

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Finance, Community and Policy Committee

18th March 2019

Present: Councillors Simon Arundel, Kevin Cranston, Rob Green, Camilla Hale, John Marjoram, Margaret Poulton, Alan Sage (Chair) and Lucas Schoemaker

Absent: Councillor Geoffrey Andrews

In attendance: Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bloxsom (work), Davies (personal) and Dechan (work).

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. Questions from the public

No questions were received.

5. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 28th January 2018 were **approved** by those present and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

6. Authorisation of payments

It was **resolved** to authorise payments from January and February 2019.

7. Budget Monitoring

The budget monitoring report to end of January 2019 was noted.

8. Internal audit report

An interim internal audit report was noted.

9. Carbon reduction fund

The Committee considered draft guidelines and an application form for a new grant fund. It was **agreed** to approve the drafts with some changes to the text to clarify the priorities for funding and to make it clear that the fund would not be available to individuals.

ACTION

Clerk

The Clerk was asked to approach local businesses to seek technical support on assessment of the impact of applications to the fund. Clerk

Cllr Marjoram arrived during this item.

10. Schedule of grant meetings

It was **agreed** that small grant applications will in future be considered at all meetings of the Committee. Clerk

The Clerk was requested to prepare a report on potential revisions to the timetable for applications and consideration of the Council's other grant funds, with particular reference to the funding of community events and the potential use of participatory budgeting techniques. Clerk

11. Cycle path memorandum of understanding

It was **agreed** to authorise the Clerk to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between parish cycling group organisations regarding funding for a feasibility study on the potential for a cycle path on the A419 between Stroud and Chalford. Clerk

It was further **agreed** that the funds required for the feasibility study would be held by the Town Council and paid upon receipt of valid invoices from the contractors. Clerk

12. Cycle path contract

It was **agreed** to appoint Witteveen and Bos to prepare the feasibility study in line with the scope of works received. Clerk

13. Grass cutting

The Committee considered quotations for grass cutting at the Cemetery, referred by the Green Spaces Committee. It was **agreed** to award a 12-month contract to Countrywide Grounds Maintenance and to advise the Green Spaces Manager to publish a formal tender for a 3-year contract from 2020. Green Spaces Manager

14. Risk Management Strategy

An updated risk management strategy was **approved** subject to a minor change to combine two items relating to data protection.

15. Councillor attendance and recruitment

Following a lengthy discussion regarding concerns about non-attendance and the important strategic role of councillors, it was **agreed** to approve publication of an attendance report annually and to mark as "absent" in minutes councillors who do not attend or send apologies. Clerk

It was further **agreed** to authorise the Clerk to organise a publicity campaign in the lead-up to 2020 elections, starting at the Annual Town Meeting on 22nd May 2019 and focusing on: promoting the work of the Clerk

Council; explaining the role of councilors; and the need for inclusivity. It was noted that the campaign would be politically neutral.

It was further **agreed** to recommend to Council setting up a working group comprising 5 councillors to review the Council's governance arrangements.

Clerk

Cllr Schoemaker left the meeting.

16. Document retention policy

A draft policy was reviewed and **approved** subject to some minor changes relating to data protection.

Clerk

17. Subscription Rooms

The Clerk provided a verbal update on the transfer for the Subscription Rooms.

18. Minutes

The minutes of the following meetings were received:

Sub Rooms Working Group

9th March 2019

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Chair

Date