

# MINUTES

**Committee:** Finance & Personnel Committee  
**Date:** Monday, 8 June 2020  
**Time:** 7:00pm  
**Venue:** Zoom

## Present

Cllr Sam Hawkins (in the Chair)  
Cllr Kevin Blakey  
Cllr Kim Bloxham  
Cllr Ray Bloxham  
Cllr Barry Rogers

## Also Present

Cllr Les Bayliss, Cranbrook Town Council  
Cllr Colin Buchan, Cranbrook Town Council  
Janine Gardner, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Cranbrook Town Council  
Aynsley Jones, Community Development Worker, Cranbrook Town Council

## F&P/20/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

## F&P/20/9 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

## F&P/20/10 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and resolved to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 as a correct record.

## F&P/20/11 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

## F&P/20/12 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SMALLER AUTHORITIES

The Committee noted the National Association of Local Councils' Practitioners Guide 2020-21 dated March 2020.

## F&P/20/13 2019-20 YEAR END FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### a) The Committee noted the Year-end adjustments

The Committee noted the positions against which the year-end balance had been adjusted.

### b) Receipts and Payments to 31 March 2020

The Committee approved the following receipts and payments:

Signed .....

Date: 13 July 2020

- i. Receipts and Payments Cash Book 1 (Bank Accounts)
- ii. Receipts and Payments Cash Book 2 (Credit Card)
- iii. Receipts and Payments Cash Book 3 (Younghayes Centre)

#### c) 2019-20 Year-End Budget Monitoring Report

The Committee considered the budget monitoring report for quarter 4 (year-end) and noted that two budget codes relating to staff recruitment had been included in the report, one of which would be removed.

It was proposed by Cllr Barry Rogers, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to approve the year-end budget monitoring report.

#### d) 2019-20 Year-End Bank Reconciliation

On 16 June 2019, the Council had appointed Cllr Barry Rogers as its signatory for bank statements and quarterly bank reconciliations (minute 19/128 refers) who had verified and signed the year-end bank reconciliation and the underlying hard copy bank statements relating to the 2019-20 fourth quarter on 22 April 2020.

The Committee noted the signed documentation and approved the attached year-end bank reconciliations at 31 March 2020.

#### e) Earmark Fit-Out Funds for The Tillhouse

The Council's budget had remained underspent at 82.9% by £81,252.00 during 2019-20 and a suggestion had previously been made to earmark any underspends towards the future fit-out costs for The Tillhouse, the Town Council's future town centre building.

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and **resolved** to

a) earmark £81,252.00 towards the fitting-out of the Town Council's future town centre building subject to the successful town centre negotiations with the local planning authority East Devon District Council.

b) to produce a detailed cost estimate on the basis of a future detailed design plan of the building.

#### **F&P/20/14 ASSET REGISTER**

The Committee considered the Council's asset register dated 31 March 2020 and commented that the public-facing document should list the assets by type and not date, should not feature references to identifiable information relating to individual assets such as IT equipment, should list litter bins individually and should include the purchase value of all electronic equipment, including the two laptops which had been purchased in 2019. The total value of assets might need to be amended in Section 2 (Statement of Accounts) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to approve the Council's asset register dated 31 March 2019 subject to the above comments and to recommend it to full Council.

#### **F&P/20/15 REPORT BY THE INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The Committee considered and noted the report by the internal auditor covering the year 2019-20 financial year.

#### **F&P/20/16 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)**

The Committee considered information from the external auditor PKF Littlejohn regarding the 2019-20 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and considered the following:

##### a) Section 2: Statement of Accounts 2019-20

The Committee noted that the total value of assets in Box 9 of the Statement of Accounts might need to be amended in light of minute F&P/20/14 above.

Signed .....

Date: 13 July 2020

It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Kim Bloxham and **resolved** to approve the Statement of Accounts 2019-20 in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return subject to the review of Box 9 and to recommend the document to full Council.

#### b) Period for the Exercise of Electors' Rights

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Barry Rogers and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council the period for the exercise of public rights from Monday, 29 June until Friday, 7 August 2020.

#### **F&P/20/17 STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

The Committee considered the reviewed Statement of Internal Control.

It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to approve the Statement of Internal Control and to recommend it to full Council.

#### **F&P/20/18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Ray Bloxham and **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting on the basis of Section 1 paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 which stipulates that a council may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

#### **F&P/20/19 PROPERTY ADMINISTRATOR**

The Committee considered the Clerk's report appraising the future of the Property Administrator role.

It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Kim Bloxham and **resolved** to

- a) agree the revised job description in principle and to delegate authority to the Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee and the Clerk to finalise the document in light of recommendation (c) below.
- b) recruit to fill the vacancy once the government guidance relating to social distancing allowed the public use of the Younghayes Centre again which would also allow a face-to-face induction and ongoing training.
- c) appoint Cllrs Les Bayliss, Kevin Blakey, Sam Hawkins, Barry Rogers and the Clerk to review the Council's staffing structure, to seek the views of all the town councillors regarding that structure and to report back to the next meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee on 13 July 2020.

#### **F&P/20/20 Awards for All Project Administrator**

The Committee considered the Clerk's report.

The Community Development Worker presented to the Committee and explained that she had successfully secured Awards for All funding towards a Cranbrook Community Connections project which would aim at improving the residents' health and wellbeing by sharing skills among each other. The Community Development Worker explained that due to the outbreak of Covid-19, projects and programmes which had been planned were currently postponed and that, as a result, she had capacity to carry out the project administration at present. The Committee further noted that an additional project administrator would be required for the project when the Community Development Worker was at capacity again.

It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and **resolved** to

- a) delegate authority to the Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee and the Clerk to finalise the advert for a self-employed Awards for All project administrator which stipulated outcomes and deliverables over the project period in return for the payment of lump sums and to finalise the future contractor's performance management arrangements.

Signed .....

Date: 13 July 2020

b) require the Community Development Worker to absorb the Awards for All project administration within her contracted hours until she would operate at capacity and to commission external project administration at that point.

**The meeting closed at 8:23pm.**

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Date: 13 July 2020