



North Hykeham Town Council

Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee meeting 05/23
held on Thursday 19th October 2023 at 7pm

Councillors Present: N Blanchard (Chair), G Edwards, FW Lee, SP Roe, K Sampson

In Attendance: Mrs M Parker – Town Clerk
Miss J Humphrey – Deputy Clerk
2 members of the public

Prior to the start of the meeting, the committee received a presentation by Root Studio in relation to the provision of a new website for the Town Council. The committee meeting started at 7.25pm and the 2 members of the public left the meeting.

05-23.1 Apologies for absence and acceptance of reasons given to the Clerk in advance of the meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies for absence and acceptance of reasons given from Cllr Briggs, Johnston, Killingsworth, Mays and McDowell.

05-23.2 Receipt of any Declaration of Members' Interest under the Localism Act 2011

The Chair advised he would take any Declarations of Interest under individual agenda items.

05-23.3 Notes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 21st September 2023 be approved as Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Notes of the Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on 21st September 2023 as a true record of Minutes and were signed accordingly.

05-23.4 Chair's Items

The Chair informed Members that the standard Report template had been reviewed and updated to include a specific area for proposed financial budget provisions to be identified.

05.23.5 Correspondence and Clerk's Items

The Clerk had no correspondence to present.

Updates on the actions from the last meeting were noted as follows: -

Item No:	Action	Updates
4-23.7	Recommend to Town Council to adopt the draft Fixed Asset Policy	Completed 28.09.23
4-23.8	Virement of £12000 from General Reserves be made to cover the associated costs for remedial works as identified in the 2023 Legionella Risk Assessments at the Civic Offices and the Community Hub	Completed 22.09.23
4-23.11	Invite the company whose quote was of most interest to the next F&P meeting	In attendance at this meeting

05-23.6 Management of Accounts, including receipt of the conclusion of the Annual External Audit for the financial year 2022-2023

The Income and Expenditure of the Council (up to 30th September 2023) was noted by Members. Clarity on the expenditure to date of the Strategic Planning sub-committee was given, which included the accrual of monies from the previous financial year to cover costs for the first plans drawn up in relation to the development of the Community Hub.

05-23.7 Review of the Non-Councillor Members' Policy - consideration of recommendations from review group

Members considered a draft Non-Councillor Members' policy, reviewed by the working group. Discussions were had around the need to ensure that non-councillor membership and voting rights could never outweigh the number of elected members at meetings. After a couple of additional paragraphs were added to the presented draft, Members were satisfied that the new draft was ready to be presented to Town Council to be adopted.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Town Council to adopt the reviewed draft of the Non-Councillor Members' Policy.

05-23.8 Precept planning for the financial year 2024-2025, including the development of the F&P committee's 5 year plan

It was **RESOLVED** to move this item into Closed Session to allow for the inclusion of the Personnel sub-committee's budget planning in discussion covering the current precept planning being undertaken by individual committees.

05-23.9 To consider whether the Committee will move into Closed Session in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 for the following confidential items:

It was **RESOLVED** that the meeting move into Closed Session to receive the agenda items relating to website recommendations and confidential Personnel matters.

05-23.8 (cont.) Precept planning for the financial year 2024-2025, including the development of the F&P committee's 5 year plan

Members discussed the overall management of the precept planning across each budget and what the predicted percentages and real-term increases were indicating. The committee reviewed the records pertaining to CIL monies and discussed the various ways in which such monies could be used in the near future.

05-23.10 To consider a virement of £2,000 from the Town Council's budgets to cover unexpected consultancy/solicitor fees in relation to landownership of Memorial Fields

The Town Council had received a solicitor's letter, acting on behalf of the War Memorial and Playing Fields Trust, regarding the freehold to the land at Memorial Hall. The Town Council had appointed a solicitor to act on this matter, for which estimated fees would be just over £2,000, and additional monies would be needed in the Consultancy Fees budget.

It was **RESOLVED** that a virement of £2000 (estimated costs for all works) from Town Council budgets; Annual Report budget (4078) to 4071 F&P's Consultancy Fees.

05-23.11 Personnel Matters: to receive updates and consider ratification of recommendations from the Personnel Sub Committee

Cllr Blanchard informed the meeting that from the latest Personnel sub-committee meeting the following matters had been dealt with: -

- resignation/retirement of Mr N Goddard, Services Team Operative wef 18.11.23

- agreed a new PAR system, to be in place from April 2024
- approved the financial support for a staff Christmas lunch
- commenced the review of the Personnel element of the Council’s Risk Management strategy, in advance of a full review by F&P in November
- reviewed and varied the council’s established posts, resulting in the changing a full time Services Team Operative into two part-time roles and the creation of a Caretaker/Building custodian position which would be filled from April 2024.

F&P committee members were informed of the conclusions from the review of the Employee Bonus Scheme (EBS) trial; recommendations being to remove the scheme from employment contracts wef April 2024 and put overtime into the contracts.

It was **RESOLVED** to discontinue the Employee Bonus Scheme from April 2024 and remove it from employment contracts, and to put an overtime policy in place and into contracts (overtime to be payable at time and a half or accrued as TOIL at time and half).

05-23.12 Consideration of updates and recommendations on a new Website for the Town Council.

Members reviewed the proposal from Root Studio to provide a new website for the Town Council, along with the discussions had before the start of this meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the quotation for the provision of a new website for the town council by Root Studio be accepted, including the annual maintenance fee of £900.

Actions from this meeting:

Item No:	Action	Allocated to	Complete by
5-23.7	Recommend to Town Council to adopt the reviewed draft of the Non-Councillor Members’ Policy	Town Council	Next Town Council meeting
5-23.10	A virement of £2000 (estimated costs for all works) from Town Council budgets; Annual Report budget (4078) to 4071 F&P’s Consultancy Fees.	Deputy Clerk	Immediately
5-23.11	Discontinue the Employee Bonus Scheme from April 2024 and remove it from employment contracts, and to put an overtime policy in place and into contracts (overtime to be payable at time and a half or accrued as TOIL at time and half).	Town Clerk	Contract change process, observing employment legislative requirements
5-23.12	Accept the quotation for the provision of a new website for the town council by Root Studio	Deputy Clerk	As soon as possible

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.