

FARINGDON TOWN **COUNCIL**

The Corn Exchange, FARINGDON, Oxfordshire, SN7 7JA

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Clerk: Sally Thurston



Minutes of a Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on Wednesday March 4th 2015 at 7.15 pm in the Jubilee Room, The Pump House, Faringdon.

PRESENT: Cllrs. **Steve Leniec** (Chairman)
Julie Farmer
Mark Greenwood
James Gregory
Andrew Marsden
Mike Wise

In Attendance: **Sally Thurston, Town Clerk**

1/2/15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. Angela Finn

2/2/15 Declarations of Interest

3/2/15 Minutes of Last Meeting: Wednesday 21st January 2015

The Minutes were signed as a correct record.

4/2/15 Items for Information Only

None

5/2/15 Public Speaking Time

None

6/2/15 Public Question Time

7/2/15 Faringdon Community & Tourist Information Centre

A written report was received from the C&TIC Supervisor. This was NOTED with thanks to Beth Davis, C&TIC Supervisor.

8/2/15 Financial Reports

Members received reports to the end of month 10 for the following:

- (a) Office & Establishment
- (b) Faringdon Community & Tourist Information Centre
- (c) Direct Council Expenditure

These reports were NOTED.

Members received and NOTED a financial summary for the following committees:

- *Venues Committee*
- *Recreation & Open Spaces*
- *Planning & Highways*
- *Youth Services Committee*

9/2/15 Audit and Internal control

- (a) Quotations were received for internal auditors. It was proposed that Internal Audit and Compliance were appointed to carry out the internal audit. This was seconded and CARRIED.
- (b) A financial risk assessment for 2014/15 was received. It was proposed that the committee approve this assessment. This was seconded and CARRIED.
- (c) Members considered carrying out a full review of financial regulations, risk management and internal control. It was AGREED to carry this out in conjunction with the audit process.

10/2/15 Strategic Working Party Recommendations

- (a) Members discussed the formulation of a 3 year plan for Finance and Audit Committee. A list was compiled covering each area of committee responsibility. It was proposed the Clerk work the list into a document which would be reconsidered at the next meeting. This was seconded and CARRIED.
- (b) Members reviewed the Finance and Audit Committee Terms of Reference. The clerk presented a draft including the committee responsibilities and membership. Members questioned the need for decisions, such as grants awarded, to be ratified by full council when they are carried out within budget. The Audit part of the committee name was also questioned. It was proposed that the clerk investigate these matters and research other councils for best practice. The Terms of Reference should then be reconsidered at the next meeting. This was AGREED.

11/2/15 FAZE

- (a) Members received an update on the legal charges for the renewal of the FAZE lease. It was proposed that the committee accept and pay the reduced charges in full. This was seconded and CARRIED.
- (b) Members received an update on progress regarding site purchase. The £79,000 price had now been confirmed alongside updated heads of terms. It was proposed that the new terms were accepted and the purchase of the site be progressed. This was seconded and CARRIED.

- (c) The committee considered the appointment of a solicitor to act on the Town Councils behalf for the purchase of the FAZE site. Concern was raised that the fees seemed high and it was suggested that a maximum amount be set. It was proposed that Slade Legal be appointed to act on the Town Councils behalf up to a fee of £1,550. This was seconded and CARRIED.
- (d) The clerk gave a written report listing the Lottery grant and funds received following the dissolving of the FAZE Board. It was proposed that these funds be earmarked and accounted for on a separate balance sheet during the next financial year. This was seconded and CARRIED.

12/2/15 Telephone Services

The committee considered quotes for telephone and internet charges following a review of the services. It was proposed that Mainstream be awarded the contract providing the clerk could negotiate a 3 year contract rather than the 5 year contract proposed. This was seconded and CARRIED.

13/2/15 I.T Provision

A quote and proposal from Microshade, following a presentation to Full Council, was considered and compared to other services available. It was proposed that the clerk be delegated authority to accept the proposal and negotiate the necessary services and user numbers with Microshade up to the value of the original quote. This was seconded and CARRIED.

14/2/15 Recreation and Open Spaces Van.

Information and a quotation was received regarding the lease of a vehicle. The committee were informed that the decision to lease the van is for the Recreation and Open Spaces Committee as it was within the committee budget. However, the Finance and Audit Committee would need to release the value of the current van for use as a deposit. This was proposed, seconded and CARRIED.

Cllr. Steve Leniec proposed to invoke Standing Order 1(c) due to the confidentiality of the following items. This was seconded and CARRIED.

15/2/15 Staff Matters

- (a) The Town Clerk submitted a report detailing the costs of an SLCC recommended non – consolidated (one-off) payment for employees. It was proposed that this be deferred to the end of this financial year to determine that sufficient funds are available. This was seconded and CARRIED.
- (b) Members considered a report from the Town Clerk regarding the financial implications of youth centre staff being placed on the National Joint Council for Local Government service pay scales in line with

other Town Council staff. It was proposed that this be phased it over the coming year in conjunction with staff pay reviews. This was seconded and CARRIED.

- (c) The Clerk informed members of the progress of the recent restructure of Town Council staff. Staff had settled well into new hours and roles. The final stage is to employ an additional assistant in the C&TIC and increase administration hours using hours made available by the restructure. It was proposed that the final stage be implemented. This was seconded and CARRIED.

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