

**MINUTES of a MEETING
of the
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**held in the
Council Chamber, Buckley**

**on
Tuesday 23rd January 2018**

PRESENT

Councillor J F Thornton – in the Chair

Cllr V E Blondek
Cllr C A Ellis
Cllr D Ellis
Cllr I D Howes
Cllr E J Hutchinson
Cllr H D Hutchinson

Cllr J S Jones
Cllr R B Jones
Cllr W A Lewis
Cllr M J Peers
Cllr S Peers
Cllr I Peters

Cllr N Phillips
Cllr E L Preece
Cllr M P Teire
Cllr A G Williams
Cllr A Woolley

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr M B Wright – Town Clerk & Financial Officer
Mrs L George – Office Administrator
Mrs T J Reece – Office Administrator

16959- APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons were received and approved from Councillors N A Cropper (family commitments) and C M Preece (holiday).

16960- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were made in relation to this Agenda. It was –

Resolved – that no Declarations of Interest were noted.

16961- MINUTES

Resolved - that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and Economic Development Committee held on 12th December 2017, as now submitted, be signed by the Committee Chair.

**16962- MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE
HELD ON 11th JANUARY 2018**

The Committee received the Minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 11th January 2018. Those Members present who had attended the Finance Sub-Committee confirmed the minutes as a correct record of the meeting. It was therefore –

Resolved – that those Members present who had attended the Sub-Committee approved the Minutes of the Sub-Committee and that the Committee received, noted and approved the actions of the Sub-Committee.

16963- ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Resolved - (i) that the accounts numbered 11238-11288 (inclusive as detailed in the Schedule of Accounts Number 484 dated 23rd January 2018 [a copy of which had been distributed to all Members] and amounting in total to the sum of £28,673.22) be approved for payment and the Town Clerk be authorised to make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the payments were properly actioned through the Council's Bank Current Account in accordance with the Council's Internal Financial Controls.

(ii) that the expenditure be authorised in accordance with powers contained within the relevant local government acts and as identified and described within Appendix 1 of the NALC advice 'Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales, a Practitioners' Guide' as revised and amended.

16964- BANK RECONCILIATION

The Committee received the monthly Bank Reconciliation as at 31st December 2017. It was –

Resolved – that the Bank Reconciliation as at 31st December 2017 be received, noted and approved.

16965- PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

The Committee received the Petty Cash Account as at 31st December 2017. It was -

Resolved – that the Petty Cash Account Spreadsheet as at 31st December 2017 be received, noted and approved.

16966- ANNUAL INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Committee received and considered the Annual Interim Internal Audit report for 2017/18 which showed three recommendations relating to the Internal Financial Controls (Regulations), Data Protection Law, particularly in respect of the 2016 EU Directive, General Data Protection Regulations, which come into force in May 2018 and the current Reserves Policy. The conclusion of the Internal Audit was that “On the basis of the Internal Audit work carried out which was limited to the tests indicated above, in our view the Council's system of internal controls is in place, adequate for the purpose intended and effective subject to the recommendations [made] ...”.

The Clerk advised the Committee that as a result of the Internal Audit recommendations amendments had been made to the Internal Financial Controls Documents, the Risk Assessment Document and the Reserves Policy. The amendments to all the documents were shown later in the Agenda for approval.

The Chair and Committee thanked the Clerk and Staff for their efficient and effective administration of the financial affairs of the Council. The Clerk advised that the Annual Interim Internal Audit Report would form part of the Annual Return and Year End Financial Accounts for 2017/18. It was –

Resolved – that the Interim Internal Audit report be received and noted.

16967- REVISION TO INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS

Members were reminded that the Internal Financial Controls Document (Addendum 1 to the Council's Standing Orders) was last reviewed in February 2017. As a result of the recommendations made in the Annual Interim Internal Audit (see minute reference 16966 above), Internal Financial Controls 9 and 11 had been revised to include greater control over on-line banking procedures and verifying the authenticity of none cheque payments.

Enclosed with the Agenda item was copy of the Internal Financial Controls as they were in February 2017 with the revisions highlighted in blue. Also enclosed was the revised Internal Financial Controls Document taking into account the revisions made as a result of the Internal Audit recommendation. It was –

Resolved – that the revised Internal Financial Controls Document be approved and that Members be advised to replace the current Addendum 1 to their Standing Orders and replace it with the hole punched revised Internal Financial Controls Document (Addendum 1).

16968- REVISION TO ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Clerk advised the Committee that the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy was reviewed on an annual basis. Enclosed with the Agenda was the revised Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2018/19 to 2019/20. The Clerk advised the Committee that only minor amendments had been made in order to up the percentage interest received and dates applicable. The amendments were highlighted with the Agenda. It was –

Resolved – that the revised Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Document (Addendum 2 to the Standing Orders) be approved and that Members be advised to replace Addendum 2 in their current Standing Orders and replace it with the hole punched revised Addendum 2.

16969- REVISION TO THE TOWN COUNCIL'S RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT (ADDENDUM 3)

The Committee was advised that as a result of recommendations contained in the Interim Internal Audit Report (reference minute 16966 above) certain amendments had been required to the Risk Assessment Document in relation to page 3 – Levels of Reserves held, page 5 – Data Protection Act 1998 and page 6 – Freedom of Information Act.

Enclosed with the Agenda was the Risk Assessment Document currently in force. The amendments to the Risk Assessment Document were indicated in blue in the relevant boxes.

With particular reference to the Data Protection Act, significant additional duties and requirements would occur in May 2018 with the introduction of the EU General Data Protection Regulations. In order to ensure compliance with those regulations, a Consultant had been appointed on a Service Level Agreement at the cost of £200.00 per annum. The Consultant would act as the Council's Data Protection Officer. The requirement to have a Data Protection Officer was part of the new regulations.

Also enclosed with the Agenda was the revised Risk Assessment Document embodying the amendments required. It was -

Resolved – that the revised Risk Assessment Document be approved and that Members be advised to replace the existing Addendum 3 in their Standing Orders with the hole punched revised Risk Assessment Document.

16970- REVIEW OF THE ADEQUACY OF INTERNAL AUDIT

The Committee was advised that each Town and Community Council must, on an annual basis, review the adequacy of Internal Audit. The review also required the Council to ensure the independence of Internal Audit.

Enclosed with the Agenda was a letter from JDH Business Services Limited confirming its continued independence. Also enclosed was the Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18, which showed the scope, costs, timescales, unplanned work, reporting and access to information requirements for the audit to be completed and how the Internal Audit complied with the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils, a Practitioners Guide. The plan also included the review of income and expenditure systems, other areas for review and year end accounts. Finally, there was a review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit, which provided a comprehensive review of the Internal Audit service. It was -

Resolved – that the Committee received and noted the report, enclosed correspondence and acknowledged the adequacy of Internal Audit in relation to the 2017/18 Financial Year. The Committee also confirmed its approval for the continued use of JDH Business Services Limited for the Internal Audits of the Town Council.

16971- LEASE OF COMMUNITY ROOM

The Committee was advised that an approach had been made by the current Lessee of the ground floor of the Old Library Building to lease the Community Room from the Council.

The Clerk advised the Committee that the Community Room was used infrequently by various groups and organisations. It was used approximately 20 times a year, ten of which were by the Labour Group of the Town Council. The income derived from the use of the Community Room was negligible. Alternative rooms could be offered on the first floor of the Council Offices for those organisations that currently used the Community

Room. The lease, if approved, would be on the same basis as the lease that was granted for the ground floor of the Old Library Building. The annual lease amount would be by negotiation with the proposed tenant and would be notified to this Committee prior to the lease being signed. It was -

Resolved – that the Committee received and noted the report, approved, in principle, the letting of the Community Room to the current tenant of the ground floor of the Old Library Building and approved the Clerk to negotiate the value of the lease for approval at a subsequent meeting of this Committee.

16972- ESTIMATES 2018/19

The Committee received and considered the recommended Budgets from the General Purposes Committee and the Highways and Leisure Committee as well as its own Draft Budget for 2018/19. Accompanied with the Draft Budgets for 2018/19 were explanatory notes in relation to the Budget Heads included within the Budget itself. The Committee also received, with the summarised Draft Budget for 2018/19, the level of Precept required. The Draft Budget indicated that the Precept would rise by 5% over the previous year. The Precept expressed as a cost per Band D property would rise by 4.91%. The Precept recommended was £316,515.00 and the Precept expressed as a cost per Band D property was shown as £47.63. It was -

Resolved – that:-

- (a) The General Purposes Committee’s estimates for 2018/19 be approved in the sum of £52,663.00.*
- (b) The Highways and Leisure Committee’s estimates for 2018/10 be approved in the sum of £52,492.00.*
- (c) The estimates for this Committee for 2018/19 be approved in the sum of £266,854.00.*

That the Council’s Precept requirement for 2018/19 be £316,515.00.

CHAIR