



Sleaford Town Council
Finance & Strategy Panel
Notes and Report of Meeting – 18th April 2019
10am – 12.10pm

Panel Members present:

Councillor Anthony Brand (Lead)
Councillor Ken Fernandes
Councillor M Graves
Councillor G Jackson
Councillor Heather Lorimer
Councillor S Shanahan-Kluth
Councillor David Suiter

Non-panel members present: Councillors Bozena Allen, Paul MCallum and John Charlesworth.

Meeting supported by the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Town Clerk advised Members of the Panel that any recommendations made at this meeting would be discussed by the new administration in May.

1. Welcome by Lead

The Panel Lead welcomed all to the meeting and accepted apologies for absence.

2. Notes from previous meeting 14th March 2019

The Panel agreed the notes which had been presented to Council on 3rd April 2019.

3. Strategic Plan 2018-19 for F&S Panel

The Panel noted the report.

4. Financial Regulations Review

The Town Clerk presented that report which suggested some possible amendments which were in keeping with most town/parish councils.

The following amendments were discussed: -

Verification of bank reconciliations – it was noted that the frequency of this process should remain quarterly.

Budgetary Control and Authority to spend – it was noted that panels were not allocated budgets so this should be removed. It was also considered that the Town Clerk should not need to consult with the Chairman in relation to expenditure below £500, therefore this should be removed.

Authorisation of Payments forming part of the Council Agenda – it was considered that this should remain as all Councillors are accountable for the spending of the precept.

Obtaining Value for Money – it was noted that usual practice was to obtain 3 or more quotes. It was appreciated by Councillors that this was becoming increasingly difficult and noted that whilst the requirement for 3 quotations would be desirable it was important to accept the best possible terms.

Contracts – it was noted that the contract values should be amended in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Assets, Properties and Estates – due to the increase in costs of tangible moveable property, it was noted that the value should be increased from £250 to £500.

Recommended to Council

That the Financial Regulations be amended to reflect the details as listed above.

5. Review of Balances including 7 year Programme revisit

The Town Clerk presented the report which outlined the current budget position, balances and the 7 year programme.

The Panel noted that the Council's financial position was sound. The Panel discussed the 7 year programme and considered that the recreational spaces may require some significant expenditure in the future.

6. Cemetery Building & Drainage

The Deputy Clerk presented the report which detailed ongoing concerns with the cemetery and supporting buildings. The report further detailed potential future challenges for the cemetery.

Following an indepth discussion, the Panel agreed that a toilet facility needed to be provided at the cemetery.

It was noted that due to the ongoing problems, options for the cemetery should be discussed further.

Recommended to Council

That a portaloo be hired as a reasonable stop gap until a longer term solution could be established.

7. Galley Hill Haulage Way

The Panel considered that this item should be discussed with the cemetery in mind. It was noted that the Galley Hill site as adjacent to the cemetery was a possibility to consider when looking for future expansion of the cemetery.

It was noted that any cost spent on the haulage way would be beneficial to allotment tenants and this should then be considered when setting fees.

Recommended to Council

That the haulage way should be brought up to a useable standard with a cost of up to £10,000.

8. Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Panel noted the update provided.

9. Chipper

The Panel considered the report and acknowledged that the Services & Assets Panel had identified a need for a Chipper in order to recycle and assist in the disposal of green waste. In principle, the purchase of a Chipper was supported by the Panel. However, it was noted that there was not currently enough money budgeted for a new chipper.

Action: The Clerk to investigate what warranties were available with a second hand chipper and confirm full costings in time for presenting recommendation to Council.

Recommended to Council

That in principle, the Finance & Strategy Panel approve the purchase of a second hand chipper with the provision that costings are reported fully including a warranty.

10. Future Items:-

Long Term plan for Green Waste.

Meeting closed 12.10pm