

MINUTES
of
**A Meeting of New Romney Town Council's
Finance and General Purposes Committee
Held in the Assembly Rooms on
Wednesday 20th March 2024 commencing at 6.45pm**

PRESENT: Councillors P Thomas, J Davies, J Rivers, P Coe,
K Terry and Reverend Canon McLachlan

In Attendance:

Finance Clerk	-	Mrs J Field
Member of the Public	-	1

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor P Thomas

589/2023-24 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and noted, as follows:

Councillor P Carey - Due to a prior personal commitment

590/2023-24 **DISPENSATION TO PARTICIPATE**

The Finance Clerk advised that no new Dispensations to Participate had been granted.

591/2023-24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

@6.46PM Councillor Thomas declared a personal Interest in Agenda Item 12 as the applicant is known to him.

592/2023-24 **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

It was not necessary to adjourn the meeting as no questions had been received in writing by the Clerk.

593/2023-24 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None.

594/2023-24 **RE-CONVENING OF MEETING**

Not applicable.

595/2023-24 **MINUTES**

(i) The Chairman presented the Minutes of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting** held on **17th January 2024**, copies of which had been previously circulated to all Councillors and it was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Rivers

SECONDED BY: Councillor Terry

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 17th January 2024, be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

Councillor Rev Cn MacLachlan abstained from voting as she had not been in attendance at the meeting.

596/2023-24 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

(i) **To receive and note 2023/2024 Budget Comparison and Income & Expenditure reports**

The 2023/2024 Budget Comparison Report and Income and Expenditure Reports were received and noted.

(ii) **Schedule of Payments Approved under Financial Regs, SPAA and/or Delegated Authority**

The Finance Clerk presented the detailed schedule of Payments Approved under Financial Regs, SPAA and/or Delegated Authority. Following due consideration, it was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Terry

SECONDED BY: Councillor Coe

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that the afore-mentioned detailed schedule of Payments Approved under Financial Regs, SPAA and/or Delegated Authority, in the sum of £87,629.97 exc. VAT, be received and noted and identified cost centres be approved.

(iii) **Schedule of Fund Transfers**

The Schedule of Transfers between Town Council Bank Accounts was received and noted.

597/2023-24 **RFO'S REPORTS****(i) Actions completed since the F&GP Committee meeting held on 20th September 2023:**

The RFO's report, which read as under, was received and noted:

RFO's Report – F&GP Meeting on 20th March 2024**Actions completed since the F&GP Committee meeting held on 17th January 2024:**

- (i)** An order has been placed to carry out roof & rainwater goods inspections (*Minute Ref: 484/2023-24(i)(b) refers*). NB: Due to the imminent demolition of the Maude Pavilion and the subsequent demolition of the Community Hall (Nursery) this order has been amended.
- (ii)** Contracts in respect of three-yearly grounds maintenance provision have been issued (*Minute Re: 484/2023-24(ii) refers*).
- (iii)** An order has been placed to carry out 2024 Church Lane ditch management works (*Minute Ref: 484/2023-24(iii) refers*).
- (iv)** An order in respect of ad-hoc grass cutting/strimming of communal areas at Church Lane Allotment Gardens has been placed (*Minute Ref: 484/2023-24(iv)(b) refers*).
- (v)** An order in respect of tree works has been placed (*Minute Ref: 484/2023-24(v) refers*). NB: Works have subsequently been completed.
- (vi)** An order to carry out electrical works at the Town Hall has been placed (*Minute Ref: 484/2023-24(vi) refers*). NB Works have subsequently been completed.
- (vii)** The applicant requesting permission to operate a market on The Greens has been advised of the Council's decision (*Minute Ref: 485/2023-24 refers*).
- (viii)** Following their confirming acceptance of the award, the payment for grant funding to JAM has been made (*Minute Ref: 487/2023-24(i) refers*). NB: Their grateful thanks to the Town Council have subsequently been received.
- (ix)** Following their confirming acceptance of the award, the payment for grant funding to Teach Me has been made (*Minute Ref: 487/2023-24(ii) refers*). NB: Their grateful thanks to the Town Council have subsequently been received.
- (x)** An order for the replacement flagpole has been placed (*Minute Ref: 488/2023-24 refers*). NB: Site preparation works have subsequently commenced.

Other Matters of Report:

None:

This concludes my report – RFO 13th March 2024

(ii) RFO's Maintenance Report:

The RFO's maintenance report, which read as under, was received and noted:

RFO's Maintenance Report – F&GP Meeting on 20th March 2024

Routine maintenance in respect of all Town Council owned lands and buildings has been carried out since the last report to the Committee as per previously awarded contracts.

Additional non-routine maintenance and repairs have been carried out since the last report to Committee, as follows:

(i) Town Hall

- Remedial decoration works, following replacement of ground floor central heating system, by the Parish Caretaker re in progress.
- Replacement of existing lighting and installation of a new consumer board.

In hand:

- Provision of air conditioning in the Council Chamber (Planning application/listed buildings consent submitted to FH&DC).
- Provision of heating for Mayor's Parlour.

(ii) Town Hall House and Outbuilding

- Adjustment to back door, carried out by Parish Caretaker.

In hand:

- Installation of conservation roof light.
- Repairs to internal plaster work (Identified during recent Tenancy inspection).

(iii) Town Hall Garden

- Tree works carried out by M Coleman Arboricultural Service.

In hand:

- Lawn restoration works.

(iv) Public Clock

- None.

In hand:

- None.

(v) Assembly Rooms

- CCTV units fitted by Parish Caretaker.
- Tree works carried out by M Coleman Arboricultural Service.
- Replacement doorbell and door retaining hooks fitted by Parish Caretaker.

In hand:

- None.

(vi) Community Hall (Nursery)

- Tree works carried out by M Coleman Arboricultural Service.

In hand:

- None.

(vii) Maude Pavilion & Sports Field

- Tree works carried out by M Coleman Arboricultural Service.

In hand:

- Any works previously in hand, in respect of the Pavilion, have been cancelled due to imminent demolition of the building.

(viii) Fairfield Road Recreation Ground

- Tree works carried out by M Coleman Arboricultural Service.

In hand:

- Routine maintenance works to play equipment.

(ix) The Greens / Hut & Winch Site

- None.

In hand:

- Routine maintenance works to gym/play equipment.
- Research in respect of providing a separately metered power supply to the Toilet Block.

(x) Allotment Gardens

- Strimming of vacant plots carried out by Caretaking Team.

In hand:

- Removal of fly tipped manure.

(xi) Flagstaff Land

- Flagpole lowered by Parish Caretaker along with a team of volunteers.

- Ground preparation works for new flagpole carried out by B E Ames Ltd.
- Horticultural assistance works carried out by NRIB.

In hand:

- Perimeter bollard gold banding (ongoing).
- Installation of new flagpole.

(xii) Coney Banks

- None.

In hand:

- None.

(xiii) Garden of Remembrance

- The Parish Caretaker has been assisted by members of New Romney British Legion to ensure the Garden of Remembrance continues to look pristine throughout the year.

In hand:

- None.

(xiv) Cinque Ports Place (Town Square) & High Street Planter

- None.

In hand:

- Re-siting of street furniture.

(xv) Vandalism / Antisocial Behaviour

- Fly tipping of manure at the entrance to Church Lane Allotment Gardens reported to FH&DC.
- Vandalism to the rear door and doorbell at the Assembly Rooms reported to Kent Police.
- Vandalism to a car parked at the Assembly Rooms reported to Kent Police.

(xvi) Miscellaneous

- Damaged Town Trail plaque reinstalled by Caretaking Team.
- Installation of final Town Trail plaque.

In hand:

- None.

This concludes my maintenance report – RFO 13th March 2024

598/2023-24 **QUOTATIONS**

(i) Due consideration was given to the quotations received in respect of weed spraying of Town Council playparks. It was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Rev Cn MacLachlan

SECONDED BY: Councillor Davies

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY - that (i) the quotation received in the sum of £140.00 plus VAT to carry out weed spraying of Town Council playparks, be accepted and funded from the relevant departmental budgets: (ii) the RFO be authorised to settle all relevant invoices, when received, having first ascertained that all is in order.

The contract was, therefore, awarded to M. Coleman Arboricultural Service.

(ii) Due consideration was given to the single quotation sought in respect of Toilet Block Maintenance and it was:

(a)

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Rivers

SECONDED BY: Councillor Davies

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that Standing Orders be waived to consider the single quotation sought.

(b)

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Thomas

SECONDED BY: Councillor Coe

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY- that (i) the quotation received in the sum of £7245.00 plus VAT to carry out Toilet Block maintenance for the period 1st April – 30th September 2024, be accepted and funded from the relevant departmental budget: (ii) the RFO be authorised to settle all relevant invoices, when received, having first ascertained that all is in order.

The contract was, therefore, awarded to Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

599/2023-24 **HORTICULTURAL ASSISTANCE – FUNDING**

Due consideration was given to the request received from NRIB to provide funding for plants and materials to be used on Town Council lands. It was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Terry

SECONDED BY: Councillor Rev Cn MacLachlan

RESOLVED – that (i) Option 1 for the sum of £524.00 inc VAT be approved and funded from the departmental budgets with any shortfall coming from General Reserves; (ii) the RFO be authorised to settle all relevant invoices, when received, having first ascertained all is in order.

600/2023-24 **THE GREENS- MOBILE CATERING**

Due consideration was given to the application from Majic Memories to site a mobile catering trailer on The Greens at Littlestone. It was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Rivers

SECONDED BY: Councillor Rev Cn MacLachlan

RESOLVED that – Majic Memories be permitted to site their mobile catering trailer on The Greens at Littlestone and that the charge for the 2024 season be set at £400.00 plus VAT.

601/2023-24 **GRANT FUNDING/ DONATIONS**

Due consideration was given to the funding requested submitted by New Romney in Bloom. It was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Rivers

SECONDED BY: Councillor Rev Cn MacLachlan

RESOLVED that grant funding in the sum of £684.00 be awarded to New Romney in Bloom.

602/2023-24 **COUNCIL CHAMBER CHAIRS**

Due consideration was given to the disposal of specified Council Chamber chairs. It was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Coe

SECONDED BY: Councillor Terry

RESOLVED that consent be given for the disposal of 1 x high back chair and 18 x mid back chairs *.

* These being those chairs in the Council Chamber used by Councillors/Clerks for NRTC meetings.

603/2023-24 **SEA WATER QUALITY MONITORING**

Due consideration was given to a request for the allocation of funding for the provision of sea water sampling. It was:

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Coe

SECONDED BY: Councillor Rev Cn MacLachlan

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that funding, in the sum of £3000.00, be allocated from General Reserves for the commissioning of a sea water sampling service.

The Chairman thanked the Councillors and the Finance Clerk for their attendance and the meeting then concluded @ **8.08PM**.

NB: All documents referred to herein are freely available for perusal on the Town Council website: www.newromney-tc.gov.uk or at the Town Hall for perusal on request, except for those documents of a sensitive / legal nature discussed in private session, including documents relating to staff matters which remain Private and Confidential in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Minutes prepared by the Finance Clerk