**Minutes of the meeting of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE held on Tuesday 7th December 2021 at 7.30pm in Community House**

**Present** – Cllr C Collier (Chair), Cllr C Cheta, Cllr R White, Cllr S Griffiths, Cllr D Seabrook,

Cllr C Gallagher.

Town Clerk T Allen.

**PF692 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and covered the housekeeping matters.

**PF693 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

**PF694 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies from Cllr I Sharkey, Cllr Hill, Cllr Milliner, Cllr Goble and the Finance Officer were approved.

It was resolved that Cllr White substitutes for Cllr Goble.

**PF695 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Cllr Griffiths re. Item PF706, as a friend of one of the Council’s contractors.

**PF696 TO ADOPT THE PUBLIC MINUTES OF 26th OCTOBER 2021**

Re. Item PF681, Cllr Seabrook noted that the minute should read “….machinery and vehicles….”. It was resolved to adopt the minutes, as amended, as a true record.

**PF697 TO REVIEW THE 2020/21FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL YEAR TO-DATE: -**

1. **Finance Officer’s report**

Received and noted.

The Chairman reported that he had been speaking with the Finance Officer regarding the way that the RBS OMEGA system shows the holding of CIL monies in the general year fund or in the CIL reserve account. The Finance Officer is speaking to RBS about this as it clouds the budgetary position reports.

The Chairman reported on his review and reprofiling of income & expenditure for the current financial year to-date, with emphasis on Community House, which showed an income deficit in the region of £33K; but with expenditure being virtually on-target.

Following a discussion about the impacts on income, particularly in relation to Covid impacts, and the presentation of the new budget proposals, it was resolved that there will be a budget discussion & preparation meeting on the 11th January 2022 at 7.30pm in CH, for relevant Councillors and Officers to discuss the new budget, ready for the following week’s Committee meeting, and then to Council at the end of the month.

Also, before the meeting on the 11th January 2022, Clerk and Finance Officer will try to produce a more detailed breakdown of the Draft Budget report and current year performance, including estimated income/expenditure, breakdown of budgeted figures, different budget scenarios/reviews/forecasts.

The Chairman stated that overall, the Council’s finances are in a very good position, with very little exposure to debt.

1. **Bank account summary**

Received and noted.

1. **Bank Reconciliation statements (for signing)**

Received and approved for signing.

1. **Income & Expenditure report**

Received and approved for signing.

1. **Balance Sheet**

Received and approved for signing.

1. **CIL & S.106 report**

Received and noted.

After discussion about updating the CIL & S.106 monitoring and development processes, it was resolved to convene a meeting of the Working Party a.s.a.p. to focus on the impending CIL & SDNPA funding rounds.

1. **List of payments (for approval)**

It was resolved to approve the October & November 2021 payments amounting to £138,095.82, as scheduled in the meeting papers.

1. **Review of external contracts & their ongoing authorisations.**

There were no matters for review.

1. **Funding report for buildings equipment maintenance works.**

Received and noted.

* 1. **To discuss and approve urgent works for the air conditioning & heating unit in the main hall, Community House.**

The Clerk related the background to this item.

It was noted that the parts for this old equipment had been difficult to source. Only Heatcraft had quoted, despite other companies being approached.

It was resolved that these urgent works should be carried out a.s.a.p. by Heatcraft at the quoted price of £6551.47.

1. **To discuss and agree the recommendation to vire £10,000 to a capital project reserve and £10,000 to the Hub boiler reserve as part of ongoing budget discussions.**

The Chairman explained the reasoning behind this proposal and the impact on the new budget.

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting of the Committee, when budget discussions will be more advanced.

Play equipment EMR, Community House maintenance and new IT equipment need to build up funds over the years to be included in the new budget.

**PF698 TO DISCUSS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2022/23 BUDGET**

Budget discussion & preparation meeting to be held on the 11th January 2022.

**PF699 TO RECEIVE A PROGRESS REPORT ON THE COUNCIL’S NEW ENERGY PROVIDER**

The Clerk reported that all was proceeding as previously reported, with some difficulties being encountered in fully closing the Council’s accounts with British Gas.

**PF700 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE USE OF THE FUNDS REMAINING IN THE COVID SUPPORT**

**EARMARKED RESERVE**

It was resolved that, apart from grants for Round 2 2021/22, the Covid Support EMR will remain available as is for Covid related funding.

**PF701 GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE**

1. **To note the Draft minutes of the meeting held on the 25th November 2021.**

The draft minutes were noted.

1. **To discuss and agree grants allocations for Round 2 2021/22.**

It was resolved to establish an SLA with Haven Community Cars w.e.f. 1st April 2022, with an agreed initial funding of £3K.

It was resolved to approve grants for Round 2 2021/22 of £3,100 from the general grants fund and £2,324 from the Covid support fund, as set out in the meeting papers.

**PF702 TO DISCUSS THE COMMITTEE’S ACTION PLAN AND AGREE ANY FURTHER ACTION**

The Clerk’s report was received and discussed.

1. The Clerk reported that the Admin. Officer is speaking to local agents regarding the letting of the Fields & Robson rooms and the expected rent levels.
2. The Clerk reported that the survey of hearing aid/loop users had been inconclusive.

It was resolved that ESHRC repairs the hearing loop for the main hall a.s.a.p.at the maximum quoted cost of £950.

1. The Clerk reported progress on the internal & external surveys agreed for Community House.
2. It was resolved the LDC Solicitor produces the new Lease for the Gateway Café, at the estimated cost of £800.

The additional elements of the Gateway Café Action Plan were discussed; Clerk to allocate owners to tasks.

Clerk to liaise with OVESCO & Dr Mark Earthey regarding current and future energy solutions for the Gateway Café.

Clerk to arrange inspection of the pellet boiler at the Gateway Café.

**PF703 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE OFFICE PHOTOCOPIER RENTAL OPTIONS**

The Finance Officer’s report was received and discussed.

It was resolved that the office should go down to one office photocopier from 1st April 2022; quotes from other companies to be obtained when the current RICOH contract expires in March 2023.

***NOTE: In accordance with Standing Order No. 3(d) and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the rest of the meeting.***

**PF704 TO ADOPT THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF 26th OCTOBER 2021**

It was resolved to adopt the minutes as a true record.

**PF705 AGED DEBT ANALYSIS**

The Chairman noted the very little exposure to debt.

Clerk/Finance Officer to identify any potential write-offs nearer the end of the F/Y.

**PF706 TO REVIEW STATUS OF COUNCIL’S SUB-CONTRACTORS**

The Clerk’s report was received and discussed, with actions agreed.

**PF707 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 7.30pm**

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:58.*