



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD, SG5 4HG AT 19:00**

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**Councillors present:** Cllr S Buck (Chairperson), J Smith (Vice-Chairperson), M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, D Matthews, B Saunders and J Talbot.

**Also in attendance:**

Cllr L Miller

**Also present:**

E. Payne – Town Clerk

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Headington. It was **RESOLVED** to:

*Accept apologies.*

**2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr Smith declared an interest in items 6.8, 6.9 and 6.10 as he knows the present IT contractor and works for one of the companies quoting for the Telephone and Internet Service contracts. He took no part in the vote.

**3. PUBLIC SECTION**

There were no members of the public present.

**4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the previous Establishment Committee Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were received and it was **RESOLVED** to:

*Adopt the minutes as true record of the meeting.*

**5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION**

The Clerk's report was received, there were no update, and it was **RESOLVED** to:

*Note the report*

**6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE**

**6.1 Outsourcing Payroll**

Members received an updated report on outsourcing the Town Council's payroll provision. Members queried the need to use a fax machine to transmit payroll data and did the software need updating. The Clerk reported that it's Sage, which is cloud-based. The Town Clerk reported that it is also a business continuity issue to outsource payroll as there is only

one officer at present that undertakes this role. Members felt that this could be covered by the Town Clerk undertaking training in the software package. Members didn't agree that the Finance Officer needed to plan their holiday around payroll processing when all staff are salaried with very little overtime to be calculated and the Officer should be scheduling their work more efficiently. It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) ***The Town Clerk should undertake payroll training and cover the Finance Officer to enable them to take annual leave.***
- b) ***An alternative system which doesn't need to use a fax machine should be investigated.***

## **6.2 Financial Regulations**

Members received the updated Financial Regulations and were advised that following advice from the County Association, item 1.7 should be deleted. Item 6.8 was updated to increase the limit to £3,000 (item i) and £5,000 (item ii). Clarification was sought regarding petty cash. Following other minor typographical errors being updated, it was **RESOLVED** to:

***Recommend the adoption of the Financial Regulations to Full Council.***

## **6.3 Appointment of Internal Auditor**

Members received quotations for the appointment of an internal auditor. Members queried why the proposed internal auditors were not based locally and were advised that it is about having an internal auditor who is suitably competent to undertake the role. The Clerk had used the Internal Auditing Services website to obtain these quotations.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to:

***Appoint Parish and Town Auditing Services as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for 1 year, with an option to extend to 3 years in total at a cost of £700 per annum.***

## **6.4 Asset Management Policy**

Members received a proposed policy for the management of the Town Council's assets including the asset register. Members questioned the disposal of assets and why they had to be kept on the register. The de minimis level for the inclusion of assets onto the asset register was then considered to be too high at £250 and it should be lower. Members considered it was important to have an accurate asset register to assist with ensuring adequate levels of insurance.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) ***Amend the Asset Management Policy to include removing disposed assets after 7 years and set the de minimis level at £100.***
- b) ***Recommend its adoption to Full Council.***

## **6.5 Mayoral Allowance Policy**

Members received a proposed policy for the Mayoral Allowance. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that:

***The Mayoral Allowance Policy is adopted.***

## **6.6 Budget Setting Timetable 2025-26**

Members received a report to outline the timetable for the setting of the budget for 2025-26. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Note the report.***

**6.7 Performance Management Policy**

Members received a proposed Performance Management Policy and associated documents. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that:

***The Performance Management Policy is adopted.***

**6.8 IT Services Contract**

Members received quotations for the Council's IT services contract. It was noted that the current IT contract was for only one year and following a review of all contracts Officers felt it would be beneficial to have a more stable approach. It was noted that there was no control over Microsoft licence increases.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Award the IT services contract to SMG at an annual cost of £12,861.60 subject to licence increases for a period of two years.***

**6.9 Telephone Provision**

Members received quotations for the telephone provision for the Town Council. Members considered the accessibility of Officers when working remotely or in the field and the benefit of a Teams based option. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Award the Telephony Contract to CloudyIT at a cost of £1,476 per annum.***

**6.10 Internet Service Provision**

Members received a report on the provision of internet to the Greenacre Centre. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Award the Internet Service Provision to IBT at a cost of £600 per annum.***

**6.11 Christmas Office Operation**

Members received a report with a proposal for the hours of operation of the Town Council during the Christmas holidays. Members felt that this was a reasonable allocation of concessionary days, and it was **RESOLVED** to:

***Note the Christmas operational days of the Greenacre Centre.***

**6.12 Bank Reconciliation**

Members noted the bank reconciliations for May and June were now available for signing. With the adoption of the new Financial Regulations the Councillors cannot be existing bank signatories. It was **RESOLVED** that:

***Cllr Miller or Cooper will authorise the bank reconciliations for May and June 2024.***

**6.13 Work Programme**

Members noted the work programme for this committee.

**7. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

***In accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, can be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted:***

**7.1 Town Clerk's Job Evaluation**

Members received quotations for the evaluation of the Town Clerk's role and queried why Worknest had not been approached as the Town Council's HR advisor. It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) ***Seek a quotation from Worknest for this exercise.***
- b) ***If Worknest is not able to undertake this exercise, then appoint Council HR and Governance Support at a cost of £400 plus £100 to present the report virtually.***

**8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY**

There were no items for information for this Committee.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 2 October 2024.

It was noted that the date of the Budget setting meeting of this Committee has been changed to 23 October 2024, from it's originally scheduled 30 October 2024.

The meeting closed at: 20.05.

**SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MINUTES APPROVED (date):**