

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

5th March 2024

At a meeting of the **Finance & Governance Committee** held on **Tuesday 5th March 2024**

Present: Councillors S Green (Chairman), A Greenwood, H Clarke, P Duigan, H King, P Morton and L Monument

Also present: Councillors Z Flint, C Coleman and Town Clerk Tony Needham.

1. **To receive apologies for absence.**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declaration of Interest.**

Councillor A Greenwood declared a personal interest in item 3 by virtue of being a member of the St Nicholas Bowls Club.

3. **To consider grants applications.**

The Following Grants were recommended.

Organisation	Purpose	Amount	Comment
Dereham St Nicholas Bowls Club	Towards a new fence	£1,000	Suggest that the Club also requests funding from Breckland Council
Dereham Community Crafters	D-Day commemoration event.	£400	
Dereham Band	Summer Concerts	£500	

4. **Review expenditure against budget**

This was reviewed with explanations. The Clerk made Councillors aware that there would be an additional cost to the Memorial Hall air handling and heating which would cost in the region on £4,000.

The Committee recommended that from the end of this financial year and until otherwise decided that any underspend in the allotment Maintenance Budget be placed in an ear marked reserve for allotment capital projects.

5. **To review 5 year projects and capital budget.**

This was reviewed

6. **To review Internal Auditor's report.**

The report was received. Safeguarding Policy for vulnerable people was highlighted, as something which could be checked to make sure it is seamless. The safeguarding procedures will be reviewed and brought back to a Social and Welfare Committee.

7. **To review Standing Orders**

7(a) to Consider amending Standing Order 20.

The Committee recommended that Standing Order 20 be amended to read:

If the subject matter of a resolution comes within the province of a Committee of the Council, it shall be placed before such Committee or to such other Committee as determined by the Clerk in consultation with the proposer; unless the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the relevant committee considers it to be a matter of urgency, then they may allow it to be dealt with at the next Council meeting.

This would be reviewed in 12 months.

7(b) That Meetings finish at a specific time:

The committee suggested that Chairman and members of committees should be mindful to try and keep meetings to two hours.

7(c) That there would be no regular meetings in August:

The Committee recommended that the Council look at not holding ordinary meetings in August, the Clerk would look at options and bring back to Full Council.

7(d) Selection of future Work Streams and presenting reports to Council and its Committees.

It was recommended that Council suspend Standing Order 20 for the time being and implement the following working practice:

All reports for consideration should be prepared by an Officer.

1. A Councillor thinks that the Council should do something new.
2. The item is then placed on a committee agenda. If the matter is quite straight forward, incurs minimal cost and minimal risk, it could be dealt with by the Committee. If it is something which, has risk and resource implications and therefore needs more consideration and it is something which the committee wishes to pursue further, then committee could decide to 'commission' a report. The report would be prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the proposing Councillor. The report would briefly set out the proposal, risk, costs, opportunities and potential issues. The report would be a First Step Report and not a thorough report.
3. If, after receiving the first step report, the committee still felt it was something that it might want to consider pursuing at a later date, it would place the report on the list of potential work streams. When Councillors then decide to select the next work stream, there will be a better understanding of some of the issues for each item under consideration.

Progress on work streams would be updated in a written report to every committee to which the work stream sits within.

In addition to the above points.

The Committee recommended that that Standing Order 1 also include reference to Full Council meetings being held on the second Tuesday of the month with regular committees on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Any other meetings will be arranged on other Tuesdays.

8. **To review Insurance Schedule.**

The Committee recommended that all items other than mobile phones with a valuation of less than £3,000 be removed from the insurance schedule. To check to see if the excess can be increased to £2,000.

9. **To Review Asset Register**

The Asset register was reviewed.

10. **To consider Communications Policy**

The Committee recommended that the Communications Policy produced by the Working Group be adopted.

11. **To consider the draft Terms of Reference for the proposed Communications and Events Sub-Committee, as requested by the Council (Cllr Coleman)**

The Committee recommended that matters relating to communications and events would sit within the province of the Social and Welfare Committee.

12. **Exclusion of press and public**

Proposed by Councillor S Green, it was agreed to pass a resolution to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting on the grounds that the Business to be transacted is confidential and publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

13. **To discuss refurbishment and revised cost plan of Cemetery Lodge**

On considering the estimated costs of the refurbishment and possible savings,

The Committee recommended:

- To change the construction of the extension to cavity wall blockwork and plasterboard on dabs and use trussed rafters with a raised tie.
- That, if required, funding from the 'New Cemetery' and 'Major Refurbishment of Town Council Asset', be reallocated to this project along with the 2024/25 building repairs budget.
- Proceed to tender for the construction.

Chairman