

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WELLS TOWN HALL, ON WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2017 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT: Cllrs: M Brandon; J Osman; C Price; T Robbins (Chairman); H Siggs;
D Swain (Vice-Chairman); C Wride (Deputy Mayor)

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White
RFO: S Luck
Cllrs: N Kennedy; G Wilson
1 member of the public

17/107F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllr. J North (Mayor)

17/108F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 26th July 2012:
None received.

17/109F MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2017
Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, approved and signed.

17/110F BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR THE YEAR 01/04/18 – 31/03/19
To make recommendations to the Council meeting to be held on 21st December:

- i. Exclude the press and public: Due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, relating to staff salaries, it was proposed by the Chairman (under the Admission to Public Meetings Act 1960) that the press and public be excluded:
RESOLVED.
- ii. The public and the staff left the room. Cllrs Kennedy and Wilson were invited to remain and stayed to take part in the discussion.
After about an hour's discussion the committee agreed on a resolution.
Proposed:
 1. The committee accepts the benchmarking proposal in principle.
 2. The committee welcomes a dialogue with the Staffing Committee and would like them to report back their final recommendations in relation to staff pay.
 3. The proposed increase in staff budget for 2018-19 is reduced by 50%.
 4. The 50% which is removed from this budget is placed into a Staffing Contingency Fund which can be used only after consultation with the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
 5. The budget is otherwise approved at the same total as in the draft.**RESOLVED**
- iii. The meeting was re-opened; staff and public were recalled to the room. Cllrs. Kennedy and Wilson left.
There was brief delay while item 17/111F Meeting Open to the Public was heard (see below), then the meeting returned to 17/110F.
- iv. **17/110F Budget** The RFO reported as follows:
 1. Funding for the 67 bus is not included in the budget: noted
 2. CCTV budget to be increased slightly due to index link formula: agreed
 3. Cemetery gates estimates are coming in at over the draft budget figure: approval was given to transfer £3,000 from the properties fund.

v. **RECOMMENDED BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR THE YEAR 2018-19:**

1. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the budget be recommended to full Council for adoption, subject to the agreed adjustments.
2. It was proposed, seconded and agreed to recommend to full Council that the precept figure be set in accordance with the approved amendments.

17/111F

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mrs D Boulton spoke about the 67 bus route and Cllr. Price reported from the recent meeting. Some figures had been circulated. No response had been received to the reply sent to SCC by WCC in July. It was agreed to put the matter on the next agenda.

17/112F

FINANCE REPORT

- i. To receive the financial reports for November 2017:
The bank accounts had been checked prior to the meeting. The accounts were scrutinised and the accounts for November 2017 were then proposed, seconded and approved.
- ii. PKJ Littlejohn PLC has been appointed as the council's external auditor.
- iii. It was agreed to re-appoint Probusiness as internal auditor.

17/113F

COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS

- i. Wells City Band 'Bekynton Bandits': discretionary grant - Year 2 review: approved.
- ii. Wells Repair Café: refused.

17/114F

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Request from the Archives & Civic Assets Committee to commit the Town Hall function rooms for participation in 'Heritage Open Days', free of charge, on the second Saturday of September from 2019:

Proposed, seconded and agreed.

17/115F

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REVIEWS

- i. A draft Reserves Policy was provided by the Town Clerk for Councillors' consideration. The RFO asked for members instructions on investment holdings and was directed how to proceed.
- ii. An Investments Strategy will be prepared to put before Council.
- iii. The Council's Asset Register of Land and Properties was distributed for review.

17/116F

CHANGING PLACES PROJECT Up-date

The Listed Building Consent is being dealt with by MDC. Quotes for the building preparation works are coming in.

17/117F

PROPERTIES Up-date

Bus station electrical works are completed. Decoration in the waiting room and other works are scheduled for the New Year.

17/118F

MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Wells in Bloom pole demolished in a road traffic accident in Broad Street.

17/119F

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 11th January 2018