

Mayor: Cllr. Eddie Sewell

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256-011/012

FINANCE AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held on 14 February 2012

Present: Cllr. E Franklin, Cllr. P Baden, Cllr. E Sewell (ex-officio) and Cllr. R Jakeman

In attendance: Jeanne Pike, Clerk

01. Apologies:

Cllr. K Fouhy and Cllr. A Winter tendered his apologies which were accepted.

02. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda:

Cllr. E Franklin declared an interest in item 04 - payments. **Noted**

03. Public Participation:

There were no members of the public present.

04. December Finance Statement:

The Clerk presented the January Finance Statement

Proposal: That the finance statement for January 2012 be accepted and passed to Full Council for ratification and the approvals passed for payment, proposed by Cllr. P Baden and seconded by Cllr. R Jakeman with **all in favour**

Pass to Full Council for ratification

A cheque number 1489 was issued to Cllr. E Sewell for £27 to replace a mislaid one (number 1449) which will be cancelled.

05. Groundsman's Contract- Financial Implications:

There were no matters concerning finance this month but information has been received from a company that provides hydraulic grave shoring equipment. Three companies have been contacted for quotes ready for the new Groundsman's contract which has grave digging added to its schedule of works.

The equipment quoted has been defined by current best practice within burial grounds and has a considerable life expectancy. The company has offered to send a representative to give advice and the complete quote comes in at just under £3,000.

Cllr. R Jakeman proposed that Full Council be recommended to agree the purchase of the equipment necessary to fulfil the grave digging part of the contract, seconded by Cllr. P Baden. It was agreed that the company concerned should be asked to visit the cemetery to ascertain the exact requirements. **Clerk to contact Company**

06. Insurance Renewal:

The Clerk reported that the insurance is due for renewal at the end of May and it is necessary to review the insurance as it is possible that the current insurance is not sufficient for the Council's needs. WPS who insure Town Councils will be visiting the Town Council on 03 April 2012 at 10 am to discuss the review. An enquiry to Aon brought a response of 'unable to visit as the premium was less than £10,000' and Zurich (the present insurers) are uninterested in helping to ensure the right insurance is obtained, preferring to do any business by telephone or email. Any councillor interested is invited to attend the meeting.

07 Standing Orders:

It is necessary to review Standing Orders annually to ensure that the Council has a document that covers all the legislation that has been implemented during the past year. Members of the Finance Committee confirmed that at this stage there were no amendments necessary but Cllr. P Baden proposed that the decision should be subject to any amendments that may be necessary later in the year when the full effect of the Localism Act is known, seconded by Cllr. R Jakeman.

Clerk to diary for September Finance and Strategy

08 Civic Awards:

One nomination for an award has been received – Margaret Jernigan for work for 'Thrapston's Youth' and further work with 'Heart Start'. **Pass to Full Council**

09 Entrance Signs:

A quote of £3082 has been received from the County Council for the supply delivery and installation of four new entrance signs with posts. Cllr. P Baden proposed that Full Council be recommended to accept this quote, seconded by Cllr. R Jakeman.

Pass to Full Council

10 Street Lights:

There is now available a 'retro-fit' control gear which converts the present orange lights to a low energy white light. The cost is £98 per light + VAT; this would make a saving of around 55% on energy costs.

Additionally it is possible to replace 'all-night' photocells with 'part-night' photocells which go off around mid-night and back on at 5.30 am. The cost to supply and install this would be £30 per light plus VAT.

It is also possible to fit high frequency control gear to existing lights to reduce the energy by around 35% while leaving the same 'orange' light. Cost for this would be £105 per light plus VAT.

Members agreed that while it was important to save energy safety, should still be a paramount concern and Cllr. P Baden proposed that the Council ask Eon to fit the first option on the thirteen lights in the town for which the Town Council bear responsibility, seconded by Cllr. R Jakeman.

Eon should also be asked if the County Council has been approached concerning the rest of the lights in the town. **Action Clerk and pass to Full Council for ratification**

11 Clerk's Report:

- 1) The current gas bill for the office is still in credit. It now shows a credit of £773.17.
- 2) The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has commenced an information stage for new electoral arrangements for Northamptonshire County Council. Views are sought from councillors.
- 3) Cllr. R Dodds has tendered his resignation due to pressure of work. A letter of thanks for his participation will be sent.

12 Items for Future Agendas:

- 1) To elect a Vice-Chairman for the F&S Committee – **March F&S**

There being no other relevant business the meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

14/02/12/F&S/jgp