



**Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018  
at the St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors S Allcroft (Chair), B Grisdale, P Broom, J Humphries, G Mavin, S Patience, M Swinbank, A Symmonds, G Watson and L Wearn.

**In attendance:** W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk.

**FP 17/43 Apologies**  
Councillors Castle.

**FP 17/44 Declarations of Interest**  
Councillor Grisdale declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 8. New Grant Application.

**FP 17/45 Minutes of the last meeting - matters Arising not on the agenda**  
FP17/41 The Town Clerk advised that the Project & Funding Officer was getting costing from the supplier for additional cameras with number plate recognition. Councillor Swinbank asked what budget was left. The Town Clerk advised that there was around £5k left in the 2017/18 CCTV budget.

**FP 17/46 Budget update 2017/18**  
The Town Clerk went through the circulated budget as at 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018. He highlighted the following lines of expenditure:

ADMINISTRATION – final year end figure.

GRANTS – budget increased to accommodate additional grant applications.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION – budget for new office accommodation not spent as awaiting landlord's approval for the Town Council to occupy the room in Greenwell Lane. They wanted a sub-lease in place which NCC are paying for.

PROJECT & FUNDING OFFICER – includes cost of additional day for economic Development.

COUNCIL VAN – includes cost of fuel.

Actual expenditure is at £168,696 against a budget of £199,865.

TOWN TWINNING – budget of £600 in 2018/19 which will be spent on visit by two of Alnwick's Twin Towns. The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that the Bryne Band from Time Kommune, Alnwick Norwegian twin town, would be visiting Alnwick from Friday June 22<sup>nd</sup> to Monday June 26<sup>th</sup> and that the Town Council have been asked to host a Civic Reception for them on Saturday June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

She advised that the Town Council had also received a request from the Friends of Voerde Alnwick's German twin town, to host a Civic Reception on Wednesday August 15<sup>th</sup> or Thursday August 16<sup>th</sup>.

She advised that she had made enquiries for a location for the two Civic Receptions.

**RESOLVED: To note the update.**

**FP 17/47 Review of Section 137 expenditure 2017/18**  
The Town Clerk reminded councillors that Section 137 allowed budget to be spent on items which were outside their Powers and Duties. He explained that the payment list approved at each Full Council meeting indicated which items were Section expenditure. The permitted amount for 2017/18, which is based on a set amount for each electorate, was £49,492.66 and the expenditure to date was £26,702.13. He issued a list of all the Section 137 expenditure items to date explaining some of the

items which appeared on the list including expenditure on Remembrance Day, some grants, Business Forums and Economic Development.

**RESOLVED: To note the Section 137 expenditure.**

**FP 17/48**

**Review of Insurance Policy**

The Town Clerk issued an extract from the Town Council's current insurance policy. He advised that the 3-year policy ends in June 2018 and that he would be seeking quotes for a renewal policy.

He advised that the insurance policy cover 4 buildings and included an All Risk list that covered all items valued at over £250. New items are notified to the insurance company as they are purchased who add them to the policy.

The current policy was for £6,229 which includes £552 for the Mechanics Institute. He felt that the new policy for 2018/19 onwards would hopefully be less.

Councillor Swinbank asked when the buildings were last valued. The Town Clerk advised that his had not been done for at least four years.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the six 'Alnwick' signs were included on the policy. The Town Clerk advised that they weren't.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the vehicles at the Cemetery were included. The Town Clerk advised that these were on a separate insurance policy.

Councillor Mavin asked if the insurance policy covered new for old. The Town Clerk advised that it did.

Councillor Mavin asked if the Cemetery Lodge content was included. The Town Clerk advised that only the content of the Cemetery Office was covered on the policy.

Councillor Wearn asked why Robertson's Pant was the only fountain on the insurance policy. The Town Clerk advised it was the only fountain owned by the Town Council.

**RESOLVED: To accept the review of the Insurance Policy and give delegated authority to the Town Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair of finance & Policy to review insurance quotes and accept the best value for money.**

**FP 17/48**

**New Guidance on Investments**

The Town Clerk advised councillors that there was new guidance on investments for Town & Parish Councils who invest more than £100k. The guidance states that, from March 2019, the Town Council need to be transparent as to where they invest and the level of return they are getting.

He advised that when the Town Council's Investment Strategy is reviewed in March 2019 it would need some changes to accommodate the guidance.

Councillor Broom asked if the investments included the Swansfield Park endowment. The Town Clerk advised that the Swansfield Park endowment was originally £99,992 (April 2015) and that the investment is now worth £101,570. Some of the original £99,992 has been spent and the Town Council need to decide how the interest is treated.

Councillor Swinbank felt the capital spend should be deducted and the rest of the money left unvested.

Councillor Watson felt the interest should be apportioned.

Councillor Gridale asked what proportion of the NCC proportion of the endowment had been spent. The Town Clerk said he had not been advised of this.

Councillor Wearn felt the interest could be identified.

**RESOLVED: i) To apportion the interest in line with expenditure; ii) To request the Town Clerk reflects the guidance on investments in the update Investment Strategy in March 2019.**

**FP 17/49**

**Consideration of new grant applications**

The Town Clerk advised councillors that a new grant application had been received from The Lions. The application was asking for a contribution towards the costs of building a curved wall with seating and planting areas in Swansfield Park near the cut through from The Avenue.

Councillor Watson asked why NCC didn't pay for the wall. Councillor Gridale advised that NCC only own the path.

Councillor Swinbank explained that the land banks but the path surface was good.

Councillor Allcroft felt that any seats installed might not be used as they would be in the shade.

Councillor Swinbank advised that potential Section 106 money from the Dukes School planning application might be used towards the project.

Councillor Allcroft felt that more information was needed.

Councillor Watson said he was not keen that the Town Council gave a grant.

Councillor Symmonds said he was not persuaded about the project and that a site visit would be beneficial.

Councillor Patience felt that the Town Council could fund a seat or flowerbed.

Councillor Swinbank felt the Town Council should support the project but give a small amount of money.

**RESOLVED: i) To support the project in principle; ii) To ask The Lions for further information about the project then review the grant application again once this is received.**

**FP17/50**

**Any Other Urgent Business**

Councillor Broom asked if the Town Clerk could request that Local Living do not attach posters to the newly refurbished fingerposts.

Councillor Mavin reported that G F White had been asked to produce a leaflet for Alnwick Medical Practice to attract doctors to work in Alnwick.

Meeting closed at 8.13pm