

MINUTES

Committee: Finance & Personnel Committee
Date: Monday, 5 June 2023
Time: 7:00pm
Venue: Younghayes Centre, 169 Younghayes Road, Cranbrook EX5 7DR

Present

Cllr Les Bayliss
Cllr Kevin Blakey
Cllr Ray Bloxham (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Lisa Goudie
Cllr Sam Hawkins (Chair)
Cllr Barry Rogers

Also Present

Steve Bampton, Chairman, Cranbrook United Football Club
Sharon Jewell, Girlguiding Commissioner, North Exeter District
Louise Beeken, Head of Philanthropy, Hospiscare
Two members of the public
Janine Gardner, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Cranbrook Town Council

F&P/23/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Colin Buchan and Vincent Wilton.

F&P/23/14 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made or dispensations granted.

F&P/23/15 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2023 as a correct record.

F&P/23/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests were made from members of the public to make representations, answer questions or give evidence in respect of the business on the agenda under Standing Orders 3e to 3k.

F&P/23/17 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered its terms of reference and highlighted that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council as ex-officio members would require inclusion in the terms of reference in accordance with Standing Order 4(d)(iii).

The Committee also agreed that item 24 in the terms of reference (ensuring health and safety at work) was a function of the Council as the employer and not the Committee's responsibility.

Signed

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It was proposed by Cllr Les Bayliss, seconded by Cllr Sam Hawkins and **resolved** to recommend the terms of reference as amended to the Full Council for approval.

F&P/23/18 GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered the following grant applications:

a) Cranbrook United Football Club

The Committee considered a grant application from the Cranbrook United Football Club for £3,000.00 to help the Club cover the costs of unexpected venue hire costs as a result of the closure of the Ingrams Sports Pitches.

The Chairman of the Cranbrook United Football Club attended the meeting in support of the application.

The Committee noted that the full Council had considered two grant applications on 20 March 2023 from the Cranbrook United Football Club for funding of £2,000 to help the Club continue to provide football sessions to the children of Cranbrook and surrounding areas, as well as £1,000 to continue to develop a strong adult setup within the Club and continue to provide a pathway for young players to progress. The Committee noted that the Council's concerns which had been articulated on 20 March 2023 relating to the Club's financial position (ref. minute 23/40) had not been responded to in the current application. Furthermore, the Committee expressed concerns regarding apparent gaps in the Club's financial accounts and remained unclear regarding the financial information provided. In particular, the Committee was concerned that the information before it did not evidence that the Club did not have the financial ability to meet its revenue outgoings.

The representative of the Cranbrook United Football Club in attendance referred to a grant which the full Council had made to the Cranbrook Football Club to provide support towards alternative training grounds during the development of the Ingrams Pavilion of £650.00 on 26 September 2022 (minute ref. 22/164(b)) which had evidenced that the Cranbrook Football Club had been accumulating a deficit in its accounts.

The Committee noted that the Club had circa 200 members including 170 children who paid £24 per month in subscription fees per child.

The Committee noted that the Club had been providing training sessions in the Country Park and requested that the Club complied with the Council's policy on the use of public open spaces and would submit a booking form for each session delivered on Council land. This had first been requested by the Clerk on 25 April 2023. The Committee invited the Club to seek a conversation with the Council regarding the use of Council land for its activities.

The Committee acknowledged the importance of the Club's activities for the benefit of the children in Cranbrook and surrounding areas and invited a grant application from the Club which complied with the Council's grant policy.

b) Cranbrook Girl Guides

The Committee considered a grant application from the Cranbrook Girl Guides for £1,056.00 in recognition of the first Girlguiding units opening in Cranbrook 10 years ago in May 2013. The Guides requested funds to enable them to subsidise a special "10th Birthday" activity evening at the Bear Trail near Cullompton which would be open to all current Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. The applicant also requested funds to purchase customised items for two new local girlguiding units which had closed due to Covid but had reopened recently.

The Girlguiding Commissioner, North Exeter District attended the meeting in support of the application.

Signed

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The Committee reviewed a recent set of accounts which evidenced a balance and allowed the Committee to assess the applicant's financial position. The Committee noted that the Girl Guides lacked resources to carry out the proposed activity and that the application complied with the Council's grant policy.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and **resolved** to support the grant application and award the full grant of £1,056.00 to the Cranbrook Girl Guides.

c) Hospiscare

The Committee considered a grant application from Hospiscare for £500.00 towards the cost of a nurse call system which was urgently required for the inpatient unit at Searle House in Exeter.

The Head of Philanthropy at Hospiscare attended the meeting in support of the application and highlighted that the inpatient unit cared for on average eight residents from Cranbrook out of approximately 200 inpatients per year. The Head of Philanthropy reported further that they charity had benefited from legacy income during the previous year which would assist in meeting rising utility costs and matching the nurses' salaries with NHS salaries in order to be able to offer competitive salaries and aid recruitment. The Head of Philanthropy confirmed that a grant made by the Town Council would remain earmarked for the use for its intended purpose only.

It was It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to support the grant application and award the full grant of £500.00 to Hospiscare.

F&P/23/19 GRANT FEEDBACK

The Committee welcomed the grant feedback from the Cranbrook Football Club and the Cranbrook Little Library.

F&P/23/20 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SMALLER AUTHORITIES

The Committee noted the updated Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices dated March 2023.

F&P/23/21 2021-22 YEAR-END FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

a) Receipts and Payments from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

The Committee considered the following receipts and payments:

- i. Receipts and Payments Cash Book 1 (Bank Accounts)
- ii. Receipts and Payments Cash Book 2 (Credit Card)
- iii. Receipts and Payments Cash Book 3 (Younghayes Centre)

b) 2022-23 Year-End Budget Monitoring Report

The Committee considered the budget monitoring report for quarter 4 (year-end).

It was It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to approve the documents under items (a) and (b).

c) 2022-23 Year-End Bank Reconciliations

On 16 June 2019, the Council had appointed Cllr Barry Rogers as its signatory for bank statements and quarterly bank reconciliations (minute 19/128 refers) who had verified and signed bank reconciliations and the underlying hard copy bank statements relating to the 2022-23 fourth quarter on 30 May 2023.

It was It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to approve the year-end bank reconciliations dated 31 March 2023.

Signed

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d) Use of Underspends at Year-End

The Committee considered a report recommending transferring some an underspend at the financial year end into an earmarked reserve.

It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Ray Bloxham and **resolved** to add the underspend of £6,000 from budget code 4206 to earmarked reserve 327 (Grounds Maintenance and & Path Replacement).

F&P/23/22 CONFIRMING LEVEL OF MATERIALITY FOR YEAR-END ADJUSTMENTS

The Committee considered a report recommending the confirmation of the Council's level of materiality for year-end adjustments which had previously been defined at 1.9% of actual annual expenditure by the full Council on 22 June 2020 (ref. minute 20/81(i)).

It was proposed by Cllr Barry Rogers, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to recommend to full Council to confirm the Town Council's materiality at 1.9% of actual annual expenditure.

F&P/23/23 VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT) EXEMPTION CALCULATION

The Committee considered a report on the treatment of value added tax (VAT).

The Committee noted the Council's value added tax exemption calculation for the 2022-23 financial year.

F&P/23/24 ASSET REGISTER

The Committee noted the Council's asset register dated 31 March 2023.

F&P/23/25 REPORT BY THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

On 21 February 2022, the full Council had appointed the Devon Audit Partnership as the Council's internal auditor (ref. minute 22/45).

The Committee considered and noted the report by the internal auditor covering the year 2022-23 financial year in which the Devon Audit Partnership had awarded a substantial assurance, indicating that a sound system of governance, risk management and control existed, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied.

F&P/23/26 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)

a) Section 2: Statement of Accounts 2022-23

The Committee considered the Statement of Accounts set out in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to approve the Statement of Accounts set out in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and recommend it to the Town Council.

b) Period for the Exercise of Electors' Rights

Each year, councils must set a period for the exercise of public rights during which the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit related and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. The period would last for 30 working days set by a smaller authority and must include the first 10 working days of July.

Signed

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It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council the period for the exercise of public rights from Monday, 3 July 2023 until Friday, 11 August 2023.

F&P/23/27 STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Committee reviewed the Council's Statement of Internal Control 2023.

It was proposed by Cllr Sam Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Ray Bloxham and **resolved** to recommend the Statement of Internal Control to the full Council for approval.

The meeting closed at 8:29pm.

Signed

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