

WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the **FINANCE & SPECIAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** of 30th November 2016 at 9.30am in the Committee Room at the Civic Centre.

Present Cllrs P Smith (Chair), John Cordwell, June Cordwell, T Luker from (10.15), R Claydon,
Town Clerk: Ms S Bailey

1. **Apologies for Absence** none
2. **Declarations of Interest** none
3. **Approval of Minutes of Finance & Special Purposes Committee** of June 2016; it was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes.
4. **Chipping Club Room** takeover 31st March 2015: to consider funds residue request for clarification from former Trustees after complaint received. Backing documentation was supplied to support the exact amount of funds handed over which was £1529.95 Anomalies were detected in CCR previous accounting (although not part of this investigation) before March 2015. Discussions centred on the inefficient and expensive electric night storage heating system at the time of takeover and the appropriation of funds towards the many improvements and upgrades which were necessary for its continuation. It was requested that exact figures are found from previous invoices for emergency lighting installation, emergency exit signs (there were none of both at time of takeover and this is a legal requirement), and for re-instatement of rear gate for essential emergency exit access. Amounts to be forwarded to next Special Purposes Committee. It will then be possible to consider the exact figure remaining which is earmarked for spending on projects benefitting the elderly. It was noted that the forthcoming grant application for £500 for British School lunches for the elderly was not linked to the CCR earmarked funds and it was not clarified by the applicant that it should be. The next meeting will clarify how elderly projects in the town can be identified as a recipient of CCR funds. Further details for the £500 grant application were also requested.

Cllr T Luker entered the meeting
5. **Code of Conduct**: To consider any revisions needed to the Code of Conduct and suggest its updated adoption at the December Council meeting. After discussion with the Legal Officer Ms Trickey at Stroud District Council, who advised awaiting for a controversial planning application to be dealt with before making significant changes, it was agreed to update only the legal inaccuracy of the Proper Officer of WTC deciding grants of dispensation rather than the Monitoring Officer at SDC – which was correct at the time the Code was written but which SDC has now changed. Other type setting inaccuracies were also highlighted.
6. **Local Council Award Scheme** – to consider whether to pursue Quality Gold status. Backing documentation was provided to show specific requirements needed to attain the next level. However it was felt that Gold Status should be an aspiration but not dealt with immediately. Given current resources available, and other priorities, it would be more prudent to concentrate on consideration of a Forward Plan for the next 5-10 years, or on a Neighbourhood Plan, from next Spring.

It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded Cllr R Claydon, agreed by all, to enter closed session due to confidential nature of staffing matters, under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

7. **Staffing Matters:** To report on all staff appraisal feedback & consider Clerk remuneration. A confidential report was provided giving overall feedback from the October staff appraisals. On the whole team morale is very good and the team works well together. However Administrator and Buildings Manager illnesses have required extra staff cover between June and November and this has seen resources stretched to capacity, with the staffing budget contingency now used. It was agreed that 1 day training on strimmer use will be arranged in March for the caretaker, and that a week's salary instead of taking as holiday will be paid before year end due to capacity shortages. The Information Officer has provided excellent cover and amassed various payment accruals and holiday pay which will be impossible to physically take before the year end, thus payment is agreed. Above two payments total no more than £500 approximately. The Information Officer will also be asked to cover one extra morning for the next year specifically to alleviate workloads for the Deputy Clerk. This extra staff cost for January to March is proposed by Cllr P Smith seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all, subject to specific work made available, and inclusion in the next FY budget for a 1 year trial. Administrator appraisal to be carried out in January due to illness. The Clerk left the room for discussion of following salary item. It was agreed that the Clerk's final spinal point increase is agreed as per employment contract, following a good appraisal and now being in post 3 years, proposed Cllr P Smith, seconded R Claydon, agreed by all.

The next Special Purposes Committee in January will need to review some staffing contracts, in addition to updates to various policies & procedures on a rolling 2 year basis.

Meeting finished at 11.00am

Signed

Date