule of the Finance & Staffing Committee and proposed that they should be separated from it. This will be put to the Full Council.

The Sub-committee has been advised that a meeting with the Clerk cannot happen until after appraisal training has been undertaken. The Clerk is to send dates for training in October. In order to future proof the appraisal process it was proposed that the training be publicised and made available to all Councillors, rather than just the members of the sub-committee.

Once a training date has been agreed a date can be set for a meeting with the Clerk.

8. To receive Payments and Receipts reports for July 2017

No reports were available due to the absence of the Clerk through ill health.

9. To receive a budget report for April – July 2017

No reports were available due to the absence of the Clerk through ill health.

10. To consider a proposal from Boxer FM on the public toilets

More detail is required on which to base a decision. A full report requested, containing:

- Material costs
- Costs of holiday cover
- What costs the council pay now for public toilet cleaning
- Information about how Boxer supervise the contracts they currently hold. So far, just one report from Boxer has been seen by Councillors. Perhaps Boxer should make a presentation to show what they are doing.

Matter deferred.

11. To update the committee on the launch of on-line payment controls

No progress has been made. Cllrs Sztymiak, Workman and Danter are not comfortable with the processes involved as this would require them having full access to the Council's bank accounts.

12. To receive a report from Cllr Aldridge on the Lloyds bank card Reader

Some costs have been obtained. No more information available. Refer back to RFO.

13. To receive a report from the Media Policy Review group

Cllr Raywood reported having looked at the SLCC sample social media policy. Some aspects are being checked and amended to line up with the terms of the Employee Handbook and Disciplinary Policy.

A suggested media policy, based on a GAPTC sample document was circulated to committee members. It's terms line-up with other TTC documents and it doesn't significantly differ from the existing policy in the Standing Orders. The Clerk has advised that the policy ought to be separated from the Standing Orders or appended to them.

Report received, but it was noted that more work needs to be done.

14. To receive a report from the Clerk and RFO on the external audit by Grant Thornton

No report given, due to the Clerk's absence. This item should go to the Full Council meeting on 16th October.

15. To review the allocation of the Mayor's allowance, currently agreed at £1,500

Cllr Sztymiak proposed that the allowance should be paid to the Mayor within the seven days following the Mayor Making ceremony and that there should be no need for the Mayor to provide a list of expenses incurred. The size of the allowance, made under LGA 1972, section 15(5) should be agreed on a yearly basis during the budgeting process. This was agreed.

19. To receive a copy of the new HR company contract

This was received. Contract ratified.

20. To consider a request from Cllr Burns to revive the use of a "Town Clerk's Work Programme" used in 2015/16 by the previous Clerk

It is the view of Cllr H Burns that it is currently not clear what the Clerk and Supporting Officers are supposed to be doing at any given time, or when they might need additional support, or when there is a possibility of work overload. It is thought that a Work Programme would help with this.

Cllr Sztymiak pointed out that a Work programme for Councillors would be useful too, in order to know who is doing what and by when.

Cllr Burns proposed that the previously used Work programme should be revived as a starting point for further development. The Clerk can check against it and bring any issues arising to committee. Agreed.

21. To sign cheques for payment

There were none.

The meeting ended at 7:35 pm