

WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the **FINANCE & SPECIAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** of 9th March 2018 at 11.30am in the Committee Room at the Civic Centre.

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

1. **Apologies for Absence** all present
2. **Declarations of Interest or Dispensations** none
3. **Public Forum** no public
4. **Approval of Minutes** of Finance & Special Purposes Committee of 27th September 2017; it was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes.

5. **Renewal of various Policies /Procedures**

a) Financial Regulations

Cllr R Claydon was thanked for providing a detailed comparison between Council's current regulations approved July 2015, and the NALC model financial regulations of January 2016. These suggested amendments along with a few other considered updates were proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to be approved by Council, agreed all in favour.

b) Business Continuity Plan

This document last updated in March 2016 was considered in detail; it was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr R Claydon that various minor amendments are approved by Council, agreed all in favour.

c) Internet banking procedures

Internet banking has worked very efficiently since its introduction in autumn 2014, with no problems. This internal procedures document was considered in detail. After suggestions for a few minor amendments, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that the updated procedure be approved by Council, agreed all in favour. After cross referencing, a further clarification regarding banking procedures was suggested for Financial Regulations - proposed by Cllr T Luker, seconded by Cllr R Claydon, agreed all in favour.

d) Remit of Committees

This document was last updated in February 2017. After proposing that PROW & Amenities Committee appoint 5 public members, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to be approved by Council, agreed all in favour.

e) Standing Orders

Section 18 only was considered light of Govt. regulation changes to public contract procurement rates. It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that these updated figures be approved by Council, agreed all in favour.

f) Wotton Cemetery Regulations & Mgmt Plan

The Clerk produced a comprehensive first draft of a 20 page document providing more detail regarding management of the cemetery and its regulations for burials. Much time was spent clarifying its detail. With many changes to be encompassed, the Clerk will circulate another draft before the final version is taken to Council for recommended approval, proposed by Cllr T Luker, seconded by Cllr R Claydon, agreed by all.

g) Data Protection Policy

Updated Govt regulations to appear in May will necessitate the introduction of a WTC data protection policy and various other procedural aspects to be considered. The Clerk circulated amongst Councillors a detailed 63 page guidance toolkit produced by NALC which clarified many aspects with suggestions. Significant resources will need to be allocated to this in order to become ready and compliant. Councillors are advised to read this long document and its suggestions, in order to assess the implications at a specific working group of this Committee for this subject.

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

6. Staffing Matters:

a) To receive brief update on Buildings Manager phased return & new caretaker. The Clerk updated the Council on works accomplished over the past 5 weeks and the plans for the next few months. All is proceeding smoothly.

b) To report briefly on last October staff appraisals. A brief report was circulated explaining staffing levels and any areas of concern. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and second by Cllr T Luker that the post of Information Officer be raised to that of Administrator level and that committees of Footpaths and Regeneration be clerked by this role, in order to make the roles equal, in addition to alleviating the workload of the Deputy Clerk, agreed all in favour. It was requested that the current Information Officer be used as much as necessary to assist the office administration during times of heavy workloads and short staffing.

c) To consider Clerk leave request for month of June.

The Clerk left the room for the following item after answering questions relating to the request and the current staffing situation.

It was agreed to allow the clerk one month's absence, subject to adequate staffing in place.

The Clerk returned to the room

It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell, agreed by all, to exit closed session

Meeting finished at 3.40pm

Signed

Date