



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council held at Community Hall - Newton Leys Pavilion on Tuesday, 25th October, 2022 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs S Browne, K Ely, R Graham, E Kelly-Wilson, M McDonald, E O'Rourke and T Stephens

Absent:

Apologies: Cllrs R Haine, A Segebrecht and M Wymer

In attendance: Alison Brown (Finance Manager) and Delia Shephard (Town Clerk)

Min Ref

- FC22/23-24 **Councillors' apologies for absence**
It was RESOLVED that the apologies for absence listed above be noted.
- FC22/23-25 **Councillors' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**
There were no declarations of interests made by councillors.
- FC22/23-26 **Minutes of the previous meeting of the committee held on Tuesday 23 August 2022**
It was RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the last meeting be approved.
- FC22/23-27 **Public Speaking Time**
There were no representations from members of the public.
- FC22/23-28 **Financial management information report showing income and expenditure against budget for the year to 30 September 2022**
It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Members again commented on item 622-4575 in the report ie overspend of £19,863 against budget for electricity at Newton Leys Pavilion. As previously reported to the committee this was a consequence of a faulty electricity meter which had caused the supplier to fail to issue invoices to the council. Following negotiations a back payment for supplies from January 2021 had been agreed.

Members noted the overspend against budget on community engagement (302-4102) of £1,692 which was a consequence of the decision to hold the Big Street Eat event using funding from Milton Keynes Council.
- FC22/23-29 **Cash and investment reconciliations to 30 September 2022**
It was RESOLVED that the cash and investment reconciliations be noted.
- FC22/23-30 **Balance sheet as at 30 September 2022 and individual transactions over £500.00**
It was RESOLVED that the balance sheet to 30 September 2022 be noted.
It was RESOLVED that the individual transactions over £500 for the period be noted.
- FC22/23-31 **List of payments made or due to be made to 31 October 2022**
It was RESOLVED that the list of payments made or due to be made which had been published with the agenda be ratified.



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

FC22/23-32 **Outcome of any tender processes completed since the last meeting of the council**

The clerk reported that the tender process for cleaning of Albert Street Public Conveniences was still open and would close on 31 October 2022.

The clerk reported that the tender process for the public art Women's EUROS legacy project had been completed as agreed by the town council in collaboration with Milton Keynes City Council. The successful artist had been notified and the formal contract was due to be awarded following a meeting on 27 October 2022. Further information and news releases would follow after that meeting.

FC22/23-33 **Electric vehicle charging point at Newton Leys Pavilion**

Members had noted a short report from the Finance Manager requesting a decision on whether or not to repair the BP Pulse electric vehicle charging point at Newton Leys Pavilion and detailed discussion followed.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i the existing EV charging point be repaired (cost would be call out fee of £250 plus cost of repairs) though it was considered that the existing unit was unsatisfactory in the long term
- ii the Environment and Premises Manager be asked to undertake research and provide a report on alternative EV charging point provision for Newton Leys Pavilion which would provide a faster and more reliable service and be more cost effective (to include relevant costings for installation and running/maintenance)
- iii the Environment and Premises Manager be asked to undertake research and provide a report on options and costings for extending the council's CCTV camera coverage of the Newton Leys Pavilion including the car park and football pitches
- iv the chair of the council gather the views of residents of Newton Leys with a view to consideration of a more formal consultation by the council on the EV charging points at a later date.

FC22/23-34 **VAT partial exemption calculation and need for advice from VAT specialists**

Members noted correspondence received from DCK Accounting Solutions confirming that, as expected, the council had breached its de-minimis VAT limit for 2021-2022 with £12,725.17 being attributable to exempt activities and therefore the council was liable for repayment. It was anticipated that the council was liable to breach again in 2022-23 due to all the VAT incurred at Newton Leys Pavilion being attributable to exempt income and the council should either opt to tax Newton Leys Pavilion or budget for approximately £12,000 of irrecoverable VAT each year.

The Finance Manager noted that the planned refurbishment of Sycamore Hall would also contribute to the complexity of the council's VAT position and therefore quotations had been sought for sector specific VAT advisors.

It was unanimously RESOLVED that a quotation from The Parkinson Partnership LLP to provide the council with a report on the VAT implications of the proposed refurbishment and options available to the council to maximise VAT recovery at a fixed fee of £1,400 (plus mileage of up to £90 for one visit) be approved and the advice obtained as quickly as possible. This would be funded from the existing professional fees budget (409-4594).



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

- FC22/23-35 **Review of policies for recommendation to full council**
- FC22/23-35i **Investment Policy**
It was RESOLVED that the draft investment policy circulated before the meeting be recommended to full council for adoption with no changes.
- FC22/23-35ii **Procurement Policy**
The Finance Manager introduced a new draft procurement policy based on the NALC model and the current relevant NALC legal topic note (LTN87 Procurement, 22 March 2022) and this was discussed at some length.
It was RESOLVED to recommend the draft procurement policy for approval without any changes.
- FC22/23-36 **Proposed scale of Charges 2023-2024**
The Finance Manager introduced a report proposing that the council's scale of charges should be renewed annually prior to the budget preparation and that a specific methodology should be considered for approaching all increases in charges. As with allotment charges the existing charges had been reviewed and rates increased by 8.8% based upon CPI from July 2022. Rates had been rounded to the nearest 5p, 50p or £1 depending on type. Market stall rates were reduced by 75% from 1 September 2020 to encourage return of traders and the 8.8% increase had been applied to this discounted rate.
It was RESOLVED to recommend to council that
i the proposed scale of charges be adopted to take effect from 1 April 2022 except that photocopying charges should not be increased
ii the scale of charges be increased every year on 1 April on the basis of the published CPI from the previous July
- FC22/23-37 **Provision of additional dog bins**
Following discussion it was RESOLVED that four additional dog bins be installed and added to the dog waste contract in the following locations:
 - Staplehall Road
 - corner of Westfield Road and Birchfield Road
 - Newton Leys Pavilion
 - Additional site in Newton Leys to be confirmedon the basis that the costs for installation and for emptying could be met from the agreed current budget.
It was noted that any further additions to the provision of dog bins would need to be included in the 2023-2024 budget.
- FC22/23-38 **Premises report**
The clerk gave an oral report on scheduled and anticipated maintenance works to premises. It was noted that previously approved works to modernize plant and increase energy efficiency at Fenny Stratford Community Centre were taking place during half term. Previously approved painting of interior of windows at Sycamore House would begin on 21 November 2022 and previously approved structural repairs to the roof of Sycamore House were to be completed in December 2022.

A temporary repair to the roof at Spotlight had been undertaken earlier in the month to mend broken tiles caused by items thrown onto the roof (eg bricks). A leak had



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

resulted and quotations were being sought for a permanent roof repair.

The 2022-23 delivery plan included a “light refurbishment” of Albert Street WCs. Recent vandalism had been repaired but it was proving difficult to identify works which would make a difference to the premises without large expense. Members commented on the continued lack of security of tenure at these premises. Accompanied visits were to be arranged for all councillors to review the issues on site during November so that further consideration could be given to the best approach.

Members agreed that specific rooms at Newton Leys Pavilion (community hub and hall) and Fenny Stratford Community Centre (Bowden Room, entrance and studio) required repainting ideally over the Christmas period and the clerk advised that quotations were to be sought.

Following a recent fire risk assessment at Sycamore House installation of a fire door and fire boarding to the underside of the stairs had been recommended with minor alterations to the fire alarm and quotations for these works would be sourced.

It was RESOLVED that the update report be noted.

FC22/23-39

Remembrance Sunday 2022 civic event at Bletchley War Memorial, Queensway

The clerk confirmed that arrangements had been made for this event.

The meeting closed at 8.34 pm