

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes: **Policy and Finance Committee** held on Monday 3rd September 2018

Present Cllrs:

J Ash-Edwards (Chairman)
S Wickremaratchi (Vice Chairman)
C Laband
C Ash-Edwards
A Boutrup**
R de Mierre
S Hillier
M Pulfer**

Apologies ** Absent *

Also Present: Steven Trice - Town Clerk and Andrew Sturgeon (RFO)

17. Apologies

M. Pulfer – family commitment.
A. Boutrup – ill health.

18. Minutes

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 18th June 2018 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman with one factual correction. It was noted that there was an omission under minute 14 which should of included that '*Cllr Wickremaratchi had stated that he had to spend his own money, totalling £250, on a Mayor's Civic Service and had only received £50 from the Town Council*'

19. Substitutes

None

20. Declarations of Interest

None

21. Matters Arising

It was again asked, in relation to grant awards whether the Town Council was asking for recognition from recipients. The Town Clerk stated that such a request would be carried within the grant award letter.

22. Payments and receipts and income and expenditure reports for the period 1st April 2018 – 31st July 2018.

Members had before them the list of payments and receipts and income and expenditure reports for the period **1st April 2018 – 31st July 2018**. The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) welcomed questions with the following being asked by Members;

- It was noted that there had been a large amount of traffic with regards to financial transactions during the first third of the financial year. It was noted that a large number of BACs payments coupled with online payments had been made due to the collection of allotment rents. At this point the RFO thanked Brenda Gulliver (Administration Assistant) who had got to grips with the financial systems and was helping the him immensely.
- It was asked what the payment for the IT hours bank referred to. It was explained that the Town Council pays in advance for IT support. Subsequently it was asked, if the Council loses the hours at the end of

the year. The RFO explained that this was not the case and the hours just were held until required.

- It was asked what the payment to Maltby Surveys actually covered, as it seemed to be a considerable amount for just measuring the Town Hall building. The Town Clerk explained that the cost included the development of professional drawings, which were to be held on electronic record for use in the office refurbishment Building Regulations application as there were none on record at the Town Hall or on the Mid Sussex District Council Planning Portal.
- Reference was made to the Town Council paying for the nun's burial areas at Haywards Heath Cemetery. The RFO pointed out that it was actually the nuns who paid the Town Council,

Members then **RESOLVED** to;

Recommend to Full Council the list of payments and receipts, and income and expenditure for the period 1st April 2018 – 31st July 2018.

23. Grants

Members considered one grant application made by Mid Sussex RED, which was approved, but there was concern at the level of reserves held by the organisation and their policy of giving any monies held to worthy organisations at the end of each year from the reserves. This was on the grounds that RED, on this basis, did not necessarily need the funds applied for, which Members could have granted to other applicants. It was felt that where the Town Council supported RED there should be a better way of holding money, which should be flagged up with RED as some grant providers will not grant to organisation that hold large amounts of reserves. However it was agreed to make the award on this occasion as Members were supportive of the work of RED, with this,

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Award a grant of £250.00 to Mid Sussex RED towards the purchase of display board.

24. Mid Sussex Voluntary Action Funding Application

Members considered the application made by Mid Sussex Voluntary Action but failed to see anything in the application that was over and above what they should be providing as a service. With nothing new to be achieved from the money requested and, on the grounds, that Mid Sussex Voluntary Action was funded by principal authorities, Members felt it would not be appropriate to grant and somewhat pay again for the service. As a result, with deep regret;

Members **RESOLVED** to decline the funding request from Mid Sussex Voluntary Action for £1,350.

25. Communications Working Group

Members had before them a questionnaire developed by the Chairman of the Communications Working Group, which had been approved by a majority of the working group for use at Town Day and through focused marketing events throughout the year. Unfortunately, the Committee decided not to adopt the questionnaire and as a result decided to pull the consultation on the following grounds.

- the Questionnaire was too long.
- the content and wording of the questionnaire, in some parts, was inaccurate.

- some of the questions were ambiguous.

Finally, felt dangerous to do a consultation, as the questionnaires with an anonymous response could be used by other groups to affect the outcomes. Furthermore, a Freedom of Information Request on any of the manipulated responses could then lead to adverse publicity in the press.

Members welcomed the idea of a questionnaire, but felt it needed reviewing, shortening and the timing of such changed. Members felt that the questionnaire did not convey the message that they wanted to put out to the community.

Members **RESOLVED** the recommendation to not ratify the recommendations of the Communications Working Group and withdraw the questionnaire and not proceed with the planned consultation.

26. Urgent Business

None

- 27.** Members **RESOLVED** to enter into exempt business and consider a human resource matter

Meeting closed at 8.48pm