

MAIN SUBJECTS COVERED: Payment Schedules for March/April 2013/ Financial Statements for year ended 31st March 2013 / Annual Return for 2012/13 / Poynton in Bloom funding request / Insurance Schedule for 2013/14/ Membership of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC)

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 8PM ON MONDAY 22ND APRIL 2013 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HALL, POYNTON

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr C Gorst

Cllrs. G Bartos, M Beanland, L A Clarke, Mrs J Saunders, A Smith and G Smith

Attending under SO 54: Cllr P Hoyland substituting for Cllr M C G Stewart

Also attending under SO 56: Cllr Mrs S Horsman

48. Apologies for Absence

None

49. Declarations of Pecuniary or Other Interests

None

50. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th March 2013

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the F&GP meeting held on 4th March 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman (NC)

51. Payment Schedules for February and March 2013

In answer to a question, the Clerk clarified that the entry for the photocopier rental charge is for the photocopier inherited from Cheshire East and located in the Civic Hall reception. It is subject to a lease agreement which expires in September 2013. The Town Council can then take it over and find the best deal available.

Cllr Bartos questioned the mileage shown on page 469. The Clerk explained that this is the accumulated business mileage claim from the Youth Co-ordinator. This is usually put in every month or two. Following a discussion on

the standard mileage rate paid by the Town Council the Clerk confirmed he will check this.

Cllr Clarke noted the Christmas tree charges. The Clerk explained that we would not be using Cheshire East again to provide the trees and lights – the charges were excessive.

RESOLVED: That the Payment Schedules for February and March 2013 be received and signed by the Chairman (NC)

52. Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2013

The Clerk explained that the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2013 were compiled by the Accountant, with assistance from the Finance Manager and the Town Clerk on 10th April 2013. These need to be signed off by the newly-elected Mayor at the Annual Town Council meeting on 13th May 2013.

The Clerk briefed members on the main points arising from the Statements. There had been a 6.51% increase in the precept in 2012/2013 compared to the previous year. The total other receipts were down compared to 2011/12, mainly because of a drop of c.£32,000 in double taxation. Staff costs had increased by 7.42%, due to a full time Operations Manager in post since October 2012, as well as annual increments. On total other payments the Clerk explained that there was an invoice from Cheshire East dated 28th March 2013 under PVRS - this is an interim payment for the bonded resin overlay, and needed to be accrued.

Cllr Beanland noted that on the list of Councillors at the front of the Statements document Cllr Bartos's name was missing. The Clerk apologised for this oversight on the part of the Accountant who had compiled the document, and confirmed ensure it was amended.

Appendix A – The Rolling Capital Programme Fund (RCPF) has reduced because of the invoice from Cheshire East for PVRS work of c. £42,000 referred to above. The Civic Hall maintenance reserve had shown a net increase of some £6,000, but members should bear in mind that work is required to the roof, flooring and other areas. The Clerk explained that if there is a requirement for capital spending, and no specific earmarked reserve for the purpose, it is legitimate to make a call on the RCPF.

Cllr Clarke asked if these accounts are usually available in time for the Town Assembly. The Clerk explained that the Accountant had to make some adjustments for the Cheshire East accrual for PVRS outlined above, and the amended Statements had only been received back on the day of the Annual Assembly, 15th April 2013.

Cllr Mrs Saunders asked if the PCSO funding of £2,800 from Disley was included in the COPS budget. The Clerk said this has not yet been received.

The Chairman noted that on page 4 the General Reserve has increased by £21,500 which was anticipated at the budget time.

RESOLVED: That the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2013 are recommended to the Town Council for approval, with the amendment to include Cllr Bartos on the list of Councillors (NC)

53. Annual Return for 2012/13

The Clerk explained that the Town Council needs to submit an Annual Return to the external auditor every year. The Clerk referred to Section 4 of the Return and confirmed that the internal auditor had signed this off at the conclusion of his visit of 17th April 2013, and was satisfied with the level of internal control. He had also made four observations which need to be brought to Councillors' attention, and actioned by the Clerk.

On the internal auditor's observation concerning controls on salary rates, the Clerk suggested that in future he attach a matrix showing a breakdown of salaries and employee and employer contributions behind the payment schedule.

On mileage rates the Clerk explained that the 65p rate is recognised by NALC, but the Clerk will follow up to find out if there is the correct HMRC approved rate.

On the level of insurance for fidelity cover the Clerk felt that this was adequate, as did the Accountant.

RESOLVED: That Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2013 are received and recommended to the Town Council for approval (NC)

54. Poynton in Bloom (PIB) Funding Request

The Chairman asked members if they had suggestions for additional sites for planting bulbs. Cllr Beanland suggested a verge in the vicinity of the railway bridge on Chester Road. Unfortunately this was discounted on the basis that it was too near to the roadside, with traffic management issues. Cllr G Smith recalled that following the meeting with Garners it was mentioned that planters at the front of Queensway may be considered by PIB. Cllr Clarke suggested the grass verge on both sides of Tern Drive at Chester Road, and near Woodford Road as possible sites that would benefit from spring bulbs. Cllr Hoyland suggested the entrance and exit to the car park at Queensway too.

RESOLVED: That the report from PIB for Summer 2013 is received; that funding of up to £750 is approved; and that additional areas for bulb

planting are considered, subject to the ability/capacity of PIB to take this on (NC)

55. 2013/14 Insurance Schedule

The Committee considered the Insurance Schedule in the context of the Town Council's Internal Controls. The Clerk said that he had found that both the War Memorial and the Queen Victoria Fountain were underinsured. These are now covered for £25,000 and £50,000 respectively, for a very small increase in the premium. Cllr A Smith asked if the Gateways are insured. The Clerk said he has previously raised this issue with Cheshire East because they are so close to the carriageway. He will refer back to the correspondence he received from Cheshire East at the time and clarify the matter.

RESOLVED: That the Insurance Schedule for Poynton Town Council is received and initialled and dated by the Chairman; and that the Clerk clarify with Cheshire East the issue of Gateway insurance (NC)

56. Bank Reconciliation

The Chairman requested that the bank statements are included in future.

RESOLVED: That the Bank Reconciliation for end-March 2013 is received and initialled and dated by the Chairman (NC)

57. Middlewood Railway Station

RESOLVED: That the letter dated 27th March 2013 from the Clerk to Mr R G Chapman of Transport for Greater Manchester, concerning Middlewood Railway Station is received (NC)

58. Membership of ChALC, 2013/14

Cllr Clarke updated the meeting on the visit by ChALC at a recent M&E meeting. Cllr Clarke provided some background and explained that at this meeting ChALC had reassured members and had acknowledged that a mistake had occurred in the past. They have put procedures in place to ensure this would not happen again. Cllr Clarke proposed that the Town Council renew the subscription for this year, but that our continued membership in subsequent years is brought back to the Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council's membership of ChALC for 2013/14 is renewed; and that membership for subsequent years is brought back to the Committee annually for consideration (NC)

The meeting concluded at 8.35 pm