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Minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held in the New Millennium Chamber, Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton on Monday 16th December 2019 at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ (Chair)

Councillor Long

Councillor Rhodes

Councillor Tandy (Substituting for Councillor Northeast)

2019/2020

34. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

35. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

36. Mobile Phones

Members and the public were reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) was prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

37. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillors B Blanchard-Cooper, C Blanchard-Cooper, Chace and Northeast.

38. Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted. In view of the many proposed and ongoing projects with Arun District Council, Councillors Dr Walsh KStJ and Rhodes declared their memberships of that Council.

39. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26th October 2019 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

40. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

There were none.

41. Public Forum

There was two Members of the Public present and no questions were raised.

42. Officer's Reports

42.1. Council Communications

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) that gave an overview of the Council's communications over the last 12 months, including Facebook and the website. The Town Clerk explained that this was an annual report and that the training for staff, referenced in the report, would be progressed. It was **Resolved** that:

The report be noted.

42.2. Strengthening Police Powers to Tackle Unauthorised Encampments

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which covered criminalising the act of trespassing and broadening the existing categories of criminal trespass and related to police. The Committee agreed to send responses and comments to the Town Clerk who would agree a response with the Chair. Members comments would be sought by email, with a reminder after Christmas. It was therefore **Resolved** that:

Members individual comments be sent to the Town Clerk to compile and agree a formal response in consultation with the Chair.

42.3. NALC Spring Conference 2020

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which outlined details of the NALC Spring Conference although the actual date had not been indicated with the papers. It was agreed that attendance should be agreed as

an Approved Duty should either the Chair or Vice Chair wish to attend. It was therefore **Resolved** that:

The attendance of the Chair or Vice Chair at the NALC Spring Conference be agreed as an Approved Duty.

42.4. Council and Committee Dates 2020 and 2021

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which sets out the provisional meeting dates for both 2020 and 2021. The Town Clerk outlined details and the reasoning behind the two new reserved dates in July. Should any potential clashes arise, Members were asked to contact the Town Clerk and it was **Resolved** that:

The Draft calendar of Committee and Council Meetings for 2020 and 2021 be RECOMMENDED to Full Council for Approval.

43. Finance

43.1. Capital Programme Draft Funding 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which explained the funding of the Capital Programme and the financial implications of the emerging priorities as part of the budget setting process for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. The Town Clerk explained that the current focus was on the Keystone Centre and Rosemead Play Area. Members were pleased to approve this report and it was therefore **Resolved** that:

- 1. The draft Capital Programme for 2020/21 and the projection for 2021/22 and 2022/23 be RECOMMENDED to Council, as part of the overall Council Budget.**
- 2. Funding for the Skate Park be met from the Capital Receipts Reserve, instead of the Loan Capital EMR.**

43.2. Finance Report

The Committee considered the periodic finance report (previously circulated) highlighting any significant variances in terms of income and expenditure relating to this Committee's Budget. It was **Resolved** that:

The report be noted.

43.3. Policy & Finance Draft Budgets 2020/21, 2021/22 & 2022/23

Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ declared a personal interest as a Member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board with regard to the Ferry Service.

43.3.1 The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which set out this Committee's draft budget for 2020/21 and the projected budgets for 2021/22 and 2022/23. The Town Clerk explained that the main focus of the new elements of this Committee's budget was the Town Centre, aligned to the new Council priorities.

43.3.2 During the Community Resources Committee, questions were raised regarding the Ferry service which the Town Clerk had brought to the Policy & Finance Committee to consider. He outlined the history of the Ferry and how some concerns had been raised surrounding whether the service was value for money. It was clarified that the service wasn't opposed, but more information on such matters as passenger numbers during the season would be helpful. Members agreed to continue funding the service and looked forward to regular updates during the Summer. It was therefore **Resolved** that:

A further three years of support for the Ferry be committed through a Service Level Agreement and that monthly updates and figures be circulated to Members.

43.3.3 The Chair and Town Clerk raised a matter that, if supported, would affect the 2020/21 Revenue Budget. They explained that the Deputy Mayor had attended a significant number of events, many at short notice. It was suggested that the Deputy Mayor's allowance be increased by £800 to meet the out-of-pocket expenses that he was incurring. This could be met from the Contingency Budget but would result in this being topped up to £2,000 in the 2020/21 Budget. Members supported this. Some concerns were expressed about the reasons why the Deputy Mayor was being asked to step in so often. This was discussed and Members would consider whether there was a need to discuss this at the Council meeting in January. It was **Resolved** that:

- 1. The Town Clerk be given delegated authority to approve an increase in the Deputy Mayor's allowance of up to £800 to meet immediate and projected out-of-pocket expenses.**
- 2. That this be met from the Mayoral contingency and that the implications of this for the 2020/21 Revenue Budget be agreed.**

43.3.4 Regarding the Mayor's Discretionary Grant Budget, Members supported changing the name to reflect that this was a fund and not a grant. The simplified criteria for the Mayor's Discretionary Fund was also approved subject to the correction of some minor typographical errors. All other matters within the Committee's draft Budget were supported and subject to the inclusion of the rebalancing of the Mayoral Contingency budget, it was **Resolved** that:

- 1. Subject to the correction of minor typographical errors, the criteria for the Mayor's Discretionary Fund be endorsed and RECOMMENDED to Full Council for approval.**
- 2. The draft Committee Budget for 2020/21 and the projected budgets for 2021/22 and 2022/23 be RECOMMENDED to Full Council for approval as part of the overall Council Budget.**
- 3. The Committee's Earmarked Reserve position be noted.**

43.4. Full Council Draft Budget 2020/21, 2021/22 & 2022/23

The Committee received and considered a report which set out the draft Council Budget for 2020/21 and projected Budgets for 2021/22 and 2022/23 (previously circulated). Members noted the detail of the report and how it addressed the new priorities for the Council. It was **Resolved** that:

- 1. The draft Budget for 2020/21 and the projected Budgets for 2021/22, 2022/23 be RECOMMENDED for approval to Full Council.**
- 2. Council be RECOMMENDED to set a precept of £1,279,268 for 2020/21.**
- 3. Council be RECOMMENDED to set Band D Council Tax at £126.31 per annum for 2020/21, an increase of 4%, £4.86.**

44. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7:14pm.

CHAIR