

# MINUTES

**Committee:** Finance & Personnel Committee  
**Date:** Monday, 13 July 2020  
**Time:** 7:00pm  
**Venue:** Zoom

## Present

Cllr Sam Hawkins (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

## F&P/20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Phil Norgate.

## F&P/20/22 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

## F&P/20/23 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and resolved to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2020 as a correct record.

## F&P/20/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

## F&P/20/25 2019-20 QUARTER 1 BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee considered the following documents:

- a) Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading report for the first quarter of the 2020-21 financial year;

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Ray Bloxham and **resolved** to approve the above documents.

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- b) Cashbook transactions report for Cash Books 1 (bank accounts), Cash Book 2 (credit card) and Cash Book 3 (Younghayes Centre).

The Committee noted that the payment for the defibrillator was currently missing from the budget monitoring report and the cashbook transactions because the VAT invoice had not been received from the South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust.

It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to approve the above documents.

#### **F&P/20/26 BANK RECONCILIATION**

On 16 June 2019, full Council had appointed Cllr Barry Rogers as its signatory for bank statements and quarterly bank reconciliations (minute 19/128 refers) who verified and signed the documentation relating to the 2020-21 first quarter. Cllr Barry Rogers' reported that the hard copy bank statements relating to two of the Council's accounts had not been received in time for this meeting. The approval of the bank reconciliations would be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee.

#### **F&P/20/27 EXIT PROCEDURE**

The Committee considered the Council's exit procedure for employees leaving the Council's employment.

In response to comments by councillors, the following amendments to the procedure were agreed:

In case of the Clerk leaving the employment with the Council, the Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee or a councillor appointed by the Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee would lead on all steps in the procedure.

The Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee or a councillor appointed by the Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee would carry out the exit interview, and where appropriate, relevant issues would be addressed / learnt from.

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Kim Bloxham and **resolved** to adopt the Council's exit procedure.

#### **F&P/20/28 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Cllr Kim Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers 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/20/29 LOCUM SUPPORT FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee proposing locum support for the Town Council if needed.

The Committee recognised that following the departure of the Property Administrator, temporary absence of the Deputy Clerk and the Clerk's impending annual leave, securing adequate staff cover was now an urgent requirement. The use of the normal recruitment process would take too long and there was no time available to recruit and induce and train a new employee.

The Committee recognised further that the workload of the Clerk was in excess of an established

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town council and there was a need to provide the Clerk with sufficient capacity to respond to strategic demands as well as satisfy operational requirements whilst all existing staff were new or relatively new who required ongoing support and training which the Clerk currently had no time to provide.

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

a) grant delegated authority to the Clerk and Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee to appoint a locum on a zero hours contract.

b) appoint an individual who is conversant with the operation and systems in place as a result of the immediate requirements of the Council and the lack of opportunity for training and familiarisation.

c) utilise the Clerk's existing job description and person specification.

d) approve a departure to the usual recruitment process.

e) fund the appointment from the savings achieved in the staffing costs budgets following the departure of the Property Administrator or, if insufficient, the general reserves.

### **F&P/20/30 COUNCIL'S STAFFING STRUCTURE**

On 8 June 2020, the Finance & Personnel Committee had appointed 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 (ref. minute F&P/20/19(c)).

The Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee reported that the working group had met once and was due to meet again once all staff appraisals were completed.

The Committee reiterated the purpose of the exercise to review the Council's staffing needs and structure in the short, medium and long term.

The committee noted the update.

**The meeting closed at 7:27pm.**

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