

MINUTES of the meeting of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** held on Monday 22nd October 2018 in Room 11, Town Hall, Royston, at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Davison (in the chair).
Councillors Brown, Harrison, Hughes, Leggett, F Smith, Squire-Smith, Stanier and Swallow.

In attendance: Town Clerk
Town Councillor Inwood, District Councillor Hunter, County Councillor Jarvis

Councillor Brown declared that she would be recording the meeting

220/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bourke-Waite.

221/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

No declarations were received.

222/19 APPROVAL OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record, the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on:

- 24th September 2018 (minutes 185/19 to 196/19)

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

223/19 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Town Council Properties Sub-Committee meeting held on Monday 24th September 2018 into the workings of the Council (minutes 197/19 to 200/19).

224/19 BANK RECONCILIATION AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE:

- i) Members received and **APPROVED** the Bank Reconciliation for September 2018.
- ii) Members received and **APPROVED** the September Income and Expenditure report compared against budgets for 2018-2019.

225/19 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

Members **APPROVED** the October 2018 accounts for payment and the supplementary accounts for payment for the total £37,919.12 and the transfers between the Town Council accounts.

226/19 BANK CHARGES:

Members received an update from the Town Clerk on the current Council banking arrangements. The current bankers have agreed to give free banking on the Council's community and charity accounts for a period of 12 months.

Members **RESOLVED** that as the banking arrangements were currently working well, these terms should be accepted, the accounts should remain with the existing bankers and the bank accounts will be reviewed again in 12 months' time when the free period comes to an end.

227/19 ROYSTON CAVE:

Members received a report detailing a proposed draft budget for Royston Cave for the remainder of 2018-2019 under the new management arrangements. Councillors discussed the updated budget and future costs and revenue. Members **RESOLVED** to approve the updated budget for Royston Cave for 2018-2019. The additional expenditure will be taken from general reserves. A recorded vote was requested. Councillors Davison, Harrison, Hughes, Leggett, F Smith and Swallow voted for the proposal, Councillor Stanier voted against the proposal and Councillors Brown and Squire-Smith abstained.

228/19 STILE PLANTATION AND GREEN WALK PLANTATION:

Members received an update on remedial work required at Stile Plantation which was identified during a recent Councillors' visit to the site. They were also advised of a new tree tagging system that would be beneficial at both plantations, enabling trees at risk to be identified and monitored. Members **RESOLVED** to approve the work totalling £2,120 for Stile Plantation and Members also **RESOLVED** to approve expenditure of £720 for tree tagging at both Plantations. This expenditure would be taken from general reserves.

229/19 COUNCILLORS AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

Members received a report from Councillor Brown on the Twinning visit in September, which took place at the end of the Arts Festival. 56 Visitors attended, and the visit was considered to be very successful, both the Civic Reception on the 29th September and the Arts Festival finale concert on Sunday 30th September. The Mayor was thanked for attending the events.

Councillor Brown then reported on the Conservators Public Meeting, held on 11th October 2018. Some important points were raised about concerns over grazing issues and it was reported that the stewardship lies with Natural England and not the Conservators. The HSL agreement comes to an end next year, Natural England do not seem to have any new agreements in place at this time. A Friends of the Heath group has been formed, they have had a good response from the public following their recent survey, but not much response from sports clubs. They are looking to increase public support and funding. It was confirmed that the golf club do not have exclusive rights to the course area and anyone can walk on it but they reportedly spend £160,000 per annum on maintenance. A member of the public raised concerns about fly tipping issues, which would not be covered by NHDC as it is private land. There was some discussion about providing better sports facilities. There was talk about charging for parking as the parking area needs to be upgraded. More public engagement would be sought through holding more meetings and increasing their social media presence.

The Chairman asked Members if they had any questions for Councillor Brown. Councillor Stanier noted that bike parking has been removed from the car park, and a

request was made to restore bike parking at the car park if parking fees were introduced. This was noted by the Chairman.

230/19 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC:

It was **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, that, in the public interest, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting under the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960.

231/19 STAFF MATTERS:

A new caretaker has been appointed and starts work on 5th November 2018. Members **RESOLVED** to agree the salary scales of £8.50 per hour weekdays, and £10.00 per hour at weekends.

Members **RESOLVED** to agree that the current caretakers would also receive the higher salary scale of £8.50 per hour weekdays and this would be implemented from 5th November 2018.

The Town Clerk and her staff were thanked for the extra work that they had put in covering the daytime caretaker role.

Members were reminded not to post matters about council business and staffing issues on social media without the agreement of the Town Clerk.

A Councillor had recently posted that a hall booking could not go ahead because the Council did not have a caretaker available. Permission for this post had not been requested from, or given by, the Town Clerk and the information was incorrect. In fact, the hirer had forgotten to make the booking in question and the hall was already in use by another hirer.

The Councillor was asked to retract her factually incorrect posts.

The date of the next meeting will be Monday 26th November 2018.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date _____