

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING, BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL  
TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2023, 5.30PM  
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

**PRESENT:**

- |                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • <b>The Mayor:</b>      | • Councillor K J Jackson      |
| Councillor A K Harper    | • Councillor J T Jones        |
| • <b>Deputy Mayor:</b>   | • Councillor A C Lawton       |
| Councillor N R Yates     | • Councillor W Rogers (Chair) |
| • Councillor C Brady     | • Councillor J T Salt         |
| • Councillor A H Hart    | • Councillor C Smith          |
| • Councillor D J Hawley  | • Councillor C Wood           |
| • Councillor M A Hopkins |                               |

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Mrs Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Mrs Margaret Warman - Compliance and Governance Officer
- Mrs Angela Williams – Administration Officer
- Ms Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnerships Officer
- Ms Elizabeth Norton – Finance Officer

*Councillor Rogers recited the disclaimer regarding the recording of the meeting.*

**52. APOLOGIES**

Councillor F A Holdsworth

**53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: Councillor Hopkins declared an interest in item 55.
- ii. Other Interests. Councillor Brady declared an interest in item 63.

**54. MINUTES**

To **confirm** the Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on 26 September 2023 (approved at the Town Council meeting on 10 October 2023) **Signed** and all **Agreed**.

## 55. ACCOUNTS MATTERS

- a) To **approve** the bank reconciliations for August and September 2023- all accounts (attached).

Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

- b) To **receive** an update on receipts and payments to-date (attached).

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Hawley, **received**.

- c) To **receive** a verbal update on the application to Unity Bank

Councillor Rogers questioned whether all committee members have received personal log in details from Unity Bank.

The Chief Officer explained all committee members will have login information which enables them to view the transactions made on the account. She explained that a new procedure, policy and possibly a change in the Financial Regulations in relation to how the Unity Bank Account will be managed alongside the NatWest account; this will be brought back to this Committee for approval in January 2024.

Councillor Hawley questioned whether the bank charges will continue due to keeping the Natwest Account. The Chief Officer explained that details such as this will need to be discussed in finer details.

The update was **received**.

- d) To **consider** the 'What is Auditing' note (attached), which considers a breakdown of monitoring roles and activities

The Chief Officer discussed the note, which detailed the following practices; What is Auditing, The Chief Officer role, Monitoring Councillors role, The Health and Safety role, A Competent person, Internal Auditor and process of external auditing.

Councillor Hawley stated that the role of a 'Monitoring Councillor' in the past had had a financial focus rather than a broader monitoring function. It was agreed that both Councillors Hawley and Eardley would test the role that had been defined within this document.

Councillor Salt agreed and requested that the finalised document be approved by full Council.

It was discussed that the monitoring officers should both be on the Finance Strategy and Management Committee; further consideration would be given to this.

All **agreed**.

## **56. TO CONSIDER A DEPUTY HEALTH AND SAFETY MONITORING COUNCILLOR**

Councillor Rogers nominated Councillor Holdsworth as a Deputy to Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Jackson. All **agreed**.

## **57. POLICIES (attached)**

### **a) To approve the reviewed Co-Option Policy**

Councillor Salt proposed to add to section 5.5: 'further discussion in relation to appendix A'; seconded by Councillor Jackson. All **agreed**.

Councillor Hawley noted that there are two separate definitions to the Co-Option Vacancy; it was either a casual vacancy or ordinary vacancy. There was discussion about whether the policy should make a distinction between them. It was agreed that clarification would be provided.

Proposed by Councillor Lawton; seconded by Councillor Harper. All **agreed**.

### **b) To approve the reviewed Petitions Policy**

The Chief Officer requested clarity on whether a petition should identify whether signatories are older or younger than 18 years old.

It was discussed whether to amend Section 4.1 part 4.

There was consideration of the role of young people in decision-making. The Chief Officer stated that a section could be added to a page on the website for 'under 18s and how to engage with your Town Council'.

There was a discussion around holding young people's data; a GDPR statement should be added to the policy, identifying the petition-makers responsibilities.

It was discussed to amend the age from 18 years old to 13 years old and add a GDPR statement. All **agreed**.

c) To **approve** the reviewed Severe Winter Weather Management Policy Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

d) To **approve** the reviewed Investment Strategy Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

e) To **approve** the reviewed Lone Working Policy Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

## **STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

### **58.**

a) To **consider** disposal of any assets, in line with the Asset Management Policy and Financial Regulations  
None.

b) To **confirm** approved suppliers as part of the Procurement Policy  
The Chief Officer tabled two new approved contractors.

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

*In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1, the Council is to determine which items, if any, should be taken with the public excluded.*

## **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

### **59. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON CCTV PROPOSALS FOR THE TOWN CENTRE**

The Chief Officer reported that she had made some new investigations regarding the CCTV.

Councillor Wood proposed to approach David Smith from the District Council to consider funding for CCTV. The Chief Officer should investigate further and gain quotes; seconded by Councillor Harper. All **agreed**.

*Councillor Hawley left the meeting at 6.45pm*

**60. TO CONSIDER THE CURRENT PROCESS FOR FUEL CARD TOP-UPS AS PART OF THE BIDDULPH WORKS TOGETHER PROJECT, AND TO MAKE SUITABLE AMENDMENTS (ATTACHED)**

The Chief Officer had attached the current process, and requested feedback. It was agreed to keep the process the same. The start date was discussed and agreed to be 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

All agreed.

**61. TO RECEIVE A GENERAL UPDATE ON BIDDULPH WORKS TOGETHER PROJECTS**

The Chief Officer gave an update regarding the spend to date.

**62. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON PROGRESS WITH THE BELLWAY LAND TRANSFER AT BRIARSWOOD**

The Chief Officer provided a brief update on the current management arrangements.

It was proposed by Councillor Hart, for the Chief Officer to go ahead and instruct a surveyor; seconded by Councillor Salt. All **agreed**.

*Councillor Smith left the meeting at 7.03pm.*

**63. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE CITIZENS ADVICE OFFICE RELOCATION**

The Chief Officer stated that the Citizens Advice have confirmed that they will relocate to the Town Hall.

**64. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON AGREEMENTS REGARDING ASSET MANAGEMENT OF DISTRICT COUNCIL LAND**

The Chief Officer had entered some negotiations with the District Council regarding the outstanding Asset Management issues.

## 65. TO CONFIRM STORAGE ARRANGEMENTS FOR MARKET/ EVENT EQUIPMENT

Councillor Salt proposed that the Chief Officer moves forward with the Brown Lees Storage unit; seconded by Councillor Jones. Forthwith. All **agreed**.

## 66. QUOTATIONS (to be tabled)

- a) To **approve** a quotation for the creation of a car parking area at the top of Springfield Road.

Councillor Yates stated that planning permission may be required.

The quotes were discussed, and it was agreed to use HB Clews.

- b) To **approve** a provider for mental health awareness and mental health first aid training.

The quotes were discussed, and it was **agreed** to use 'Taking off the Mask'.

- c) To **approve** a quotation for additional CCTV cameras at the Town Hall. Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Lawton. All **agreed**.

- d) To **approve** a quotation for nappy bin and sanitary bin provision. Proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

*The meeting ended at 7.40pm.*

Signed..... Date.....