

**Honiton Town
Council
Finance & Policy
Committee**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on
1 July 2019 at 8.45pm following the Extra-ordinary meeting at the
Beehive, Dowell Street, Honiton**

Members Present

Cllr P Carrigan
Cllr Jill McNally
Cllr Vera Howard
Cllr Duncan Sheridan-Shaw

Cllr John Zarczynski
Cllr John Taylor
Cllr Roy Coombs

In attendance

Cllr Nicolette Macve
Cllr Hattle-Spence
Mark Tredwin (Town Clerk)

19/154/FP - To elect a chairperson of the Finance and Policy Committee

Cllr Sheridan-Shaw proposed Cllr Carrigan and this was Seconded by Cllr Zarczynski. No other members were proposed. This was resolved when a unanimous vote was recorded and Cllr Carrigan took the chair.

19/155/FP - To elect a Vice-chair of the Finance and Policy Committee

Cllr Zarczynski proposed Cllr Taylor and this was seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw. No other members were proposed. This was resolved when a unanimous vote was taken.

19/156/FP - To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Kolek and Cllr Darrant neither of whom are on the committee

19/157/FP - Disclosable pecuniary interests

No pecuniary interests were declared.

19/158/FP - To note the grant of dispensations made by the town clerk in relation to the business of this meeting

None had been granted.

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PART A MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

19/159/FP - To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 25 February 2019.

Copies of the minutes of the meetings had been circulated in advance.

Members **RESOLVED** to confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 25 February 2019.

Proposed by Cllr Howard and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw and **resolved** unanimously.

19/160/FP – Agenda Item 8 Finance Review Report

The committee considered the report provided with the agenda.

The Clerk went back over the internal auditors reports and the visit with regards to the end of year process by the software providers. He explained the rationale regarding the proposed acquisition of software for managing both the asset register and also the allotments.

Members also considered the existing Financial Regulations and agreed that they would go forward to Full Council. Any future changes could be adopted should it be necessary going forward. It was confirmed that Cllr Carrigan was normally checking the reconciled accounts on a monthly basis.

The report was unanimously noted.

19/161/FP - Members resolved to recommend to Full Council on the 8 July 2019 that the Asset Register Module and the Allotment Module be purchased from RBS Software in order to facilitate more accurate recording of the Council's assets and Allotments.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw and **resolved** unanimously.

19/162/FP – Members resolved to recommend to Full Council on the 8 July to 2018 that the Financial Regulations as provided at the Finance and Policy meeting be adopted.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw and **resolved** unanimously.

19/163/FP – Agenda Item 9 Insurance Renewal

Members considered the new insurance premium and information was provided on the

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premium in comparison with the previous year. Cllr Coombs questioned why we were delaying chasing the outstanding debt for insurance until the end of July. The Clerk pointed out that as we are still looking to resolve the dispute as swiftly as possible, it was agreed that because there is a possibility that we would have to make some payment for the past years to HCC, any insurance would be offset against the payment that is outstanding once the dispute has been resolved.

19/164/FP - Members noted the report and resolved to recommend to Full Council on the 8 July that suitable Insurance has been arranged and instruct officers to make payment of the Insurance Premium for 2019-20.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw, 6 For, 1 abstention.

19/165/FP – 2018-2019 Policy Report

Members were taken through the report with regards to the policies that moving forward the council would need to look at. Also, the policies that the council had considered over the past year were noted.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw and **resolved** unanimously that the report was noted.

19/166/FP Suspension of standing order “10.a x” in order to extend the meeting by an additional 15 minutes in order to consider the balance of the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Carrigan and seconded by Cllr McNally and **resolved** unanimously.

19/167/FP Co-option Policy

The Town Clerk explained the purpose and rationale that sat behind the policy in front of members. Cllr Zarczynski felt the policy had been well thought through and reflected past procedures. It was felt that members had a duty to ensure anyone co-opted was suitable and had a skill set that reflected the needs of the council.

Concerns were raised about the possibility of a block vote potentially leading to people placed on the Council who did not necessarily possess the skills that the Council wished. It was raised that a block vote could see this being an issue and as such each candidate should be voted for individually.

The clerk explained the words in the LGA 1972 act specify a block vote **MAY** be agreed. The word **MUST** is used when detailing the need for a candidate to have more than 50% of the vote of those present and eligible to vote. As a result the **MUST** should take precedence over a **MAY**. A block vote could be proposed but the council would need to take a vote on whether or not to use it. The Clerk explained that he has reservations about the use of such a mechanism since it could allow for a group of people to be rejected if there was a situation where one of the candidates was felt not to have a particular skill set that the council was looking for.

It was pointed out that the policy would not apply until the 9 July 2019, after the co-option takes place at the Full Council meeting on the 8 July 2019.

It was pointed out that the proposed application form was based upon the NALC documentation. This means that the questions asked in the application form are those that the council can ask in order to seek information from each potential candidate. Members were reminded that a CV is what candidates want to tell members, whereas the application form allows the members to ask for information.

Cllr Coombs raised some points, but members felt these were issues that could be dealt with at the time any vacancies occur.

Members resolved to recommend to Full Council on the 8 July the adoption of the Co-option Policy as put forward to the Finance and Policy Committee for resolving.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw and **resolved** unanimously.

19/168/FP Meeting closed at 9-15pm