



Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee held on 14 February 2023 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.00pm.

Committee Members Present: D Budd (Acting Chairman), M Cotton, K Green, V Green, M Russell, C Turner

Officers present: Nicola Gray, Town Clerk & RFO; Gale Pettifer, Deputy Clerk

587. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr K Critchley and Cllr Z Gover.

588. Declarations of interest

Cllr M Cotton declared an interest in Item 7 Grants, as the Chair of the Carey Hall Charitable Trust and would therefore not take part in any discussion or vote.

589. Public participation time

There were two members of the public present who spoke in support of Tower Chimes Magazine and the Visit Wareham website.

590. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Policy, Resources, & Finance Committee, held on 10 January 2023, were **APPROVED** and signed by the Chairman.

591. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

592. Methods of Public Engagement

Agenda Item 13 was brought forward to allow members of the public to hear the discussion on the current method and costs of public engagement and, should they wish, allow them to leave following the item.

The Committee considered the report and praised the quality of the Tower Chimes publication and both Tower Chimes and Visit Wareham websites but acknowledged that current methods of public engagement by Wareham Town Council were confusing and duplicated.

It was **RESOLVED** that the current arrangements be paused whilst consideration was given to what the Council needed in the way of public engagement, with a meeting to be held with Lewis-Fry Publications Ltd to investigate current arrangements, with a way of moving forward being explored. Recommendations from that meeting would return to a future meeting.

593. Payment of outstanding creditors

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments to creditors in the sum of £240,791.48 be approved.

594. Grants

Members considered the grant submissions from various local community groups and discussed each application on merit.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following grant applications:

Wareham Summer Carnival to receive £750

Carey Hut Charitable Trust to receive £500

Lewis-Manning Hospice Care to receive £1,000

Father Christmas Committee to receive £1,000

It was **RESOLVED** that the grant application for Sustainable Wareham was not approved as it did not meet the requirements of the grant awarding policy.

595. Review of Policies and Procedures

The Town Clerk presented the Health and Safety Policy, and Health and Safety Handbook for review.

It was **RESOLVED** the Council adopt both policies.

596. Mobile Phones

The Committee considered the report and compared the current arrangement with the proposed new contract with one provider for all staff mobile phones.

It was **RESOLVED** to enter a new two-year EE contract which would see 7 mobile phones and 2 SIM cards being held by the Council at £179 per month ex VAT.

597. CCTV

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update regarding the options for CCTV already agreed in principle for the town, noting the current provider was incapacitated at present and because of the urgent need to get CCTV installed it had been necessary to approach alternative contractors. This could be a timely option to completely overhaul the CCTV and some reserves had been identified which could cover the cost.

The verbal update was noted and a full report with quote would return to the next meeting.

598. Payroll Provider

The Committee considered the current and proposed arrangements for Wareham Town Council Payroll.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the outsourcing of Wareham Town Council's payroll function to Dorset County Payroll Service for a minimum of three years from 1 April 2023 at a cost of £1,800.61 per annum.

599. Accounting software

The Town Clerk provided a report on the current accounting software and a proposed new package, Scribe Accounting, which would provide much greater transparency and an attached booking facility for the Town Hall and sports pitches. It would enable Councillors read only access to the full accounts to view transactions and would provide much better reporting ability.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt Scribe Accounting from 1 April 2023, at a cost of £1,914 per annum.

600. Any other items the Chairman deems urgent

The Chairman asked if it may be appropriate to consider the appointment of ‘internal auditor’ as it had been some years since fresh eyes had viewed the Council from an audit perspective and asked that this be placed on a future Agenda.

601. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee was scheduled to be held at 7.00pm on 28 March 2023.

Chairman..... Date.....

