

Lowestoft Town Council

Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee

Via Video Meeting
17:00 on 14 May 2020

MINUTES

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Neil Coleby, Alan Green, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce (Chair), John Pitts and Alice Taylor

Also participating: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

1. Welcome

The right to report and the application of the video meeting protocol were explained and noted, and the meeting was welcomed. It was noted that Cllr Patience was not able to participate at this stage of the meeting, as due to technical issues he was unable to hear or contribute.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Paul Page and David Youngman. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. Cllr Patience confirmed the technical issues had been resolved and he was able to participate in the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

4. Noting that the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

There were no comments. The draft minutes were noted and will be considered at the next appropriate meeting.

5. Any advance comments from the public on any matters on this agenda

There were none.

6. Committee arrangements

- 6.1. Membership of the Finance and Governance Committee – Membership was confirmed as follows: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Neil Coleby, Alan Green, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Alice Taylor and David Youngman
- 6.2. Appointing the Deputy Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee – Cllr Green proposed Cllr Coleby for the position of Deputy Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Pearce. There were no other proposals. The vote was taken and seven Councillors voted in favour. One Councillor abstained from the vote.

7. Sub-Committee arrangements for the Events and Communications Sub-Committee and the Standing Orders Sub-Committee

- 7.1. Terms of Reference – Under the responsibilities section, it was requested that the phrasing be amended to reflect that Standing Orders should be reviewed at least annually, rather than just annually, and that the Sub-Committee should review its Terms of Reference at least annually, rather than just annually. It was suggested that this Sub-Committee could review the Town Council's policies during the year also. This is currently covered by the Finance and Governance Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed that the Standing Orders Sub-Committee be renamed to the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee, and that its Terms of Reference be amended to reflect that it should review the Town Council's Standing Orders and Policies at least annually, and should review its own Terms of Reference at least annually. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Green and all Councillors voted in favour. Cllrs Coleby, Page, Patience, Pearce and Taylor had previously expressed an interest in joining this Sub-Committee, and it was suggested that an invitation be circulated to all Councillors again, since the Sub-

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Committee's responsibilities were being extended to include the review of the Council's policies as well. In the interim, Cllr Coleby proposed to accept the current membership as Cllrs Coleby, Page, Patience, Pearce and Taylor; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

The Terms of Reference for the Events and Communications Sub-Committee were reviewed, and it was suggested that they be amended to reflect that the Committee will be working in conjunction with the Events and Communications Officer, once this appointment is made. It was further suggested this should more broadly refer to the Clerk or any delegated officer. Cllr Pearce proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Events and Communications Sub-Committee, to reflect that it shall fulfil its responsibilities working in conjunction with the Clerk or any delegated officer; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. Cllrs Barnard, Coleby, Page, Parker, Pearce and Pitts had previously expressed an interest in joining the Events and Communications Sub-Committee, and during the meeting a request was received from Cllr Hardie to join both the Events and Communications Sub-Committee and the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee. Cllr Coleby proposed approval of Cllr Hardie's request to join the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee and to approve the membership of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee as Cllrs Barnard, Coleby, Hardie, Page, Parker, Pearce and Pitts; seconded by Cllr Green; seven Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

- 7.2. Any delegations – At the Annual Meeting, delegations were accepted, including interim emergency delegations relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, subject to further review in September. It was clarified that this item relates to any delegations specifically to the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee and the Events and Communications Sub-Committee. Any delegations would be included in the Terms of Reference for these Sub-Committees, which this Committee has already voted to accept.

8. Any updates on banking

The Town Council's Financial Regulations state that approval of the use of BACS and CHAPS should be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years. The Financial Regulations require review in this respect, as this advice is outdated and the preferred method of payment would be BACS or CHAPS, although cheques are issued occasionally, and a resolution to continue the use of BACS and CHAPS will not change this. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve the use of BACS and CHAPS, without invalidating any other accepted payment method; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

At the Annual Meeting, it was resolved that the Finance and Governance Committee should make a recommendation on the appointment of bank reconciliation signatories from amongst its members, from those who are not already bank signatories. The Clerk explained what the role would entail. No volunteers were forthcoming, but it was noted that Cllrs Page and Youngman are not bank signatories, and may wish to be considered for the role of bank reconciliation signatories. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to Full Council to appoint Cllrs Page and Youngman to the role of bank reconciliation signatories, subject to their acceptance; seconded by Cllr Pearce; five Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against; two Councillors abstained from the vote. It was agreed that a request for volunteers could be opened to the wider Council if necessary. Cllr Green advised that he would be happy to offer advice to those appointed to the role.

9. Budget:

- 9.1. Monitoring the budget for 2020 – 2021 – It was queried whether the heading for leisure fees in the budget monitoring document can now be removed. This may have been left in for audit

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purposes or to allow comparison to the 2019 – 2020 budget, but it will now be removed if possible. There is a separate heading for the drying racks, and it was confirmed that this is a contractor sum. It was requested that if it cannot be merged with the heading for The Ness, that it be moved so that the separate headings for The Ness are grouped. It was also requested that the heading for The Ness be renamed from 'East of England Park'. It was requested that a meeting of the Budget and Loan Working Group be arranged once its composition has been confirmed at June's Finance and Governance Committee meeting, and no later than 1 July. It was previously agreed that it would meet quarterly to scrutinise the budget in detail, and on that basis it was suggested that the Budget and Loan Working Group should instead become the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee, as its remit had been extended, and to align it with other comparable Working Groups which had become Sub-Committees. Cllr Pearce proposed that the Budget and Loan Working Group become the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. Draft Terms of Reference will be presented for consideration at the next Finance and Governance Committee meeting.

9.2. Any bank reconciliations – Arrangements will be made once signatories have been appointed.

10. Payments:

10.1. Payments for authorisation, including the following:

10.1a. See schedule – There were no payments for authorisation to be considered at this meeting.

10.1b. The Ness:

10.1bi Whether to proceed with a formal application to Essex and Suffolk Water, at a cost of £138, to provide a mains water supply to the site – There was a concern raised that with both this item and item 10.1bii, despite requests, the Town Council has yet to receive definitive advice as to what items are out of scope. The Town Council has set aside funding in its budget for The Ness, but would like further clarification before funding is committed for these purposes. It is understood that an electricity supply to The Ness was considered earlier on in the project, but was not pursued since plans for the performance space were adapted. It is understood that a water supply to the site had not been previously considered, which formed part of the basis for the Town Council considering a compostable toilet for the park. The demand for water and electricity supplies to the site is being driven by the Town Council through the Steering Group meetings. The Committee was made aware that requesting further information at this stage could delay the project and cause costs to increase. This was noted, but it was felt that the Council should not commit to this expenditure without first receiving the information it has requested before – specifically confirmation of what items are in and out of scope, and for the items which have been determined to be out of scope, a clear audit trail which shows when such a decision was made. The Clerk advised that she could make enquiries to this effect. £14,000 is an indicative cost for supplying electricity to the site, based on enquiries made. £138 is the cost for Essex and Suffolk Water to investigate and confirm whether it would be possible to supply water to The Ness, the actual cost to connect the water supply – should it be possible – is not yet known. It was suggested that the decision regarding the electricity supply should be deferred until information has been received about the out of scope items. It was suggested that in the interim, the payment of £138 to Essex and Suffolk Water could be authorised, for investigations to proceed on whether it would be possible to supply water to The Ness, on the basis that this action would not commit the Town Council to anything further. Even if it were possible to supply water to the site, the Council would need clear advice as to where pipes would need to be installed, as it may disturb areas which the Council wished to preserve. With regard to item 13.1 of this agenda, it was agreed that any decisions made there would not include delegating authority for an electricity supply to The Ness to be progressed. Cllr Taylor proposed approval of the payment of £138 for Essex and Suffolk Water to explore and confirm whether or not it

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would be possible to supply water to The Ness. Cllr Taylor's proposal was made on the basis that proceeding with this action would not commit the Town Council to anything further and is for exploratory purposes only. The Clerk will check and clarify this. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Green

10.1bii A maximum budget of £14,000 for EDF Energy to supply electricity to the site – Cllr Coleby proposed deferring this item to the Full Council meeting on 26 May, for the Clerk to make enquiries to confirm which items are in and out of scope, and for those items determined to be out of scope, a clear audit trail to be provided to confirm when such decisions were made. It was requested that it is made clear that the Town Council is not refusing this item, but is requesting the information it requires to make a responsible and transparent decision regarding expenditure of public funds. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Pearce and all Councillors voted in favour.

10.2. Income and expenditure reports for April 2020 and May 2020 to date – These had been circulated in advance and were displayed during the meeting as follows:

April income

Date	Payment from	Description	Amount
3 April 2020	First Light Festival C.I.C.	Refund of grant for the First Light Festival 2020	£5,000
8 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Historic England event lunch and refreshments	£140
17 April 2020	HMRC	HMRC VAT repayment 19-20 Q4	£52,161.15
20 April 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£213.16
22 April 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£47,713.07
28 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	CIL 2020-21 1 st instalment	£25,995.25
29 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Precept 2020-21 1 st instalment	£918,865.50

April expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
1 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market NNDR Apr 20	£119.65
1 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Links Road car park NNDR Apr 20	£188.25
1 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowls NNDR Apr 20	£107.80
1 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens PC NNDR Apr	£205.80
1 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street PC NNDR Apr 20	£124.55
1 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowls NNDR Apr 20	£108.20
1 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	S.N. Bowls NNDR Apr 20 refund	-£108.20
3 April 2020	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions March 2020	£3,871.95
7 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Reimbursement of CIL overpay	£2,827.59

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7 April 2020	Marina Theatre Trust	MTT Management Fee Apr-Jun 20	£37,500 + £7,500 VAT = £45,000
7 April 2020	Marina Theatre Trust	MTT Management Fee Jul-Sep 20	£37,500 + £7,500 VAT = £45,000
7 April 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Arnold's Bequest tarmac work	£1,738.58 + £347.72 VAT = £2,086.30
7 April 2020	Suffolk Cloud	Website hosting 2020-21	£110
7 April 2020	McCormack Benson Health & Safe	Fire risk assessment HH	£342
7 April 2020	East Suffolk Council	Harbour and Normanston By-Election	£11,567.95
7 April 2020	East Point Business Services	Capital repayment 20-21 Q1	£4,028.88
7 April 2020	East Point Business Services	HH Service Charge 20-21 Q1	£8,210.10
7 April 2020	East Point Business Services	HH rent 20-21 Q1	£4,410
7 April 2020	SLCC	Zero Carbon NHood Plan webinar	£72
7 April 2020	SLCC	Accessible Documents webinar	£42
7 April 2020	SLCC	Energy Projects webinar	£72
7 April 2020	Need2Store Ltd	Civic artefact storage April	£240
7 April 2020	Zurich Municipal	Insurance 2020-2021	£20,770.19
7 April 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Nightingale Park refurbishment	£42,000
7 April 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	General legal advice	£237.60
7 April 2020	McCormack Benson Health & Safe	Asbestos sampling	£765.60
8 April 2020	Binder Ltd	Uplands sewage disposal maintenance	£298.50
8 April 2020	Binder Ltd	Uplands sewage disposal	£406.20
8 April 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	North Denes legal advice	£2,578.08
8 April 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	Marina Theatre legal advice	£1,116.72
8 April 2020	Need2Store Ltd	Civic artefact storage March	£240
8 April 2020	Marina Theatre Trust	MTT Management Fee Oct-Dec 20	£37,500 + £7,500 VAT = £45,000
8 April 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Norse Partnership Charge Apr 20	£36,525 + £7,305 VAT = £43,830
8 April 2020	NABMA	NABMA subscription 2020 – 21	£358
8 April 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	Legal advice for HH lease	£169.80 + £30.36 VAT = £200.16

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14 April 2020	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	Year End Closedown 19-20	£560 + £112 VAT = £672
16 April 2020	Lloyds Bank Account	Credit card payments	£137.43
21 April 2020	Nicholson Solicitors LLP	General legal advice	£1,170.40
23 April 2020	Salaries	Salaries April 2020	£8,725.67

May Income

There was none at this stage.

May Expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC NNDR May 20	£117
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Links Road car park NNDR May 20	£187
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowls NNDR May 20	£110
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens PC NNDR May 20	£210
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street PC NNDR May 20	£122
1 May 2020	NPower	Town Hall electric March 2020	£282.38 + £14.12 VAT = £296.50
1 May 2020	NPower	K Gardens electric Jan-Mar 20	£272.02 + £13.60 VAT = £285.62
1 May 2020	NPower	CCTV electric March 2020	£173 + £34.60 VAT = £207.60
1 May 2020	NPower	Triangle Market electric Mar20	£103.64 + £5.18 VAT = £108.82
1 May 2020	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall gas March 20	£42.83 + £2.14 VAT = £44.97
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Food voucher grant	£1,200
1 May 2020	SLCC	Town Clerk SLCC membership	£525
1 May 2020	SLCC	The Clerks' Manual	£47.50
1 May 2020	Railway Paths Ltd	Annual rent for GELP access	£24.78
1 May 2020	NPower	Pakefield St electric Jan-Mar	£354.83 + £17.74 VAT = £372.57
1 May 2020	Essex and Suffolk Water	Normanston Park water Dec19 – Mar20	£516.87
1 May 2020	NPower	Normanston Park electric Jan-Mar 20	£3,779.83 + £755.97 VAT = £4,535.80
1 May 2020	NPower	Denes Oval electric Jan-Mar 20	£1,084.78 + £216.96 VAT = £1,301.74
1 May 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest electric Jan-Mar 20	£305.69 + £15.28 VAT = £320.97
1 May 2020	Suffolk County Council	2 x recruitment adverts	£305.69 + £15.28 VAT = £320.97

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4 May 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership Charge May 2020	£36,525 + £7,305 VAT = £43,830
4 May 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	Professional charges (legal)	£712.80 + £142.56 VAT = £855.36
4 May 2020	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit Year End 19-20	£450
6 May 2020	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions April 2020	£3,860.90
6 May 2020	SLCC	Community Governance qualification	£1,376

There were no comments and the income and expenditure reports were noted.

10.3. Payments made under delegated authority (see schedule) – This was displayed during the meeting as follows:

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC NNDR May 2020	£117
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Links Road NNDR May 2020	£187
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowls Pavilion NNDR May 2020	£110
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens PC NNDR May 2020	£210
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street PC NNDR May 2020	£122
1 May 2020	NPower	Town Hall electric 1 – 31 March 2020	£282.38 + £14.12 VAT = £296.50
1 May 2020	NPower	Kensington Gardens electric 1 January – 31 March 2020	£272.02 + £13.60 VAT = £285.62
1 May 2020	NPower	CCTV electric 1 – 31 March 2020	£173 + £34.60 VAT = £207.60
1 May 2020	NPower	Triangle Market electric 1 – 31 March 2020	£103.64 + £5.18 VAT = £108.82
1 May 2020	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall gas 1 – 31 March 2020	£42.83 + £2.14 VAT = £44.97
1 May 2020	East Suffolk Council	Food voucher grant	£1,200
1 May 2020	SLCC	Town Clerk SLCC membership	£525
1 May 2020	SLCC	The Clerks' Manual	£47.50
1 May 2020	Railway Paths Ltd	Annual rent for GELP access	£24.78
1 May 2020	NPower	Pakefield Street PC electric 1 January – 31 March 2020	£354.83 + £17.74 VAT = £372.57
1 May 2020	Essex and Suffolk Water	Normanston Park water 11 October 2019 – 31 March 2020	£516.87

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1 May 2020	NPower	Normanston Park electric 1 January – 31 March 2020	£3,779.83 + £755.97 VAT = £4,535.80
1 May 2020	NPower	Lowestoft Cemetery PC electric 1 January – 31 March 2020	£228.62 + £11.43 VAT = £240.05
1 May 2020	NPower	Denes Oval electric 1 January – 31 March 2020	£1,084.78 + £216.98 VAT = £1,301.74
1 May 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest electric 1 January – 31 March 2020	£305.69 + £15.28 VAT = £320.97
4 May 2020	Suffolk County Council	2 x recruitment advertisements	£150
4 May 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership Charge May 2020	£36,525 + £7,305 VAT = £43,830
4 May 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors	Professional charges (legal)	£712.80 + £142.56 VAT = £855.36
4 May 2020	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit year end 2019-20	£450
6 May 2020	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions April 2020	£3,860.90
6 May 2020	SLCC	Community Governance qualification Deputy Clerk	£1,376

Cllr Coleby proposed acceptance of the schedule of payments made under delegated authority; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

- 10.4. Capital grants payments – A total of £11,196.80 has been spent and reclaimed from East Suffolk Council, out of total available funding of £105,150. Expenditure has to be committed first then reclaimed, but it was agreed the Town Council would wish to seek a prior agreement with East Suffolk Council before committing any expenditure to a project. It was suggested that a group of Councillors from this Committee could look at the capital grants programme with the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee, to consider an appropriate way forward and make a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee. Cllrs Coleby, Green and Taylor advised they would be happy to do this. Cllr Pearce proposed that Cllrs Coleby, Green and Taylor work with the AID Committee to consider the capital grants programme and the Council's priorities, and make a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

11. Audit

- 11.1. The Internal Audit report and recommendations from the Responsible Financial Officer – It was agreed to bring item 12.3 forward on the agenda to consider after item 11.2, as these items are linked. The Clerk's Action Plan as Responsible Financial Officer was approved by Full Council and was circulated ahead of this meeting. The Council has several different reserves, and clarification as to the current position with these reserves was requested for consideration of this item. Cllr Coleby proposed deferral of this item, pending clarification of the current position regarding the Town Council's reserves; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 11.2. Progress with preparations for the External Audit – The public notice for the period for the exercise of public rights has been published today, and circulated to Councillors who may be able to access the Town Council's noticeboards. The period does not commence until 20 May, so this has provided advance notice and has been published in compliance with the law. The period for the exercise of public rights was also noted at the Annual Meeting.

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It was noted item 12.3 was no longer being brought forward on the agenda, and will be deferred to be considered in conjunction with item 11.1.

12. Policies and Procedures

- 12.1. Review and adoption of the Complaints Procedure – A recommendation had been received from an official source, for a review of the Complaints Procedure. Cllr Pearce had a suggestion on how complaints should be handled, which would apply to new complaints only. It was suggested that upon receipt of a complaint, it should be logged by the Clerk or another member of staff with delegated authority, then reviewed by a review group of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of the Personnel Committee, in conjunction with the Clerk, and from there be referred to a panel, who would assess how the complaint should be taken forward and by whom. No individual who is a subject of the complaint, either directly or indirectly, should be involved in the handling of it. The panel of any three from six appointed Councillors would be formed by the Personnel Committee, from amongst its members, upon receipt of a complaint, but those three Councillors would not then be involved should the complaint proceed further. The three Councillors on the panel will evaluate the complaint and if they feel no further action is required by the Council they will provide a response as to why. Should they decide that further action is required, they will decide how this is taken forward and by whom. Those Councillors not on the Personnel Committee may be called upon should the complaint go to appeal. It was clarified that any complaint against a member of staff would be dealt with by the Clerk as their manager, as per the existing procedure. This proposed new procedure would need to be checked against the Town Council's Standing Orders before being approved and put into place, and if panels are going to handle complaints, sufficient Councillor availability to support these needs to be confirmed to ensure complaints are handled in a timely manner. Complaint logging will provide a way to track the progress of a case. It was agreed that the amended Complaints Procedure should be reviewed by the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee, so that it can be checked against Standing Orders for consistency before being considered for adoption by Full Council. Cllr Pearce proposed that the revised Complaints Procedure, as detailed above, be referred to the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee to review against Standing Orders, before being considered for adoption by Full Council; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.
- 12.2. Review and adoption of the Appraisals Guidance – It was requested that the guidance include the advance provision of forms to the appraisee. This is part of the appraisal process but it was agreed that guidance could be amended for clarity. It had previously been requested that the importance of training be made more clear in the guidance. Training is an inherent part of the appraisal process and this will be covered more clearly in the Appraisals Guidance. There was a discussion as to whether appraisals should be conducted more frequently. Currently they are completed annually, unless a member of staff is on a probation period, has recently changed role, or requires additional support. Increasing the frequency of appraisals could be seen as harassment unless specifically required. The Clerk will review the Appraisals Guidance against the ACAS guidance and will make any amendments if necessary. Regular staff meetings and one to one meetings are held throughout the year. It was agreed there are no fundamental issues with the current appraisals process. It was queried whether there is a system in place for a member of staff to appeal against their appraisal. The appraisal process is an agreed process, which requires both parties to sign in agreement of what has been discussed. Any issues would be handled separately, the complaints procedure. Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to Full Council to accept the Appraisals Guidance, subject to amendments as discussed regarding training and the advance provision of forms; seconded by Cllr Green; seven Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.
- 12.3. Review and adoption of the Reserves Policy and consideration of allocating £300,000 from the general reserves to the Council's earmarked reserves for asset management and improvement (£200,000 to the capital reserve and £100,000 to the repairs and maintenance reserve) – It had previously been agreed that this item would be deferred, to be considered in conjunction

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with item 11.1.

- 12.4. Review and adoption of the Grant Awarding Policy and to consider how to manage the diverted funds for COVID-19 support and relief – At point 1.1 of the policy it states that grant awarding funds have been increased to assist with COVID-19 support and recovery. Whilst this statement is accurate, it was requested that the wording be made clearer to reflect that the Council had further increased its grant awarding funds, as it had previously made a decision to increase its grant fund from 2019 – 2020 anyway, before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. At point 6.1d, it was queried what action is taken if a grant awarded by the Town Council is not used for its intended purpose, or no report is provided within six months as to the outcome and impact of the grant. In such cases, the Finance and Governance Committee would be informed of this if the same organisation submitted another grant application at a later date, but further consideration needs to be given to what action the Council would take if it does not receive the requested information. It is important that robust checks are completed before grants are awarded. At point 8.1, the standard Grant Awarding Policy states that applications will be considered at the June and December meetings of the Finance and Governance Committee. This has been removed for the purpose of this policy, as applications are likely to be more time urgent, but it was suggested that this should be reviewed with regard to the standard policy also. It was previously agreed that grant applications should be considered in two rounds, as it allowed for fairer comparison between applications, however, it was felt that a six month period between the two grant awarding rounds may be too long. It was suggested that the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee review the standard Grant Awarding Policy, ahead of it being reintroduced. Cllr Green proposed referring the standard Grant Awarding Policy to the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee, ahead of the policy's reintroduction, with a recommendation that grant applications be considered on a quarterly, rather than six monthly, basis; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to adopt the post-COVID-19 Grant Awarding Policy, with the minor amendment to point 1.1; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. It was requested that contact be made with East Suffolk Council to see if any further support is required. As this is an emergency situation, it was agreed that a recommendation on delegated authority to consider applications as they come in would be beneficial. Cllr Pitts proposed a recommendation to Full Council to grant delegated authority to the Mayor and Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee, working with the Clerk, to make decisions on grant applications made under the post-COVID-19 policy as they are received. This can be referred to the Deputy Mayor should the Mayor or Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee have a pecuniary or local non-pecuniary interest in any of the applications. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Taylor and all Councillors voted in favour.

13. Other financial matters, including:

- 13.1. Granting delegated authority to the Clerk to agree the Town Council's electricity supplier – As per discussions earlier in the meeting, it was agreed this would not include any decisions about an electricity supply, or electricity supplier, for The Ness. It was queried how much the Council spends on electricity during the year. This would need to be checked but is thought to be in the region of £40,000. It was agreed that the decision should include consideration of the suppliers' green credentials. Cllr Patience proposed a recommendation to Full Council to delegate authority to the Mayor and Chair of Finance and Governance Committee, working with the Clerk, to agree the Town Council's electricity supplier; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 13.2. Whether to develop an Infrastructure Investment Plan (for CIL and s106) – Currently, decisions are being based on a moment in time, and not in line with a strategy or corporate decision by the Council. The Clerk will draft a plan with context on what funding is available and what the Council would be able to spend funds on. Cllr Pearce proposed approval for the Clerk to draft an Infrastructure Investment Plan, for the consideration of the Finance and Governance and AID Committees; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. Cllr Coleby offered assistance with

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drafting the plan if needed.

14. Date of the next meeting

11 June 2020 17:00 – It was queried whether the timing of the meetings should be reconsidered. Meetings were originally being held at 18:00, but the Committee voted to make this earlier from a safety perspective of those travelling to and from the meetings during the winter. Some Committee members have other commitments later in the evening, so it was agreed the meeting time should be brought forward. Cllr Taylor proposed that, as of June’s meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee, the meetings should commence at 15:30; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. The Events and Sub-Committee meetings had previously been scheduled around meetings of the Finance and Governance Committee. Their future meeting schedule will be considered separately by the Events and Communications Sub-Committee.

15. Items for the next agenda and close

It was requested that a meeting of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee be arranged, once its Terms of Reference have been considered for approval at the next Finance and Governance Committee meeting. The Clerk will email Councillors the latest position regarding the Council’s tenants.

16. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential items for consideration. Thanks were offered to those who had observed the live stream of the meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting 19:36.

Signed:

11 June 2020