

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** meeting of the **BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL** in the **Clifford Room, Beulah Baptist Church, Bexhill-on-Sea** on **Wednesday 20th July 2022 at 7pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Clasby; Cllr Plim; Cllr Brailsford; Cllr Harding; Cllr Rustem; Cllr Taylor-Gee Cllr Wray;

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: J Miller, Clerk; Cllr Winter and one member of the public.

00215. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public made the following comment for which an answer is provided in italics.

The committee should be mindful to the claims made during the campaign for a town council that it shall operate on a small budget and councillors should be wary of 'double taxation' when taking on devolved services.

The first budget for the council was set by the Town Council Steering Group at Rother District Council and any future budget decisions will reflect the plans agreed by the corporate body. The National Association of Local Council's guide to managing double taxation is available on the town council's website on the Finance and Accounting page which details ways that councils can overcome this issue.

00216. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and accept apologies for absence with reasons from Cllr Baldry and Cllr Gibson.

00217. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Cllr Harding and Cllr Taylor-Gee declared an interest in any item that discussed Ukrainian refugees.

00218. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

00219. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to sign and approve the meeting of the 22nd June 2022.

00220. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- a) To note further finance training to be organised in September – noted.
- b) To note risk register being updated for review at next meeting – noted.
- c) To approve corporate card to be applied for with restrictions of £500 per transaction as per Financial Regulation 6
It was **RESOLVED** to apply for a corporate card for use by the proper officer with a restriction of £500 per transaction as per Financial Regulation 6.
- d) To receive and approve bank reconciliation as at 30th June 2022.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliation as at 30th June 2022 and the chair and RFO duly signed the reconciliation.

- e) To consider budget position as at 30th June 2022.

The budget position and 15% variances were discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the request from the Community Committee to allocate £5000 to 'Bexhill Churches Together' from the Grants and Community Support budget for the Ukraine effort. Should this budget be overspent at the end of the year this will be reimbursed by the General Reserve.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget position as at 30th June 2022 with any significant variances.

- f) To approve BACS payments July 2022:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following BACS payments:

PAYEE	BUDGET	GROSS	VAT	DETAIL
Julie Miller	Events Expenses	£ 40.23	£ -	Mileage for meetings and stationery purchase
Sparc Creative	Mayor's Budget	£ 300.00	£ 50.00	Design and production of town council flag logo
College of Arms	Charter Trustees Reserve	£ 3,870.00	£ -	Right to bear and use armorial bearings of Bexhill-on-Sea
Showman Audio Visual	Events – ATM	£ 384.00	£ 64.00	Annual Town Meeting PA
Beulah Baptist Bexhill	Meeting Room Hire	£ 80.00	£ -	Planning and Finance meeting room hire
Rother District Council	Climate Events	£ 42.00	£ 1.50	Printing of A5 flyers
Rother District Council	Allotment Charges	£ 573.32	£ 95.55	April - June allotment recharge
Bexhill Radio	Streaming Reserves	£ 52.99	£ -	July FC and Planning streaming
Rother District Council	Meeting Room Hire	£ 810.00	£ -	May and June meetings
Pebsham Community Assoc	Meeting Room Hire	£ 60.00	£ -	CC meeting July
Regional Media Group	Printing and Publications	£ 295.00	£ -	Advertorial in Bexhill News first edition
The Pelham	Rent and Rates	£ 419.40	£ -	June office hire
Surrey Hills Solicitors	Professional Fees	£ 738.00	£ 120.00	Lease work
Surrey Hills Solicitors	Professional Fees	£ 99.00	£ 16.50	Lease work allotments
The Local Payroll Company	Professional Fees	£ 48.00	£ 8.00	June payroll services
Paul Plim	Mayor's Budget	£ 185.70	£ -	Reimbursement event attendance costs

- g) To approve Direct Debits.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the direct debits:

Initial.....

Payee	Budget	Amount	VAT	Description
Waveney IT	IT Costs	£ 125.33	£ 20.89	Monthly mailbox subscription Microsoft

h) To approve Staff Costs

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the staff costs as follows:

Payee	Budget	Amount	Description
Various	Staff Costs	£7,747.28	July salary, PAYE, NI and Pension Contributions

i) To review internal audit report action plan.

The following actions were reviewed:

Risk Assessment	1. Annual risk assessment adopted at June 2022 meeting 2. Assessment of new risks added to the agenda of each meeting 3. New risks identified will be added to the risk assessment document with mitigation measures 4. Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually at March Full Council meeting
Allotment Management	1. Facilities Co-ordinator role advertised 2. Transfer of responsibility of allotment management will take place once successful candidate has completed induction 3. Climate, Nature and Environment (CNE) Committee to determine whether or not a sub-committee is required or the strategic management remains with the CNE Committee.

00221. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

- a) To consider seeking legal advice following Full Council's motion to review the ex-officio status of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

It was **RESOLVED** to seek advice from NALC to establish an informed view on the ex-officio status of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and committee memberships.

00222. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- a) To review Pension policies for recommendation to Full Council
It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the pension policies to Full Council.
- b) To review the following policies for recommendation to Full Council:
- i. Document Retention Policy
 - ii. Investment Strategy Policy
 - iii. Project Plan Scrutiny Policy
 - iv. Procurement Policy
The scoring system shall be updated to include the locality of contractors as 20%, 10% to Climate and biodiversity and combine capability and relevant experience to 20%
 - v. Protocol for Officer and Councillor Relationships

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the above policies for recommendation to the Full Council.

A review of the effectiveness of these policies will continue throughout the year.

00223. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

- a) To consider request for financial support from 18 hours

Following a request for £15,000 from the town council, it was **RESOLVED** that the full council review the application for funding in September to facilitate full member involvement.

00224. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

00225. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a) To note questions from the last meeting
There were none.
- b) To receive questions from councillors and any future agenda items
Cllr Harding asked for a permanent agenda item regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
Cllr Wray asked if a policy could be created for groups asking for funds outside of the usual grant funding policy.
- c) To review any new risks
The potential CIL money was discussed and risks of false expectations affecting the timescale of devolution of discretionary services to the town council
The risk of Rother District Council operating without a Local Plan was also noted, it was felt that this leaves the town open to inappropriate development with a potential lack of services being delivered to support this development.

00226. OVERVIEW OF ANNUAL INTERNAL CONTROL TASKS OF THE COUNCIL

The following was reviewed:

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

00227. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 21ST SEPTEMBER 2022

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 the next item:

00228. STAFFING MATTERS

- a) To review future resourcing
Future staffing resources were discussed.
- b) To receive updates on staffing matters.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to full council the recruitment of the part time customer services advisor role.

Meeting closed at 21:27pm

Signed.....

Date.....