

MEETING PAPER

Subject: **Review of Lowestoft Town Council’s subscriptions**

**Meeting: Agenda Item 16 – LTC AGM**

**Date: 14 May 2019**

**NOT CONFIDENTIAL**

**Background/Introduction**

Lowestoft Town Council subscribes to various organisations in order to ensure the Council has access to the support and information it requires to enable it to manage risk and run its business effectively. The Council’s subscriptions are reviewed annually to ensure they are still relevant and offering good value for money. The relative cost of the subscription given its cost and the availability of information elsewhere is taken into account as part of this review.

**Details**

The following table details Lowestoft Town Council’s current and previous subscriptions, and the renewal cost for 2019 – 20:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **2017 – 18** | **2018 – 19** | **2019 – 20** | **Comment** |
| Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) | Subscription included as part of an overall contract for consultancy and clerking services. | Would have been £3,365.04 (no VAT), including a payment of £1,750 to NALC (the National Association), but Full Council decided not to renew this subscription. | As per 2018-19. As yet unpaid. | Full Council made a decision not to renew the SALC subscription for the 2018-19 year, owing to an overall assessment of value for money and risk management. There have been no substantive changes which would affect this position and it has been noted previously by Council that the additional cost of attending NALC events as a non-member is considerably less than the subscription cost. |
| National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) | £79.50 + VAT (part year)  Delegated – Clerk. | £381.60 (£318 + VAT £63.60)  Paid - Full Council decision. | £358. As yet unpaid. | A free consultancy visit and advice already received. Reasonable value and needed to assist the Council with its ambition to explore options for a market and to help the Council comply with the law. Now due. |
| Suffolk Preservation Society | £30  Full Council decision. | £30. | £30. | Acquired in 2017-18 to enable free access to training. Not used in 2018-19. Now due. |
| Institute of Workplace Facilities Management (IWFM) (Formerly British Institute of Facilities Management) | £202  Full Council (recruitment delegation to Personnel Committee) | £202. | £255 (renewed 1 March 2019) | Essential professional support to the Facilities and Contracts Manager. Next due by 1 March 2020. |
| Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) | Shona Bendix – Upgrade to Fellow for 2018 agreed by F & G (up to £75 – not yet paid)  Sarah Foote – Upgrade to Principal for 2018 (agreed by F & G £41.67). | Shona Bendix - £403 agreed by F & G  (subscription paid for by SALC in 2017)  (plus upgrades £125). | Shona Bendix - £507 (subscription from 1 May 2019 – 30 April 2020 paid). | Essential advice and support to Clerks within their role, access to information, conferences and training and upgrades provide recognition and additional entitlements e.g. training discounts.  Next due by 1 May 2020 and 1 January 2020. |
| Sarah Foote - £144 (part of £300)  (subscription from 1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019 paid). |
| Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd | Not subscribed. | Service use agreed but never invoiced. | Nothing to date. Suggest budget of £300+ VAT. | Essential advice on ethical matters, such as the Code of Conduct. Advice provided in 18-19. |
| Parkinson Partnership LLP | Not subscribed. | Full Council agreed on a budget of up to £450 (+VAT) (payable on a ‘pay-as-you-go’ basis). Actual invoice £200. | Nothing to date. Suggest budget of up to £450 +VAT. | Essential advice on VAT. |
| Survey Monkey | Not subscribed. | £340 | £340 (subscription from 23 March 2019 – 22 March 2020 paid). | Platform for the Council to produce online public surveys. Next due by 23 March 2020. |

**Recommendations/Decision**

1. The subscription to SALC is not renewed at this stage but this position is reviewed for 2020-21.
2. The subscription to NABMA is renewed but is reviewed for 2020-21 for value for money.
3. The subscription to the Suffolk Preservation Society is not renewed at this stage but will be reviewed for 2010-21.
4. The subscriptions to SLCC and IWFM have been renewed and are recommended for renewal when due.
5. The use of Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd is continued and the suggested budget agreed.
6. The subscription to Parkinson Partnership LLP is continued and the suggested budget agreed.
7. The subscription to Survey Monkey has been renewed and is recommended for renewal when due.
8. Delegated authority is agreed for the Clerk to progress the subscriptions recommended and any other subscriptions deemed necessary to help manage risks for the Council up to a limit of £3500 (+ VAT where applic).