

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 24th June 2024

A.M Cooke (*Chairman*)
S. Walsh (*Vice Chairman*)
A. Bashar
P. Lucraft
A.M Lucraft
A. Murray
A. Rees

* Absent ** Apologies

Also present: Town Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO),
Committee Clerk. 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies to note.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18th March 2024 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

3. Substitutes

None.

4. Public Forum

Representatives from the Simon Wellbeing Centre gave a presentation in relation to their grant application.

They outlined their proposal for a new men's wellbeing group to be held at the Simon Wellbeing Centre in Ardingly.

Members thanked the representatives for their presentation saying the grant would be discussed under Agenda item 13.

2 members of the public left the meeting at 07.23

5. Members' Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary or other interests.

6. To receive and consider the lists of receipts and payments for the period 1st January 2024 – 31st March 2024.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) presented the Period 1st January 2024 – 31st March 2024, he reminded members that funds had been moved into the CCLA account and welcomed questions.

Without further comment:

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to approve the lists of payments and receipts, for the period 1st January 2024 – 31st March 2024.

7. To confirm bank balances and bank reconciliation statements as at 31st March 2024.

Members noted the documents presented. The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) explained that the documents presented were for the year end and now included the new CCLA account.

Cllr P Lucraft questioned the variable rate of interest on the CCLA Account and asked if it were possible to move a sum of money into a fixed rate account which would yield more income. The RFO responded that as the 1st tranche of the precept had been received funds were available for transfer if the council so wished.

After a short discussion members agreed it was sensible to move funds into a higher interested account. The Clerk suggested the committee could delegate the decision to transfer the funds to the RFO and Clerk allowing funds to be moved quickly rather than waiting for the next Full Council meeting, with the Clerk confirming with this councils auditor.

The Clerk also advised members that the investment policy was due to be reviewed at the next Policy and Finance meeting.

Members **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to approve the bank balances and the reconciliation statement as at 31st March 2024.**

Members **RESOLVED to move £250,000 into the CCLA Account.**

8. To receive and consider and approve the Town Councils Income and expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st March 2024

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) presented the income and expenditure report for the year to date 31st March 2024 and welcomed questions.

Without comment:

Members **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to approve the income and expenditure report and Balance Sheet for the year to date 31st March 2024.**

9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31st March 2024 – to receive, consider and note the Internal Audit Report 2023/2024.

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) gave an explanation of the internal audit process.

Cllr P Lucraft thanked the Clerk and RFO for their work on the end of year accounts. The RFO also thanked Administration Assistant for her work.

Members **RESOLVED to approve the Internal Audit Report 2023/2024.**

10. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31st March 2024 – to receive, consider and approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024.

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) explained that the series of questions posed to the Council in Section 1 as presented needed to be answered yes with any that could not be fully explained.

Without further comment.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024**

11. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31st March 2024 – to receive, consider and approve the Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/2024.

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) presented Section 2 to members.
Without further comment.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/2024.**

12. To receive the Town Councils Asset Register

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) referred to the Asset Register shared in the agenda pack. He advised members that he intends to migrate the Asset Register which is currently on an excel spreadsheet to the Rialtas accounts package. Cllr P Lucraft inquired upon some items registered, the RFO answered the questions and with no further comment.

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Register as at **31st March 2024.**

13. To consider applications for Town Council Grants.

Members noted the 2024/2025 budget of £10,000

Each grant application was discussed individually.

Members **RESOLVED** to award;

a) a grant of £1000 to Haywards Heath Scout Group to fund insulation of the building with the caveat that funds will only be released once the full cost of the project has been collected. The Clerk also advised he has recommended the group investigate if there are any S106 monies available.

b) a grant of £750 to Haywards Heath and Beech Hurst Bowling Club to fund the introduction of a set of bowling aids

c) a grant of £418 to 7th Haywards Heath Guide Unit set up a new Girl Guides unit.

d) Defer the grant application of £500 to Girl Guiding UK. Members had concerns over the sustainability and future funding of the temporary storage solution. The council are happy to discuss the idea of a capital grant to come to a more permanent storage solution.

d) Refuse the grant application of £1000 to the Simon Wellbeing Centre to set up a new wellbeing group. Members were still unclear on the scope of the project and there were concerns that there was no match funding which would benefit the wider community and surrounding areas. There were also concerns around the organisation's constitution and set up. Therefore, on this basis the Council have resolved to refuse the grant application.

e) a grant of £90.00 to the Windermere Road Residents Association to fund the purchase of Swift nesting boxes for a conservation project.

14. To consider a special award to Mid Sussex Voluntary Action

The Clerk referred to his report. A short discussion took place and with all in favour.

Members **RESOLVED** to

- a) **Members agreed to award Mid Sussex Voluntary Action £15,000 towards services and activities in Hayward Heaths over two years to be met from the Community Project Budget with £7,500 being awarded within the current financial year and further £7,500 be earmarked within the 2025/2026.**
- b) **That each annual payment be made two in tranches of £3,750 subject to monitoring through a Service Level Agreement.**
- c) **That the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to execute a Service Level Agreement with Mid Sussex Voluntary Action.**

15. To consider the adoption of a Social Media Policy.

The Clerk referred to the Social Media Policy shared in the agenda pack. He explained the importance of the Town Council having such a policy.

Members discussed the proposed policy. It was felt that an addition regarding the administration of social media groups should be added to sections 3 and 4 of the policy and more context be given to point one of Section 3.3.

Taking into consideration the above amendments.

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the **Social media Policy**

16. To consider the adoption of a Training and Development Policy

Without comment.

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the **Training and Development Policy**

19. Urgent Items

None.

The meeting closed at 08.29 pm.