

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH MAY 2018

PRESENT: Cllr. Swann (in the Chair), Cllrs. Beck, Bunyan, Clifford, Veitch and Warne.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Fairweather and Fletcher.

Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying:

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

131/17: Internal finance check:

Cllr. Swann confirmed that the internal finance check had been completed and everything was in order. The Clerk advised that the KCC Audit Team were due to complete their audit on 16th May.

132/17: Year End Figures/Earmarked Funds:

Cllr. Swann referred to the year-end cash balances and earmarked funds that all Councillors had been given and invited questions. In response to a question regarding the increased general fund balance, Cllr. Swann advised this was because the litter clearing contract and the TWBC car park enforcement contracts had not been paid. No invoices had been received for the litter clearing contract as the current contract is under review. The amount of the invoice that was issued by TWBC for the enforcement contract is in dispute. These two amounts account for the majority of the increase.

133/17: Annual Governance Statement/Accounting Statements 2017-2018:

Cllr. Swann confirmed the two documents were part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return that is sent to our appointed external auditor and explained how the figures were calculated. It was agreed that the documents were completed correctly. The Clerk reminded the Committee that both statements required approval by all Members at a Full Council meeting.

134/17: Authorisation of payments made after the April meeting:

A list of payments made after the April meeting is filed with these minutes. It was noted that no transfer of monies between accounts had been necessary during April.

135/17: Cheques for payment:

Cheques for May were signed for payment as per the list filed with these minutes. The information pack from KALC that accompanied their annual subscription invoice was highlighted. It was agreed that all Members would benefit from a copy of the information pack advising of the full range of services provided by KALC. It was proposed by Cllr. Swann, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed to authorise payment of the cheques as presented.

These included:

Policy and Resources	£19,422.89
Burial and Properties	£ 60.00
Environmental Management	<u>£ 753.30</u>
Total	£20,236.19

136/17: Review of Procedures/Policies & Banking Arrangements

The Clerk confirmed that as part of our audit all of our policies and procedures required review annually. This had identified several that required amendments. Our Financial regulations required an amendment to the amount stated in section 11.1 to reflect the legal requirement to publicise all contracts over £25,000 on the Contracts Finder website. It was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Clifford and agreed to make the amendments, all Councillors would be supplied with an amended version as soon as possible.

An Asset Register policy had been devised, using guidelines in the Practitioners Guide in Governance and Accountability. The Clerk advised that our assets are valued by their acquisition cost, where this is not known, a proxy cost can be applied. Depreciation and inflation are not considered in asset valuation for the purposes of the register.

A Data Retention Policy had been devised using a template supplied from LCPAS which was amended to reflect the needs of this council.

An Information Protection Policy had also been devised from a template, to replace our current Data Protection Policy.

New model Standing Orders from NALC were now also available. The Deputy Clerk had spent time comparing our current regulations to the new model and had prepared a document explaining the differences, which had been emailed to all Committee Members for consideration. Unfortunately not all Members had had the chance to study the document in depth so it was decided to defer the review of our Standing Orders until next month to give Members more time to study the recommended changes. Members expressed their thanks to the Deputy Clerk for all her hard work in preparing the policies.

It was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed to accept the Data Retention Policy, The Asset Register and the Information Protection Policy as filed with these minutes and that all the remaining current policies and procedures were still relevant and that our banking arrangements, risk assessments and internal finance controls were reviewed and acceptable. Members agreed to delegate the updating of Privacy Notices and Consent forms to the Clerks to ensure GDPR compliance.

137/17: Staffing:

There were no issues to report. Consideration was still being given to what tasks could be outsourced to reduce the current workload.

138/17: Data Protection Officer:

A recent amendment to the GDPR removed the legal requirement for parish councils to appoint a DPO, although it had been recommended as good practice. Three quotes had been sought. Invicta Law had initially advertised their services as a DPO but we had been advised recently they were now withdrawing this service due to a possible conflict of interest. From the remaining quotes it was proposed by Cllr. Swann, seconded by Cllr. Warne and agreed to accept the quote of £650 from Local Council Public Advisory Service (LCPAS) which included a compliancy visit.

139/17: Grant applications:

a) An application from The Farmers Market had been received in April requesting £542.20 to cover the cost of membership to the Kent Farmers Association and for additional promotional material. A decision had been deferred until more information on attendance figures and a finance report. These had now been received, however Members were disappointed at the amount of visitors to the market and agreed they would consider a grant in the future if the applicant could demonstrate some promotional ideas for increasing the footfall.

b) A request for funding had been received from West Kent Mediation It was proposed by Cllr. Swann, seconded by Cllr. Clifford and agreed that the Committee could not support the request, however Members wished them well with their fundraising efforts.

c) A request for funding of £300 had been received from the Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance. It was proposed by Cllr. Clifford, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed that this vital service should be maintained and the full amount should be awarded as requested.

A discussion on grant allocation followed, at which it was agreed to look into the amount allocated when considering the budget for awarding grants next year.

Members were reminded that the two hour limit for a meeting had expired, it was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Swann to continue the meeting.

140/17: Promotion of Parish Council:

Cllr. Clifford referred to the CVLT and felt that as they were working so closely with the NDP that they should appear as a regular item on the Policy and Resources agenda. The Clerk advised against this as the organisation is independent from the Parish Council. Members agreed they would like to invite the Chairman Mark Wade to a Full Council meeting to report on their achievements to date. It was also suggested that they could be allocated a regular slot in Parish Cake to promote their activities.

In response to Cllr. Clifford, Cllr. Veitch advised that discussions were ongoing with the heads of both Cranbrook School and the High Weald Academy on the formation of a Youth Council.

141/17: Items for information:

Cllr. Veitch advised that in preparation for an information audit, along with Cllr. Beck, she would be looking at the archive records currently stored in the tower room of the Vestry Hall. Cllr. Clifford's offer of assistance with this task was gratefully accepted.