

**Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on  
Thursday 4th June 2015  
at the Mechanics Institute, Percy Street, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Cllrs A Symmonds (Chairman), D Farrar, G Mavin, S Mavin, R Roberts.

**In attendance:** W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk.

**FP 15/01 Apologies**

S Allcroft, P Allcroft, P Broom, G Castle, B Grisdale, S Patience.

**FP 15/02 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**FP 15/03 Budget update**

The Town Clerk circulated the Committee budget as at 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. He highlighted the final Committee expenditure of £94,981.47. He also explained that for 2015/16, the budget heads of Town Twinning and Mayoral Gifts had been transferred to this Committee from Recreation and Amenities and that £900 had been transferred from 2014/15 to 2015/16. Expenditure at 1<sup>st</sup> June was £11,173.49 out of a budget of £125,580. Questions were asked about the increased NALC subscription, which had increased by almost £200 as part of a new calculation formula.

**RESOLVED: To receive the budget update.**

**FP 15/04 Draft Annual Return**

The Clerk circulated copies of the draft annual return for 2014/15 and explained section 1 and section 2. Section 1 included the accounting statements and the supporting documents included the Income and Expenditure Account, the Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet. Each of the supporting documents were looked at in-turn and it was noted that the council's reserves had increased from some £145,000 to some £252,000 but out of this £98,317 was ring fenced to the Swansfield Park Play area, a further £1,000 belonged to the Bike Track Project and £5,106 belong to the Town Team. The different Council bank accounts and bank balances were highlighted which showed a total of £255,214. This figure excluded sundry debtors and creditors. The Clerk also highlighted that the new asset register had resulted in a change of value for 2013/14 so this had been restated and the 2014/15 figure had increased by £110,000 due to the Swansfield Park play area endowment and new assets purchased during the year. Section 2 was the governance statement; the completed document was highlighted and discussed.

**RECOMMENDED: That the draft Annual Return for 2014/15 be approved at the Council meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015.**

**FP 15/05 Update on Council Insurance Policy and Council Investments**

At the last Committee it had been agreed to seek competitive quotes for the insurance renewal for a three 3 year period and the clerk was given delegated authority in consultation with the committee chairman to agree the new cover with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. The Clerk outlined that the 2014/15 cover had been £8,164.92 and competitive quotes had been received from 2 companies. These quotes had been similar although the insurance cover varied slightly between the policies, particularly in relation to the policy excess. In discussion with the Chairman, a new 3 year cover had been arranged with Zurich Insurance at an annual cost of £4,850.23.

Following the last committee and the circulation of documents about the CCLA property fund, a number of councillors had made suggestions about future investments. In the light of these it

was clear that further discussion and work needed to be undertaken to devise an investment policy that could be approved by the Council. Councillors suggested a working group be formed to do this. It was suggested the working group be up to 5 councillors, Councillors Farrar, Symmonds and P Allcroft were suggested, with others not at the meeting, to be invited.

**RESOLVED: a) To note the new insurance policy and premium and b) to form a working group to devise a council investment strategy which would give a framework for future investment decisions.**

**FP 15/06 Project and Funding Officer Post**

The Clerk issued the revised job description which incorporated comments made by councillors after the last meeting. A draft Person Specification had been added together with background information. Councillors discussed some of the wording and the purpose of the post and it was agreed to circulate the information to all councillors on the Committee requesting final comments by Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June, so that the post could be advertised soon afterwards.

**RESOLVED: that the draft job description and person specification be circulated to councillors and feedback to be given to the Clerk by 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015.**

**FP 15/07 Community Governance Review – Boundary Discussion**

In light of new developments to the south of the town and following a discussion with Denwick Parish Council, Alnwick Town Council had previously agreed to ask NCC to undertake a community governance review with a view to changing the parish boundary between Alnwick and Denwick Detached. It had also been suggested that this Committee would look at boundary options. The Clerk informed the committee that he has not been able to obtain any information about the actual process and the extent to which the Town Council needed to make an actual boundary suggestion, or options, or if these emerged from the consultation. Councillors reviewed a map of the parishes and discussed the area to the south of the town and the most appropriate boundary; it was felt to be beneficial to include a proposed boundary that would incorporate any future development beyond the proposed housing, sports facilities and high school. It was felt that rather than use field boundaries, the Rugley Burn could form a possible natural boundary. Councillors also discussed other aspects of the boundary between the two parishes including the locations of the Lionheart Enterprise Park and the Cawledge Business Park and an area to the west of the Town and east of the A1 which was currently in the Alnwick parish, but which might be better in the Denwick parish. If included in Denwick, this could actually see the parishes of Denwick and Denwick Detached being amalgamated. Councillors felt that if the process allowed consideration of the wider boundary, then these comments could be made.

**RECOMMENDED: That the Council agree the proposed parish boundary to the south of the town follows the Rugley Burn between Rugley Wood and the A1 and is linked to the existing boundary by the unnamed road running north from Rugley Wood towards Intake Farm and the A1 running north towards Alnwick.**

Meeting closed at 9.02pm