

Framlingham Town Council
Minutes of the Finance and HR Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Meeting Room
10c Church Street on
on Thursday 9th December 2021 at 7.00pm

All documents relating to this meeting were made available to Councillors (Cllr) in advance

1. APOLOGIES:

None, all present.

Present:

Cllr D Carter (Chair), Cllr P Collins, Cllr J Culemann, Cllr C Eastwood, Cllr S Garrett and Cllr M Hine and Cllr J Jones

In attendance:

Mrs E Coe (Town Clerk/RFO)

2. Declarations of Interest:

None.

3. Minutes of previous meeting:

3191221 Cllr Carter proposed the minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2021 (circulated in draft form prior to the meeting) be approved as an accurate record, which was seconded by Cllr Hine and with two abstentions due to absence all were in favour. Cllr Carter signed the file copy of the minutes.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None present.

5. Financial Matters:

5.1 Income and Expenditure Report to date:

The Town Clerk/RFO provided an excel report of income and expenditure to date and explained the detail. A copy would be attached to the file copy of these minutes.

Cllr Jones noted that the expenditure in some codes were showing over-budget where this was not the case as funds from EMR had been used or grants secured. The Town Clerk/RFO explained that this was an anomaly of the accounting package and the corresponding income code needed to be considered alongside the expenditure code. However, this was also highlighted in the Explanation of Differences document at the end of year, which was also published on the website.

5.2 Ear Marked Reserves:

No changes to note.

5.3 Bank balances and bank reconciliations to date:

The Town Clerk/RFO provided an HSBC printed copy of the bank balances to date, which was noted, and a copy attached to the file copy of these minutes. It was noted that the balance of the Nationwide Building Society remains the same.

The Town Clerk/RFO noted that all the reconciliations were complete and up to date.

5.4 Budget and Precept 2022/2023:

Budget 2022/2023 final for recommendation to Full Council:

There was some considerable discussion on the final budget and precept requirements for the next financial year.

Cllr Carter explained the process which would entail a 0.6% increase per household on last year which was well within the Town Council's policy to not increase the precept more than 2%.

Cllr Jones felt that there was some leeway within the budget to increase the income and thus reduce this figure to a 0% increase, which he felt would be beneficial in showing that the Town Council was supporting residents at a challenging time.

There followed some further debate on this matter, following which it was agreed to increase the income for Budget codes 2281, 1778 and 1779 and use £2,584 from EMR 336 (Tax Base Contingency) to make up the shortfall in the budget and enable a 0% increase per household in the next financial year. It was noted that this would represent a second consecutive year for which the Town Council had taken this position.

5.4191221 Cllr Jones proposed to recommend approval to Full Council the final budget figures for 2022-2023, using funds of £2,584 from EMR 336 (Tax Base Contingency) to make up the shortfall, which was seconded by Cllr Collins with all in favour.

Precept requirement for 2022/2023 for recommendation to Full Council:

5.4291221 Cllr Jones proposed to recommend approval to Full Council to request a precept figure of £170,451.00 for the 2022-2023 financial year, a 0% increase on last year, which was seconded by Cllr Collins, with one against. Carried by a majority of 6 to 1.

Cllr Garrett requested that thanks and appreciation be recorded in the minutes for all the work undertaken on the budget proposals by Cllr Carter and the Town Clerk/RFO.

5.5 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit:

5.5191221 Cllr Carter proposed to recommend approval of the review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit (All questions answered as YES) to Full Council, which was seconded by Cllr Garrett with all in favour.

5.6 Amazon Business Account:

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council credit card could no longer be used for Amazon purchases from 19th January 2022, unless a business account was opened.

5.6191221 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the opening of an Amazon Business Account under the management of the Town Clerk/RFO, which was seconded by Cllr Garrett with all in favour.

6. Annual Review of Town Council Policies:

6.1 To consider the following reviewed and revised Town Council policies – circulated prior to the meeting:

- Child Protection
- CCTV
- Terms of Reference for Working Groups
- Delegated Powers (Town Clerk)

- Risk Assessment Record and Guidance - No changes
- Ban of Mass Balloons and Sky lanterns from Town Council owned land - No changes
- Review the risks of Legionnaires Disease - No changes
- Illegal Fly Posting - No changes
- Retention of Documents Policy - No Changes
- Third Party use of Town Council Resources - No Change
- Tree Policy - No Changes
- Information Protection Policy and Information Security, protection and removable information storage policy. Combined to form new: Information Policy
- Grant Policy - revised
- Grant Application form – revised
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- **Press Policy**
- **Filming Videoing, photographing and Audio Recording at Council Meetings Policy**
- **Social Media Policy**
- **Internal Communications Strategy**
- **External Communications Strategy**
- **Community Engagement Policy**

6.1191221 It was agreed to defer all the above policy documents highlighted in red to the February meeting, to allow further time for Cllr Hine to discuss with CEP Committee.

6.1291221 Cllr Carter proposed to recommend approval to Full Council the review and revisions of all the above documents except the ones highlighted in red, which was seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour.

Cllr Garrett gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

6.2 Terms of Reference for Committee's and Sub-Committee's – to be reviewed by individual committees at January meetings and returned to the Town Clerk for collating into one document for consideration at the February meeting.

7.Town Council Office:

No business.

8.Correspondence:

8.1 Marie Curie

Thank you letter for the recent grant. Noted

8.2 Framlingham Royal British legion

Thank you card for the recent grant and support and commitment for Remembrance. Noted

8.3 Rialtas

Offer of a 3 Year Loyalty scheme with a 7% discount on the 2022 fee if signed up before 31st December 2021.

8.3191221 It was agreed for the Town Clerk to clarify the situation for year 2 and 3 fees and if these were confirmed to be no more than £600 plus VAT per year then the Town Clerk had authorisation to sign up to the loyalty scheme for 3 years, which would be retrospectively put forward to Full Council for approval at the next meeting. If confirmation was not received that year 2 and 3 fees would be no more than £600 plus VAT then the Town Clerk was authorised to book the 2022 year-end only.

9. A resolution to exclude the press and public will be passed by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2) for item 10.1 because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Members of the Public and Press will be requested to leave the meeting

None present

10.1 Employment Matters:

The Town Clerk noted the Government Guidelines coming into force on 13th December and the advice to 'work from home if you can', and requested the Committee's thoughts on this matter with regards to the Office Assistant.

It was agreed that until the advice to work from home was mandatory the Office Assistant should be present in the Office during opening hours.

10.2 HR Sub-Committee:

10.2.1 To consider the following new and revised policies reviewed by the sub-committee-circulated prior to the meeting:

➤ **Training and Development Policy:**

Revisions

➤ **Disciplinary Procedure (NALC Model)**

New policy

➤ **Grievance Procedure (NALC Model):**

New policy

➤ **Complaints Procedure:**

Revisions

➤ **Health and Safety Policy and Statement:**

Revisions.

➤ **Equal Opportunities Policy:**

➤ **Equality Policy Statement:**

New policy incorporating both 6.6 and 6.7 as Equality Policy

➤ **Lone Worker Policy:**

Revisions

➤ **Training Statement of Intent:**

Incorporated into the Training and Development Policy

➤ **Training Report Form:**

Revisions

➤ **Annual Pay Policy Statement:**

Revisions

10.2191221 Cllr Carter proposed to recommend approval to Full Council the review and revision of the above documents which was seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour.

Cllr Jones noted that it would be useful to have a summary of the changes in all the reviewed/revised documents.

10.2.2 Speechy Pro:

10.2291221 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the sub-committee's recommendation for the purchase of Speechy Pro at £6.99 per month plus a battery pack costing up to £30.00, which was seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour.

11. Annual Review of Risk Assessments:

Financial Management and Control – Cllr Carter

Town Council Office -Cllr Collins

HSBC Credit Card- Cllr Eastwood – no changes

GDPR – Cllr Garrett

Lone Worker – Cllr Culemann

11191221 Cllr Carter proposed to approve to recommend approval of the annual review of the above Risk Assessments to Full Council, which was seconded by Cllr Collins with all in favour.

12. Action Plan:

Updates - None

13. Matters of report or items for next agenda:

Next Agenda: HR – recommendations on the Annual review of Contracts and Salaries and Appraisals and Job descriptions

Next Agenda: Public Comment at meetings

Next Agenda: Electronic payments

14. Date of next meeting:

No meeting in January

Thursday 10th February 2022 at 7.00pm

Meeting closed at 21.20