

MINUTES of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE meeting held at Felixstowe Town Hall on Wednesday 18 March 2015 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr C Slemmings (Chairman) Cllr G Newman (Town Mayor)
 D Savage (Vice-Chairman) Cllr J Sennington
 Cllr S Bird Cllr M Sharman
 Cllr M Deacon Cllr A Smith
 Cllr Jan Garfield Cllr M Walker
 Cllr M Morris

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the Public.

559. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jon Garfield, Cllr N Barber, Cllr C Webb and Cllr K Williams.

560. DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS

Cllrs C Slemmings, S Bird, M Deacon, Jan Garfield, M Morris, M Sharman, J Sennington, D Savage and A Smith each declared a Local Non-Pecuniary Interest on all items on the agenda as Members of Suffolk Coastal District Council.

561. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

562. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 21 January 2015 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

563. ACCOUNTS FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2015

The Committee considered a detailed report showing income and expenditure from the start of the financial year 2014/15 to 28 February 2015.

The Clerk advised that some in-year savings were likely to result in an overall underspend for the year whilst income was projected to be close to the estimated budget for 2014/15. A full list of material variances was provided although no further action was deemed necessary.

RESOLVED that the Accounts to 28 February 2015 be received and noted as presented with no other action required at this time.

564. ELECTRONIC AGENDA SUMMONS

Members noted that since 30 January 2015 the Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015 was in force which allowed legal summons of Councillors to meetings via email.

The Clerk advised that all Members would be still provided with hard copies of agendas at, or prior to, meetings in line with Members' personal preferences. However, Council would make a significant saving in postage costs over the longer term. Members who specifically request to receive agendas by post could still receive them in this way.

Although the changes were already in force the Clerk confirmed that existing arrangements would continue until the end of the current Municipal year.

It was RESOLVED that the recent legal changes surrounding electronic agenda summons be noted.

565. STANDING ORDERS 2015/16

Committee reviewed the Council's Standing Orders for 2015/16 and noted the recommended changes as tracked in the draft provided. Key updates in the draft reflected recent legislation, such as the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 which allow the recording or filming of Council meetings and Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015 which allowed legal summons of Councillors to meetings via email.

Following a vote on a proposal to maintain existing arrangements it was agreed that Council would not be requested to adopt arrangements for substitutions at meetings.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be instructed to incorporate the draft recommendations and other minor amendments and present a finalised copy of the Standing Orders 2015/16 to Council for formal adoption at its meeting of 1 April 2015.

566. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2015/16

Committee reviewed the Council's Financial Regulations for 2015/16 and noted the recommended changes as tracked in the draft provided.

Members requested that references to the 'Clerk' be amended to state 'RFO' to avoid duplication.

There being no further amendments, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk be instructed to incorporate the draft recommendations and present a finalised copy of the Financial Regulations 2015/16 to Council for formal adoption at its meeting of 1 April 2015.

567. INTERNAL AUDIT – QUARTER THREE REPORT

Committee considered the Internal Audit report for the period ending 31 December 2014 and noted that the two recommendations in the report had been resolved prior to the meeting.

Committee noted the Q3 2014/15 report of the Internal Auditor and recorded a vote of thanks to the staff for their hard work.

568. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.35pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for 27 May 2015 at 7.30pm. Members recorded a vote of thanks to Cllr C Slemmings, for his chairmanship of the Committee.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____