

Amersham Town Council

Flint Barn Court, Church Street, Amersham, Bucks HP7 0DB

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 16 JUNE 2014

PRESENT: Councillor A. Williams (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Mrs L. Walsh (Town Mayor)
Councillor Mrs A. Lamont (Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillor Mrs V. Head
Councillor Mrs J. Heydon
Councillor M. Lacey
Councillor H. Newton

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor N. Shepherd
Councillor Mrs D. Allen
Mrs J Wheeler – Town Clerk
One member of public

01. **APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from Cllrs M. Vivis; A. Seymour; MJ Phillips and H. Trevette.

02. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
There were no Declarations of Interest.

03. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2014:** Cllr Mrs V. Head queried item 98 regarding the costings for internal works to Flint Barn – she wanted to know why there was not three quotes for these works. The Clerk explained that item 98 was referring to a full programme of works and that the item on today's agenda was for a small piece of work to allow the Arts Festival to take place in the Barn and to allow the building to open on 01 August. Cllr Mrs V. Head also requested an update on item 100 referring to the Judo Club.

Cllr A. Williams adjourned the meeting to allow the resident to speak. The item was regarding the A boards in the High Street. It was AGREED that this item would be on the agenda of the Community Services Meeting on 23 June 2014. The resident left and the meeting resumed.

04. **FINANCE MATTERS:** To approve the following:
(i) Income and Expenditure for the period ending 31 March and 30 April 2014
(ii) Cash flow as at 31 March and 30 April 2014
(iii) Balance sheet as at 31 March and 30 April 2014
(iv) Accounts paid to 31 March and 30 April 2014

It was Proposed Councillor Mrs L. Walsh

RECOMMENDED to:

Approve the financial reports for March and April 2014.

05. **TO REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 2013-2014 INTERNAL AUDIT AND REVIEW THE INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN FOR 2014-2015:** The Councillors spent some time considering both documents. It was AGREED that the internal audit plan was effective and the minor amendments on the 2014-2015 plan were approved.

06. **TO REVIEW THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AND CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT FOR 2014-2015:** The Councillors AGREED to all the recommendations made by the internal auditor and thought that the report offered some good advice. It was AGREED to appoint Kevin Rose to continue as internal auditor for 2014-2015 financial year.

07. **TO REVIEW THE END OF YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2013-2014:** The Councillors noted the need to spend monies on the upkeep of Council-owned buildings. It was confirmed that Keystone were doing a good job in terms of legal advice to the Council. It was

Proposed Councillor Mrs J. Heydon
Seconded Councillor Mrs L. Walsh

RECOMMENDED to

Approve the end of year financial report.

08. **TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR 2013-2014 FINANCIAL YEAR AND NOTE THE NEW LEVEL OF THE PRECEPT:** The level of the precept at £491,448 was noted due to the Government's new Housing Benefit Element. As Council noted this reduction has been reduced by a mitigating grant from CDC but this grant is reducing and may not be available for the next financial year.

It was
Proposed Councillor H. Newton
Seconded Councillor Mrs L. Walsh

RECOMMENDED to

Approve the Annual Return for the 2013-2014 financial year.

09. **TO INCREASE THE FIDELITY INSURANCE:** It was AGREED to increase the Fidelity Insurance to £900,000 when the insurance is due for renewal in October.

10. **TO APPROVE A TELEPHONE LINE INTO SEYMOUR HALL:** It was AGREED that the Playgroup could pay for the telephone line and broadband into Seymour Hall. This would be the property of the Playgroup and would not be available for public use.

ACTION: JW

11. **TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR ELECTRICAL TESTING, COURTYARD LIGHTING, CCTV AT FLINT BARN, LIGHTING THE WAR MEMORIAL AND THE POND:** Three quotes had been gathered. Sparkx gave the most competitive price for the electrical testing and the CCTV. Sparkx also included infra-red lights for the courtyard lighting which was preferred to the lower priced quote. It was AGREED to defer the items concerning the lighting of the war memorial and pond to the Community Services agenda.

ACTION: JW

12. **TO CONSIDER THE CURRENT DEPOT LABOUR RATES:** The current rates @ £36.30 per hour for a man and a van has not been increased since 2010. Since this time,
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costs have risen, especially fuel. There was consideration for running two scales; one for Parish Councils and one for private contract work. It was agreed that more information would be needed as to what other contractors charge.

It was

Proposed

Councillor H. Newton

Seconded

Councillor Mrs A. Lamont

RECOMMENDED that

The basic labour charge for one man and a van increases from £36.30 per hour to £40 per hour plus vat. The extra labour of a second man would increase from £18.80 per hour to £25.

13. **TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF MOTOR INSURANCE FOR THE ATC FLEET:** Three quotes had been received for renewal of the fleet motor insurance. The quotes included allowance for our younger Depot members to drive ATC vehicles in the future. These were: £3,942.86; £3,840 and £3,325. The last price would load the excess for drivers under 21 and exclude the Mitsubishi Pick Up.

It was

Proposed

Councillor H. Newton

Seconded

Councillor Mrs L. Walsh

RECOMMENDED to

Renew our motor insurance with Zurich on the three year deal which came in at £3,648.81.

14. **TO CONSIDER THE DEVOLUTION PROPOSAL FROM COUNTY:** It was AGREED that a Working Group open to all Councillors would consider the offer in more detail and report back to Council. The Group will also consider the impact of those parishes who have expressed an interest in clustering with Amersham. We will have to look at the work involved, available man hours and whether there is enough work to make it viable to increase our groundsmen.
ACTION: JW/MR

15. **TO CONSIDER AN INCREASE IN THE VALUE OF PROJECTS THAT NEED TO GO TO TENDER:** The internal auditor felt that the current requirement to go to tender on projects worth over £5,000 was very low. His recommendation was to increase to around £25,000. It was AGREED to follow the advice of the auditor and increase the threshold up to £25,000. The three quotes will still be gathered as usual and tenders can still be sent out for smaller projects however this will be discretionary on projects below the £25,000.
ACTION: JW

16. **TO CONSIDER THE DISPOSAL OF REDUNDANT MACHINERY:** Some Councillors had concerns that the Depot had redundant equipment that could be sold to clear space. The Town Clerk said that an asset register would shortly be available for those who wished to look in detail at the Council's assets. Discussions should be held with the Contracts Manager and the Depot Manager to confirm those items that could be sold.

17. **TO CONSIDER ADDING ANOTHER MOWER IF DEVOLVED SERVICE FROM BUCKS WORKS OUT TO BE FINANCIALLY VIABLE:** This would be a matter for the Working Group once all the details have been received.

18. **CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTERS:** The Town Clerk was asked to write to Bucks County Council to ask for a public meeting on the proposals for the new Waste Transfer Site to be held in Amersham. The meetings have all been in Little Chalfont Parish so far.
ACTION: JW

19. **BUCKS COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS:** Transport for Bucks have a Depot Open Evening on Tuesday 24 June from 4.30pm. The case for Amersham to repair its potholes on local roads has been put to Bucks County and we are awaiting a response.

20. **MATTERS FOR REPORT:** The Town Clerk asked for clarification of a budget to support the official opening of Flint Barn Court. The evening would coincide with the preview evening of the Arts Festival which meant that the Arts Festival budget could be shared and the extra numbers invited may help to swell sales of the paintings and thus our Jubilee Charity fund. The Clerk was given a budget of £500.

Part two

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

That under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they include the likely disclosure of exempt information, stated to be confidential.

- 21. **ITEM CONCERNING ATC STAFF**
- 22. **ITEM CONCERNING A PROPOSAL FROM ST MARYS CHURCH**
- 23. **ITEM CONCERNING AN ATC PROPERTY**
- 24. **ITEM CONCERNING ATC EVENTS**
- 25. **ITEM CONCERNING ATC PROPERTY**
- 26. **ITEM CONCERNING ATC PROPERTY.**

The meeting closed at 21.30pm.

Chairman.....

Date