

Minutes of a Meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 4th JUNE 2014 at 7.15 p.m.**

PRESENT **Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman) and**
Councillors E.M. Adam, D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, W.M. Blenkinsopp, A.M. Chandran, Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, N. Collinson, Mrs. M. Dalton, I. Gray, G.C. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, K. Henderson, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson and Mrs. V.M. Raw.

OFFICERS Mr. A. Bailey (Town Clerk)
Mr. D. Austin (Finance Manager)
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin. Officer)

4. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors R. Bowman, J. Clark, M.A. Dalton, Mrs. I. Hewitson, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary, Mrs. A. Palmer, D. Summers and C. Wheeler.

5. **MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS**

No applications for dispensations had been received.

6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

7. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from the public.

8. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor B. Hall, seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. Dalton and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 16th April 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9. **AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

It was proposed by Councillor A. Chandran, seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. Dalton and

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee held on the 28th May 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- (ii) That Members wished to record their thanks to Councillor W. Iveson for the work he had undertaken as the previous Chairman of the Audit Sub-Committee.

10. **ACCOUNTS CONTROL SHEETS**

Accounts control sheets for the period 11th April 2014 to the 23rd May 2014 and the General Bank Account for April 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the accounts control sheets for the period 11th April 2014 to the 23rd May 2014 and the General Bank Account for April 2014 be received.

11. **GRANTS / DONATIONS**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report which gave the current donation budget for this financial year as £5,700.

The following requests had been received:

- (a) 'Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society'
- (b) Mayor's Charity Golf Day – Friday, 5th September 2014
 - (i) Free use of the Oakleaf Golf Course.
 - (ii) Issue of a voucher for a promotional free round of golf to each participating person in the tournament.

Aycliffe Youth Council

The current Youth Council grant for 2014/15 was £2,500.

The following applications had been received and proposed for ratification by the Policy and Resources Committee:-

- (a) Royal Air Force Air Cadets - £448 towards the cost of a weekend teambuilding camp for the 1407 (Newton Aycliffe) Squadrons 21st Birthday celebrations.
- (b) Aclé Scouts - £400 towards the cost of a range of training and assessor courses.
- (c) WECAN Parents Group - £200 towards the cost of a family trip for low income families.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society
That a donation of £100 be given to this Society.
- (iii) Mayor's Charity Golf Day
 - That permission be granted for the free use of the Golf Course for the Mayor's Annual Charity Golf Day.
 - That a promotional voucher for a free round of golf be given to participating persons in the tournament.

(iv) That the following recommended donations from the Youth Council be ratified for payment:

- Royal Air Force Air Cadets - £448
- Acle Scouts - £400
- WECAN Parents Group - £200

12. **PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING CENTRES**

The Early Years Officer submitted her report which set out the current attendance figures.

Information was given to update members on the Early Years Single Funding Formula changes in respect of a reduction in the funding to be received. A full report would be given to the next meeting of the impact of these changes.

Following a briefing session attended by Officers in respect of the criteria for eligible two year olds being introduced into the pre-schools an Officer from Durham County Council would be visiting the 2 Pre-Schools to give support and advice on the introduction of two year olds into the setting.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That information in respect of Early Years Single Funding Formula be reported to the next Policy and Resources Committee Meeting.
- (iii) That further information in respect of the possibility of two year olds being introduced into the Pre-Schools be considered at the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.
- (iv) That a Service Review of the Pre-Schools be initiated.

13. **2013/14 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET YEAR END OUTTURN POSITION**

The Finance Manager submitted a report to provide members with details of the final year end position on the Council's approved Revenue and Capital Budgets for the 2013/14 financial year.

The report outlined the impact of the year end financial position on the Council's Balances and Reserves together with the key year end financial issues relating to the Council's Balance Sheet.

The Statutory Statement of Accounts were to be presented to an Extra-Ordinary meeting of the Council to be held on the 25th June 2014.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the year end financial position of the Council's 2013/14 Revenue Budgets be received.
- (ii) That the year end financial position on the Council's 2013/14 Capital Programme be received.

- (iii) That the year end position on the Council's Balances and Reserves be approved.
- (iv) That the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme carry forward requests referred to in paragraphs 5.2 and 6.8 be approved.
- (v) That quarterly budgetary control reports continue to be submitted during 2014/2015 detailing the financial position and estimated outturn on the Council's 2014/2015 Revenue and Capital Budgets.

14. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2014/15**

- (a) Mr. D. Austin, Finance Manager gave a presentation on the Medium Term Financial Plan to members explaining the document in detail prior to the consideration of the document for approval.

Members were given the opportunity to ask the Finance Manager questions on the Medium Term Financial Plan which were duly answered.

- (b) The Finance Manager submitted his report together with the Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2014/15 – 2018/19 for members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2014/15 – 2018/19 be approved.
- (iii) That it be agreed that work continues on the Council's programme of service reviews.
- (iv) That an assessment of Council and Community priorities is undertaken with a view to identifying possible areas for future savings.
- (v) That the Members wished to record their thanks to the Finance Manager for his excellent report and a professional management system.

15. **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS UPDATE**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report seeking Members consideration of the upgrading of the Council's financial management system.

It was pointed out that the computerised accounting system (Pegasus Opera 2 software) currently used by the council has been in place for over 10 years and there was concerns that following the release of Opera 3 there may be an 'end of life' on the current software by the end of the year.

T.S.G. the Council's IT software support Group had given three options in terms of an upgrade for the financial management system:-

- (1) Retain the Opera 2 System until an 'end of life' announcement is made by Pegasus;
- (2) Upgrade to the Opera 3 System;
- (3) Test the market and look into the viability of replacing the system with another financial management system.

Budget provision of £10,000 had been set aside within the 2014/15 Capital Programme for the replacement of the financial management system which would cost £10,050.

There would be an additional revenue cost to meet the annual licence fee and maintenance contract increase on the system making a shortfall of £420 which could be taken from the IT Revenue Budget.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the current financial management system be upgraded to Opera 3 Software at a capital cost of £10,050.
- (iii) That the additional revenue budget requirement of £420 be approved from the Information Technology Revenue Budget.
- (iv) That the Standing Orders Exemption Form be approved.

16. **REPLACEMENT RIDE-ON MOWER**

The Works Manager had submitted information on the purchase of a replacement triple mower. The current mower, Ransomes Parkway, is now 10 years old and due to be replaced. This mower has structural problems with the front chassis and would not be cost effective to carry out further repairs.

Demonstrations of possible replacement triple mowers had taken place from the following three companies with their quotations taking into account a part exchange allowance for the Ransomes Parkway:-

Rickerby Horticulture	Ransomes Parkway 3	£23,888.00
Carrs Billington	Toro LT3340	£23,100.00
Greenway (Grass Machinery)	John Deere 8400	£22,502.31

Prices exclude VAT.

A sum of £30,000 had been included in the 2014/15 Capital Budget for the purchase of replacement Works Department machinery.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That a Toro LT3340 Mower be purchased from Carrs Billington at a cost of £23,100.00.

CHAIRMAN.