

## FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held at the Pavilion, Soham, on Monday 11 November 2019.

Present: Cllrs C Warner, D Woricker, D Dyer, L Johnston and A Pallett

FP76/19 PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

There were no representations made by members of the public in respect of matters under discussion or those arising from previous minutes.

FP77/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by members to items on the agenda or more generally matters under discussion.

FP78/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies or absences were recorded.

FP79/19 FINANCIAL MATTERS & ACCOUNTS – OCTOBER 2019

NOTED income & RESOLVED to recommend to Council approval of those payments made to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 totalling £ 42654.41 (inc vat) respectively and as attached to the council minutes as appendices. NOTED grant income (specified use) contribution of £5000 from ECDC for Tourism purposes (one further £5000 receipt expected in next financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020)

NOTED receipt of £4417.53 CIL contribution (total current in year £15247.49) which will be subject to virement to allocated reserves (122/18) to cover outstanding expenditure on Phase I refurbishment Pavilion (current owed to the town council funds of £45737.14)

NOTED that after repayment from current and future CIL contribution(s) none of Phase I refurbishment has been provided from current or previous resident (ratepayers) rate demand(s) after which all further CIL provision/payments received as income will (again) be ring fenced for other relevant amenity projects/funding requests from community.

NOTED receipt of £161250 1/2 yearly precept (rate demand).

NOTED previous ring fenced budgetary heading of 'Lest We Forget/WWI' (balance zero) renamed 'Neighbourhood Planning' with expenditure of £656 allocated (debtor) against for leaflet printing (grant from Central Government Groundworks UK of £1690 applied for).

NOTED creditor amount of £5000 (net) allocated pre-emptively against s137 budget for legal opinion in regards to (loss of) Shade common (108/19B-invoice to be raised)

NOTED budgetary balances as stated for end October 2019.

NOTED those addition approvals made by Cemetery & Allotment and Community Amenities Committees in October which will impact on Finance & Policy Committee precept recommendations to full council in due course

NOTED verification ID documents have yet to be returned by all members in order to change the bank cheque signatory arrangements as well as then be able to introduce electronic payments (reduce bank charges).

CONSIDERED & APPROVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL the budgets for 2020-21 generating a precept demand of £362 000

(Three hundred and sixty two thousand pounds) noting the £ increase to current is £34500 providing for a 12.5% increase from ratepayer above current (for a Band D property from £88.20 to £96.49, or increase of £8.29 per year, or 69p/month which is proportionately less for Band A-C (majority of properties in Soham) or proportionately more for Band E-H housing )

NOTED budget calculations specifically excludes the following fiscal considerations for costs associated with

1. HR for Town Ranger
2. Request for Legacy provision (Cllr Leonard)

NOTED budget calculations specifically excludes costs (£ capitalisation required) associated with strategic infrastructure and amenity provisions of:

- i) Land acquisition
- ii) Public toilet provision (Fountain Lane)
- iii) DDA toilet provision (cemetery)
- iv) Tree and legacy planting (Cllr Leonard)
- v) New Hall build (Phase II)
- vi) Skatepark

APPROVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL it considers any additional financial approvals (requirements) over and above the recommended budget amount required to deliver these shorter and long(er) term infrastructure and amenity improvement projects.

FP80/19

GOVERNANCE-PROCESS AND PROCEDURES INCLUDING HR MATTERS (FP05/19, 15/09, 25/09, 35/19, FP44/19, FP 53/19, FP62/19, FP 71/19)

NOTED Cllrs Warner, Johnston, Warner & Dyer met briefly on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019 for their monthly updates and briefing by the Clerk.

NOTED half yearly independent internal auditor's (IIA) visit with report expected imminently.

APPROVED Assistant Clerks membership annual subscription fee to SLCC (this year £187) and one off additional cost of £350 as registration fee to enable her CiLCA portfolio to be submitted for assessment and award.

NOTED recent Independent Review Panel (IRP) convened for the purposes of considering pay (rises) and remuneration for District and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority County Cllrs but did not consider parish and town Cllr pay (last review for town and parish Cllrs performed in 2007)

NOTED town and parish Cllrs who are not volunteers but unpaid public servants should have some fiscal value ascribed for the work they undertake for and on behalf of the resident/community irrespective of whether they choose to take any/such payment.

NOTED Huntingdon, Ely (City) and St Ives Town Council provide allowance to their Mayor (STC is eligible as a town council for its Chairman to be referred to as Mayor but historically has chosen to retain the title of Chairman) currently at £4,000, £2514 and £4065 (increased annually by RPI figure in the preceding Sept – 1.7% this year) respectively under an assumption that anyone should be able to be(come) Mayor/Chairman and that this should not be dependent on 'them' being able to fund this role themselves.

APPROVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL its consideration  
on the matter of IRP review for town and parish Cllrs and associated costs (£1000)

NOTED any further issues will be reported as matter(s) arising and considered by full council at the upcoming evening (November 2019) meeting.

FP81/19

COMMUNITY AMENITIES REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION  
(FP 08/19, FP 18/19, FP 28/19, FP 36/19, FP 45/19, FP 54/19, FP 64/19, FP 72/19)

NOTED Community Amenities Committee convened in October and their comments recommendations and approvals for consideration by Finance & Policy Committee for next year's precept calculations and 3 year forecast.

NOTED progress of ground survey audit of street lighting stock currently being undertaken by Community Amenities Committee members and request to assess PC114 (Mill Corner) previously requested by Cemetery & Allotment Committee in February 2016 for electrical termination and removal.

NOTED Chairman to review matter of PC114 (Mill Corner).

NOTED electricity provision to Soham Town Council's street lighting stock still in negotiation (quote) with suppliers (CCC advised of delay)

NOTED meeting date with Lord of Manor concerning future arrangements in regards to commons management still to be arranged.

NOTED town sign installation continues to be progressed by Chairman with anticipated resolution and install imminently.

NOTED work on adizone area (Kingfisher Drive) anticipated to commence 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (TBD).

NOTED replacement camera 10 (overlooking skate park in recreation ground) due to water ingress (out of warranty) at cost of £788.60 (net)

NOTED Clerk has negotiated that at time of recreation ground camera the white bullet camera on front of NAZ building (High St circuit) will be changed over FOC for black with side mounting to be less obtrusive and more in keeping with conservation area (complaint received from building owner)

NOTED informal meeting held with Chairman of Management Committee to Scout and Girl Guide building (situated on recreation ground) in month to discuss those external repairs needed and accordingly with new information and under of the town councils Standing Order (6 month rule) and siting of adizone equipment in near vicinity (hard standing)

APPROVED to rescind those previous decisions/approvals to allow only temporary daily scaffold towers and that subject to compliance to Health and Safety advisor's (Tony Payne) recommendations to allow full scaffolding around the building for the period of time to effect those necessary repairs to include the additional precaution for public protection of an additional Heras fencing boundary (including suitable safety and warning signs)

NOTED AGREED that Clerk to draft heads of terms (HOT's) which will be subject to negotiation and contract between Parties.

NOTED request by Soham Detachment Army Cadet Force to host

mobile air rifle range in building noting that its own Public Liability will not cover this activity and accordingly:

APPROVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL its consideration on the matter of allowing a mobile air rifle range on its premises.

NOTED length of time Balfour Beatty continues to take to supply those 5 double hanging basket brackets that were removed in error by them in street light changeovers in 2015-16 due to original supplier used no longer on their preferred supplier list (FP52/16, FP61/16).

APPROVED for Cllr Warner to get a quote for 5x double hanging baskets like current from local supplier/manufacturer with a view to issuing invoice for same to Balfour Beatty to expedite this long standing issue.

NOTED continuation of works on byway 113 (from Mill Drove onto Bracks Drove) to create a suitable surface for cycle-path connection towards Wicken is now within 2 fields (approx. 1000m) from parish boundary noting that some fields abutting this byway are owned by Cambridgeshire County Council urban/farm estates (CCC Rural Assets).

APPROVED TO RECONSIDER MATTER and any request to CCC Rural Assets for a contribution for works or as part of s106 contribution to planning application regarding Solar Farm Park extensions.

NOTED AND APPROVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL £ request from Treasurer for a payment of £125 in full and final settlement of those non-receipted out of pocket expenses incurred by SACT in the matter of volunteer provision of festive street lights in Soham High St (with request for return of original insurance documentation for 1920-21).

NOTED that due to incorrect information being passed to the festive light installers number of traverses across High St will be reduced this Christmas period.

NOTED & APPROVED RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL of 3 year LTA with Galalights Ltd to install festive (Christmas) lights commencing Dec 2019 which will impact budget calculations (and precept request).

NOTED any further issues will be reported as matter(s) arising and considered by full council at the upcoming evening (November 2019) meeting.

FP 82/19

CEMETERY & ALLOTMENT ISSUES REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION (FP 113/18, FP06/19, FP16/09, FP 26/19, FP 37/19, FP 46/19, FP 55/19, FP 64/19, FP 73/19)

NOTED Cemetery & Allotment Committee convened in October and their comments recommendations and approvals for consideration by Finance & Policy Committee for next year's precept calculations and 3 year forecast.

NOTED appointment of CJ Roofing for Chapel roof repairs work expected to commence w/e 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019

NOTED appointment of Art steelworks for manufacture and install of replica cemetery railings

NOTED quote(s) for Weatheralls allotment fencing in progress

NOTED any further issues will be reported as matter(s) arising and considered by full council at the upcoming evening (November 2019) meeting.

FP 83/19 PLANNING REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION (FP 47/19, FP 56/19, FP 65/19, FP 74/19)

NOTED Chairman's annoyance wrt to the IT issues and difficulty accessing ECDC's Planning Portal at recent planning committee meetings

NOTED any further issues will be reported under matter(s) arising and considered by full council at the upcoming evening (November 2019) meeting.

FP 84/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee will be held at the Pavilion on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 commencing 6.30pm.

(members are invited to attend a update briefing at council offices on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 9:30am)