

DOWNHAM MARKET FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 23rd July 2019 AT 7.00PM

Present	The Mayor	Cllr R Hayes
	The Chair	A Pickering
	Councillors	E Hendry R Hepworth J Woodmin
	Non-Committee Member	Cllr R Shippey
	Senior Administrator (Clerk)	Ms C Dorman

2 members of public were in attendance

Those in attendance at the meeting were notified of the emergency evacuation procedure from the Town Council offices.

Members were asked to ensure that their mobile telephones were either switched to silent mode or turned off.

1601. To receive Members' Apologies for Absence

An apology was received from Cllr Lawson due to work commitments.

1602. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made

1603. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 June 2019 (pages 6509 – 6514)

Proposed – Cllr Hayes

Seconded – Cllr Hendry

'That the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 June 2019 (pages 6509 – 6514) be approved as a true and accurate record.'

All in favour

1604. Public Participation – 15 minutes allowed

Two members of the public addressed the Committee on the subject of Procurement.

The first member of the public requested that Downham Market Town Council (DMTC) make Downham Market a leader in regard to sustainability to enable others to change. It was requested that DMTC enable Downham Market to be at the forefront of small towns making an environmental change. She asked the Committee to consider whether best value was only about money or whether best value should be seen in regard to the positive domino effect it can have for children / grandchildren / future generations. She commented that she understood the financial constraints of local councils however this can reduce the health burden of citizens and environment for wildlife. She asked that the Committee consider insisting that all suppliers comply wholeheartedly with the policy and not take the easy option.

The second member of the public requested the Committee to be bold and resolute in their decision and help prevent a climate disaster and to consider implementing further green and ethical commitments for the residents of Downham Market.

The Chair thanked the 2 members of public for their attendance. They were invited to stay but chose to leave.

1605. To receive the Clerk's Report

The Clerk advised that there was no report.

1606. To receive Councillors' questions

Cllr Shippey requested supporting documents for discussion were sent out well ahead of meeting dates.

The Clerk and the Mayor both advised that his suggested method is the usual course of action and the documents usually go out with the agenda however the documents in discussion at this meeting had only been approved with the Internal Auditor on Monday 22 July 2019 with minor amendments being made on Tuesday 23 July 2019 to allow full discussion and prevent another month until discussions could be held.

1607. To receive and consider correspondence

There was no correspondence received.

1608. To approve the Payment of Bills

A list of bills from Town Council had been circulated (Appendix 1).

Cllr Hendry queried the bill for Sally's Classic Catering as this had not been approved by Community Development Committee earlier in the month. The Mayor discussed the role of the Council in Civic Functions and that this date had already been agreed with the supplier and the Council had a requirement to meet the deposit due.

Cllr Hepworth queried the bill in relation to Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. The Clerk gave an overview of the costs budgeted in relation to contested and uncontested elections and this bill fell within the expected levels for an uncontested election.

Proposed – Cllr Hayes Seconded – Cllr Hendry

'That the Finance and General Purposes Committee bills be paid as per the attached schedule.'

All in favour

1609. To discuss acceptance of cash for invoices

The Mayor gave an overview of her concerns regarding staff safety when accepting cash and the transport of cash to the office, Town Hall or Bank. Various options were discussed, and it was agreed that the view of the Market Sub Committee would be canvassed for their opinion and referral to the new Town Clerk on 01 August 2019 for her opinion. The Committee asked for this item to be added to the August 2019 agenda for further discussion.

1610. To discuss grant post submission suggestions

The Clerk advised the Committee that due to the current workload this had not been fully researched and asked that the Committee agree for this item to be placed on next month's agenda. The Committee understood the Clerk's constraints and agreed to such action.

1611. To receive update from Internal Auditor visit on 22 July 2019

The Clerk advised the Committee that this had been a really positive visit and all items reviewed under Payroll had met expected standards. The formal report from the Internal Auditor (IA) is expected shortly.

The Committee asked for the Deputy Clerk to be congratulated for his efforts on Payroll.

The Clerk advised that the IA had assisted in the Procurement overview and Financial Risk Register document creation.

1612. To discuss Finance Training

The Internal Auditor had confirmed he was available to complete a 3-hour training session on Risk Management and Account Analysis on Thursday 26 September 2019 to the whole Council for a maximum cost of £275 plus VAT.

Proposed – Cllr Pickering

Seconded – Cllr Hendry

'That the Committee authorise the booking of the Internal Auditor to provide training between the hours of 6pm and 9pm on Thursday 26 September 2019 with all Councillors expected to be in attendance.'

All in favour

1613. To discuss assessment of SLCC / Norfolk ALC cost comparison

The Clerk gave a cost benefit analysis.

Proposed – Cllr Pickering

Seconded – Cllr Hayes

'That the Committee authorise the renewal of the Norfolk ALC subscription for the Financial Year 2019/2020.'

All in favour

1614. To discuss and approve Procurement Policy

The Policy had been circulated prior to the meeting (Appendix 2).

The Committee discussed the Procurement Policy which included a Sustainability Statement.

Cllr Pickering advised that the Sustainability statement would be supported by an Environmental Policy in due course.

Proposed – Cllr Pickering

Seconded – Cllr Hendry

‘That the Committee adopt the Procurement Policy with supporting sustainability statement, as presented, for further review in October 2019.’

All in favour

1615. To receive and consider Financial Reports 2019/2020

a) To discuss Financial Statements

The Clerk gave commentary on Month 4.

b) To receive Bank reconciliation update

The Clerk gave evidence of a partial reconciliation to 08.07.2019. There was a difference of £140.03 which coincided with the Credit Card statement dated 21 April 2019. This matter is being investigated.

The May 2019 reconciliation had been completed.

c) To receive Monthly Bank Statements

The original Bank Statement to 28.06.2019 was checked and signed by the Chair.

The balance as at 23.07.2019 was £49,533.00 (Bank Account)

The balance as at 23.07.2019 was £263,415.26 (Savings linking to Bank Account)

The balance as at 23.07.2019 was £0 Unused Savings Account

The balance as at 23.07.2019 was £200,390.78 (Reserve Account)

The balance as at 23.07.2019 was £106,012.49 (Ear Marked Reserve Account)

d) To receive an update on the Bank Account

The Clerk advised that the savings account linking to the Bank Account had been opened as requested to sweep funds between the Bank Account and itself to maintain a balance of £50K in the Bank Account every week. Unfortunately, the Bank had opened a second savings account. As this did not cost anything to run, the Clerk had not closed this account in case it was required in the future. The Committee agreed to this course of action.

e) To receive an update on aged debtors

A list of aged debts was provided.

Invoice 19 005 was overdue but expected by 31.07.2019 due to contractual changes.

Invoice 19 006 was overdue and had been chased by the Deputy Clerk on 22.07.2019.

Invoice 19 0160 / 19 0161 were provisional bookings where full payment rather than just a deposit is expected on 29.07.2019 for bookings in September and October 2019.

Invoice 19 0163 / 20 0010 have outstanding deposit balances due to an error in calculation at reception. The Committee agreed not to request the difference as it looked unprofessional.

f) To receive a VAT update

The Clerk advised that the VAT refund of £3,467.66 had been received and banked on 12.07.2019. The Clerk was asked to obtain an update on the requested VAT date change.

g) Update from RFO (Cllr A Pickering)

Cllr Pickering is satisfied with the Financial Management and Policy progress.

1616. To discuss Financial Risk Assessment

The Committee discussed the renamed Risk Register. Some minor amendments were made to phrasing and risk ratings.

Proposed – Cllr Pickering

Seconded – Cllr Hayes

‘That the Committee adopt the Risk Register as amended in discussion.’

All in favour

1617. To receive an update from Website Implementation Committee

The Clerk advised that the Committee had met on 03 July 2019 and a Chair and Vice Chair had been voted in.

Cllr Shippey has requested to speak at the next meeting on 07 August 2019 to discuss keeping the existing domain name in addition to the new name.

1618. To discuss The Ministry of Housing, Councils and Local Government (MHCLG) consultation;

‘LGPS: consultation on changes to the local valuation cycle and management of employer risk’

The Committee discussed this item.

Proposed – Cllr Pickering

Seconded – Cllr Hayes

‘That the Committee agree that Cllr Pickering provide a response, on behalf of the Committee, to disagree with the extension times to the Pension review dates.’

All in favour

1619. To receive and discuss current Lease and Licence negotiations and renewal dates

The Committee did not go into confidentiality.

The Committee felt no discussion was required.

1620.To receive recommendation

There were no recommendations from item 1619.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8:47pm

Chair

Dated

Actions

The Clerk was asked to:

To refer discussion on cash acceptance for Market Sub Committee
To refer discussion on cash acceptance for Market transactions to Town Clerk
Continue to research grant submission suggestions
Book Finance Training with Internal Auditor
Renew Norfolk ALC subscription
Procurement Policy to be added to next Full Council Agenda
Investigate Bank reconciliation issue as presented for June 19
Contact HMRC for update on period change request
Risk Register to be added to next Full Council Agenda

Cllr Pickering was asked to:

Provide a response to MHCLG consultation by 31 July 2019

Future Agenda Item

To discuss acceptance of cash for invoices August 2019