

Workington Town Council

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Minutes of the Finance, Property and Employment Committee Meeting on Thursday 12 March 2015, at 6pm in Workington Town Hall

N Schofield Chair	Present
A Lawson Vice Chair	Absent
C Armstrong	Present
J Bracken	Absent
B Cannon	Apologies
N Hardy	Absent
K Hansen	Apologies
M Heaslip	Present
R Jones	Apologies
B Miskelly	Present
B Reville	Present
D Rollo	Absent

F14.54 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs B Cannon, K Hansen and R Jones.

F14.55 Declarations of Interest

It was agreed that any additional interests would be dealt with as they arose.

F14.56 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 22 January 2015 were received and affirmed as a true record.

F14.57. Schedule of Payments

The committee reviewed the Schedule of Payments 1 January to 28 February 2015.

Resolved: To accept the Schedule.

F14.58. Bank Reconciliation Statement

The committee received the Reconciliation Statement as at 28 February 2015

Resolved: To note the statement.

F14.59. Budget Monitoring Statement

The committee considered a report on the Budget Monitoring Statement for 2014 – 2015 to 28 February 2015. It was noted that the underspends were not yet a representative picture of the whole year.

Resolved: To accept the report.

F14.60 Banking

The Committee considered a proposal to place a proportion of the Town Council's reserves in an account operated by CCLA. It was noted that the council currently kept a long term reserve with Allerdale Borough Council. The return on this account was set at 0.5 below the bank rate, which meant it currently accrued no interest at all. It was noted that the council has agreed to open an account with the Cumberland Building Society, but that this was awaiting the 'churn' of councillors from the May election, so that its signature requirements could be robust. The committee heard that the accounts offered by CCLA were held in reasonable regard by a number of other local authorities and that they potentially offered a higher yield than other options, whilst being fairly secure and retaining some access (albeit at the penalty of sacrificing some of the yield).

Resolved: To recommend the transfer of the £151,000 holding with Allerdale Borough Council to the CCLA Property Fund. The money would be reviewed after three years, but the expectation would be that this would form the council's 'core' reserve, able to benefit from a long term investment.

F14.61 Employment issues.

The Clerk outlined the arrangements for the recruitment of an Estate Worker. These would include shortlisting, verified by the chair of FPE, followed by interview assisted by a panel of councillors and the Senior Estate Worker. Interviews would take place on the first/second week in April.

Resolved: To adopt this approach to the selection process.

F14.62 Property issues

The clerk updated the committee on the status of current transfers of property and liabilities around the town including public realm furniture, play areas and allotments. The allotment transfer was completed in the preceding month, and talks were now underway to complete the process for Northside, Mountain View and Stoneleigh allotments. Notice boards in the town centre had been rebranded, but there were issues with water ingress. The Environment Committee was recommending the adoption of a Play Area on Walker Road and the clerk was finalising a legal agreement with Impact Housing to secure the site's future. The Environment Committee was also looking at other sites around the town for small play areas, which would complement those already in the council's care. They were also investigating the possibility of installing Panna courts (small football courts), on a number of sites,

including Vulcan's Park. Cllr Heaslip reminded the committee that he was the Portfolio Holder at Allerdale Borough Council for locality services, but added, for the committee's information, that the Borough Council was opening negotiations for a new parks contract and that this would bring the issue of parks and play area management into sharp relief. It was suggested that bus shelters and toilets might also be included in that consideration.

Resolved: that the impact of this potential change, and any opportunity it presented for the Town Council, be discussed at the June meeting of this committee, with a view to making a recommendation to Full Council in the summer.

Resolved: That no further action be taken on the issue of toilets and bus shelters at this time.

F14.63 Town Hall Management

The Committee received a briefing on the proposal from the Policy and Resources Committee relating to the occupation and management of the Town Hall. It was noted that this was considered under the exclusion of the public but that there was little of a confidential nature about the recommendation.

Resolved: To support the proposal to occupy the remainder of the East Wing of the Town Hall, and to develop the proposal with partners at Allerdale that the building be managed by a project manager.

The meeting closed at 19.02.