

MINUTES of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE meeting held at Felixstowe Town Hall on Wednesday 23 September 2015 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr S Bird (Vice-Chairman *in the chair*) Cllr D Savage
Cllr M Deacon Cllr A Smith
Cllr S Gallant Cllr S Wiles
Cllr Jan Garfield Cllr K Williams

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
Mrs D Frost (Finance Administrative Officer)

In the absence of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman Cllr S Bird in the chair.

231. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr G Newman, Cllr N Barber, Cllr C Barham** and **Cllr S Bloomfield**.

232. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Gallant Cllr D Savage Cllr A Smith	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of Suffolk Coastal District Council)

233. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

There were none.

234. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 22 July 2015 be signed by the Vice-Chairman as a true record.

235. ACCOUNTS FOR JULY/AUGUST 2015

Committee considered a detailed report showing income and expenditure against budget to 31 August 2015.

A full list of material variances was provided and Members discussed a number of matters relating to income and expenditure.

Electricity consumption was noted as being high at Walton Community Hall. The Clerk advised that Council's Assets & Services Committee were aware of

this issue and would be considering how best to identify possible improvements. Members suggested that a remotely operated 'smart' timer could offer a way of controlling the heating system from the Town Hall.

The Clerk reported that, despite a number of phone calls and correspondence with a regular hirer of Walton Community Hall, a significant bill had still not been paid. The hirer had given assurances to Town Hall staff that the balance would be settled in a timely manner but no payment was received. Following cancellation of the booking and return of the keys, the hirer indicated that they would favour the offer of a repayment plan. The Clerk wrote to the hirer to set up a payment agreement, advising that further action would be taken if no response was received. As no response was received, the Clerk has instructed that formal action of recovery of the debts take place through the small claims process.

In response to a question on the maintenance of the Town Council's CCTV system, the Clerk advised that he was discussing the possibility of a joint maintenance contract agreement with SCDC which would include the additional cameras being installed at the Spa Gardens. It was expected that this could realise some savings for both authorities in 2016/17 through economy of scale.

Members discussed the cost and provision of Felixstowe in Flower, noting that some savings were expected against budget in the current year. The Clerk confirmed move the awards event to the Felixstowe Academy from the Brackenbury Leisure Centre had been very successful and it was hoped this this venue would be available again next year. It was also noted that additional sponsorship has been received in the current year but this could not be assumed for next year.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the Accounts to 31 August 2015 be received and noted as presented with no other action required at this time; and,**
- ii. the action taken by the Clerk to seek recovery of debts owed to the Council through the small claims process be approved.**

236. LOCAL COUNCIL GOLD AWARD SCHEME

Committee considered an update from members of the Local Council Gold Award Scheme Working Group.

Members heard that the group had met with the Chief Executive Officer of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils to discuss the criteria required to meet the Quality Gold level. The group had been advised that there were no other Council's in Suffolk currently seeking the Quality Gold standard, which had been awarded to very few councils nationally to date. It was also noted that the Council's current Foundation Aware level was considered by SALC to be

a more comprehensive accreditation than the Quality Council status which had been achieved under the previous scheme.

Committee noted that the Working Group believed that Council could demonstrate how it met the criteria required for the mid-level 'Quality' award and potentially submit this evidence to the accreditation panel early in the new year. However, further work would be required to develop Council's business plan in order to secure the 'Quality Gold' award.

Members discussed the practicalities of a timeframe for achieving the award and agreed that appropriate time should be given to the development of an extensive business plan rather than submitting an early portfolio for the Quality award.

RESOLVED that the Local Council Gold Award Scheme Working Group continue to progress the Council's application with a view to submitting for the Quality Gold award in 2016/17.

237. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.06pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for 28 October 2015 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____