**MINUTES OF ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**HELD IN ROOM 11, ROYSTON TOWN HALL**

**ON 24 FEBRARY 2025 AT 6.45PM**

**PRESENT -** Cllrs Haugh (Chair), Antony, Adams, Harrison, Lockett, Rees, Brown and Squire-Smith

**APOLOGIES** Apologies received from Councillor Bindi Jani and Councillor Robert Inwood.

**285/25 DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS**

Members were asked to be mindful of the Climate Change and Biodiversity emergency declared by the Town Council when making decisions on behalf of the Council.

No declarations of interest or dispensations were received.

**286/25 MINUTES FROM 27 JANUARY 2025 FINANCE COMMITTEE.**

APPROVED.

**287/25 BANK RECONCILLIATIONS AND INCOME EXPENDITURE REPORTS**

Members NOTED the Income and expenditure reports for January 2025. They compared these to the 2024/25 budget.

**288/25 ACCOUNTS PAYMENT TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 2025 TRANSFERS**

 **BETWEEN THE TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS**

The members reviewed the expenditure reports and clarification was sort on cost of staff advertising charges. APPROVED.

**289/25 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

Due to the confidential nature of the business transacted the public and press were excluded from the remainder of the meeting under the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

**290/25 EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS;**

CAVE GUIDES. The Finance Committee APPROVED the following employment contracts and additional recruitment costs;

Fixed term contracts for Five Royston Cave Guides starting on 5 April and ending 31 December 2025. Salaried at a rate of £47.25 for each three hour session.

 One permanent Royston Cave Guide costing £13.50 per hour. The Committee APPROVED the recruitment SUBJECT; to the inclusion of a minimum number of hours within the contract; and a seasonal review with the post holder.

Royston’s Town Clerk has resigned effective from10 March. A Locum Town Clerk is required to cover until a permanent replacement can be recruited. The additional costs included will be covered from the vacant posts. The Finance Committee APPROVED the following recruitment costs subject to agreement at the next Finance Committee;

£400 per day for a locum Town Clerk. The locum would be recruited temporarily for three days a week until the post can be recruited to permanently.

Hertfordshire Association of Parish & Town Council’s Gold support package. This package provides additional individual support and Governance advice.

Advertising costs for a replacement Town Clerk costing £1200. The Committee felt that these costs were justified if a suitable CiLCA qualified candidate could be recruited.

 The Committee AGREED that ‘Staffing & Recruitment’ should be added to the Finance Committees Agenda as a standard item for note.

 The Committee AGREED that the payroll for Royston Town staff be outsourced.

The Committee AGREED a full staffing review of Royston Town Council should take place.

The difficulties the Committee had encountered with the out-going Town Clerk’s conduct were raised. Going forward; alignment between Elected Members priorities and those of the in-coming Town Clerk would be imperative for the smooth running of the Organisation in the future.

The Committee discussed how and when the current vacant posts should be recruited. The committee recommended pausing recruitment until the staffing review has taken place. The possibility of offering temporary contracts to prevent future redundancies was but it was AGREED that this could be considered as and when necessary, should the occasion arise.

Meeting closed at 7.45 pm