

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** meeting of the **BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL** on **Wednesday 22nd February 2023 at 7pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Baldry; Cllr Gibson; Cllr Harding; Cllr Plim; Cllr Taylor-Gee; Cllr Wray.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: J Miller, Clerk; Cllr Winter; three members of the public.

00661. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public asked:

- a) That the Town Clerk contact the District Council and ask them to supply the reports written by District Cllr Dixon in 2021 and 2022 regarding public convenience expenditure.

The Clerk can only follow the instructions of the Corporate Body, so it would be for the Council to make a resolution for this action to be carried out.

- b) What consultation was carried out regarding the conservation rules in place in Western Road?

A full consultation was carried out and can be found on the Rother District Council website:

[Conservation Areas – Rother District Council](#)

A member of the public asked:

- c) Can the Town Council note that the valuation of the repairs of the toilets in the Rother District Council surveys is higher than the £200,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funds being offered. Where is the difference in funding coming from?

Surveys carried out by Rother District Council are not quotations for proposed work. A specification for improvement works will be investigated by the Town Council should it take responsibility for the maintenance of the public conveniences.

- d) The VAT on the payment list for the car park ticket is show as £276, is this a typo as it is 80% of the gross figure.

Yes, the net amount has been pasted into the VAT column.

- e) Would the council consider adding the risks of holding meetings in other venues into the main council risk assessment document, as there are cables trailing at this meeting? Also, fire drills and information is not covered at the beginning of meetings.

The risk assessment published in the meeting papers for this meeting is for the council's premises and statutory activities. Dynamic risk assessments are carried out at each venue for council meetings and measures put in place to address issues at the time, such as warning visitors about trailing cables from attendees laptops.

00662. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve apologies for absence with reasons from Cllr Clasby and Cllr Brailsford Cllr Rustem was noted as absent.

00663. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were none.

00664. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Harding made an announcement on behalf of the chair concerning a suggestion of extending the deadline for the grants and donations allow groups to apply for funding for Coronation Street Parties.

00665. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to sign and approve the minutes of meeting of the 21st December 2022

00666. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- a) To review and approve risk assessment.
Some typographical issues were noted and it was **RESOLVED** to approve the risk assessment with the corrections suggested.
- b) To conduct annual review of Standing Orders.
Standing orders were reviewed and it was **AGREED** to amend the requirement for substitutes to allow Councillors to nominate their own substitute within three days of the meeting, rather than five.
- c) To conduct annual review of Financial Regulations.
Financial Regulations were reviewed, and it was **AGREED** to include the project plan requirements.
- d) To conduct annual review of Code of Conduct.
The Code of Conduct was reviewed.
- e) To receive and approve bank reconciliation as of 31st January 2023.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliation as of 31st January 2023.
- f) To consider budget position as of 31st January 2023.
The budget position was reviewed, and it was **AGREED** for the RFO to prepare a report on the room hire costs with suggestions for the transfer of budget funds from another budget if required (virement).
- g) To note reserves position as of 31st January 2023 – noted.
It was **RESOLVED** to use the Charter Trustees reserve budget to update the Mayor's board in the town hall.
- h) To approve BACS payments February 2023.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following BACS payments:

Payee	Budget	Amount	VAT	Description
Rother District Council	Rent and rates	£ 4,734.01		Business rates August - April 2023
S Deacon	Events	£ 16.34		Reimbursement stationery and shop window
National Allotment Society	Subscription	£ 67.00	£ 11.00	Local authority allotment society membership
Sussex Sign Company	Events	£ 1,350.08	£ 455.70	External shop signs
East Sussex County Council	Subscription	£ 50.00		DBS Check registration
Local Payroll Company	Professional Fees	£ 48.00	£ 8.00	Payroll services January
St John's Centre	Future Projects CNE	£ 100.00		Hall hire for sewage meeting 03/12
Mulberry & Co	Professional Fees	£ 84.96	£ 14.16	
Viking	Repairs and Renewals	£ 691.89		Office equipment
Rother District Council	Printing	£ 36.00	£ 6.00	Banner printing for shop window
Trade Fire Safety	Repairs and Renewals	£ 423.65	£ 70.61	Fire Extinguishers for shop
Rother District Council	Allotments	£ 656.46	£ 109.41	Recharge for final allotment management cross charge
Rialtas Business Solutions	IT Costs	£ 1,104.19	£ 184.03	Finance software subscriptions
Rother District Council	Events	£ 350.00	£ 58.33	Parking permit
P Debreczeny	Events	£ 37.50		Mileage events

- i) To approve direct debits and standing orders.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following direct debits and standing orders:

Payee	Budget	Amount	VAT	Description
Waveney IT	IT Costs	£ 119.93	£26.85	Monthly mailbox subscription Microsoft
Maltby Property Management	Rent	£ 1,333.33		Rent for premises
Opus Energy	Utilities	£171.78	£8.18	Electricity 5 Jan – 4 Feb
Opus Energy	Utilities	£923.29	£153.88	Gas 7 Jan – 6 Feb

- j) To approve staff costs.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following direct debits and standing orders:

Payee	Budget	Amount	Description
Various	Staff Costs	£ 14,021.72	February salary, PAYE, NI and Pension Contributions

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00667. GRANTS AND DONATIONS

- a) To discuss policy for grants outside of policy.
It was **RESOLVED** for the RFO to prepare a special grant policy of £1,000 - £5000, remove Christmas lights ringfenced funds into its own budget and ringfence the existing £30,000 grant budget for small grants up to £1,000.
- b) To note next round of grant funding closing date of 28th February 2023 and to agree.
It was **RESOLVED** to extend the grant application deadline to 12th March 2023 to allow street party organisations to apply for Kings Coronation events.

00668. NEW PREMISES

- a) To approve the following purchases:
 - i. Mobile phones.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve mobile phone contract and internet dongle.
 - ii. Office Printer.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the office printer contract.
 - iii. Fire marshal and First Aid training.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the emergency staff training.

00669. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

- a) To receive further updates – there were none.

00670. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

- a) There are none.

00671. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- a) To note policy review underway – noted.
- b) To note frequently asked questions page to be created on the website and other online updates to be reviewed in the coming month – noted.
The committee will review the customer service log when more data has been collected to consider how this could be presented on the website.

00672. MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- There are none.

00673. CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

- There were none.

00674. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a) To note questions from last meeting.
There were none.
- b) To receive questions from councillors and any future agenda items.

Initial.....

Cllr Plim asked if Community Infrastructure Levy funds could be used to provide motorbike parking facilities in Bexhill using the CIL funds and if so, which committee would progress this.

- c) To consider any new risks for future mitigation.
There were none.

00675. OVERVIEW OF ANNUAL INTERNAL CONTROL TASKS OF THE COUNCIL

January	Submit Precept to Rother District Council
February	Review Standing Orders/Financial Regs and policies for Full Council AGM, obtain three quotes for insurance policy renewal
March	Review annual financial risk assessment
April	Complete year end accounts and AGAR, produce annual report, insurance policy renews,
May	AGM – adoption of policies, internal audit, review asset register
June	Approval of AGAR, review internal controls, complete internal audit
July	Electors rights period, Annual VAT return
August	RFO to begin budget drafting
September	Committees prepare budget forecasts, F&GP review salary budgets
October	Committees prepare budget forecasts
November	F&GP review committee forecasts and prepare budget for full council review
December	Full council approve annual budget

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press may be asked to leave the meeting during consideration of item 676.

00676. STAFFING MATTERS

- a) To receive update on staffing matters, recruitment, and appointments.
It was noted that there are two part time customer services advisers, one facility officer, one assistant clerk and one clerk in post.
- b) To receive advice from HR provider.
It was noted the following advice:
Disclosure of employee information to Cllrs/committees/the full council should be on a "needs to know" basis. The HR Committee will have direct line management of the Clerk so it would be reasonable for them to have knowledge of her performance objectives on an ongoing basis. Given that full council need to appoint a Clerk, it may be that full council had sight of objectives/input into these at the point of recruitment. Full council may have need to discuss these at other times where appropriate. For example, if Clerk were to say they needed a particular piece of equipment or training to meet certain objectives and full council needed to approve that expenditure, it may be appropriate. Generally speaking, though individual Cllrs outside the HR Committee would not need to have much involvement with the Clerk's performance. Obviously if they had any concerns about this they should then just report it to the HR Committee as Clerk's line manager.

In terms of interviews, Council's vary on their approach to this. Sometimes Clerks are left to the recruitment process and do this alone or with other colleagues, sometimes Cllrs may be involved for input. I would approach this on a case by case basis. If it's a relatively low-level position you might be happy for the Clerk to get on with it, for someone more senior the Cllrs (assuming HR Committee) might want to have input in the process.

00677. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 19TH APRIL 2023

Meeting closed at 21:08pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

