



MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

FRM(19)MO3

FINANCE, EMPLOYMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee held on Wednesday 10 July 2019 commencing at 19:00 at 17 Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT.

Present:

Cllr Mrs B Abbott
Cllr Mr B Banks (in the Chair)
Cllr Mrs C Gradwell
Cllr Mr A Porter (*ex officio*)
Cllr Mr C Taylor

Absent:

Cllr Mr N Brown

In Attendance:

Mr W J Grosvenor *Clerk to Melton Parish Council*

	PART ONE – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
19.28	ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE EMPLOYMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT (FERM) COMMITTEE It was RESOLVED that Cllr Banks be elected Chairman of FERM Committee. <i>Proposed by:</i> Cllr Porter <i>Seconded by:</i> Cllr Abbott It was RESOLVED that Cllr Gradwell be elected Vice-Chairman of FERM Committee. <i>Proposed by:</i> Cllr Porter <i>Seconded by:</i> Cllr Taylor
19.29	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Brown.
19.30	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
19.30.01	To receive Amendments to the Register There were none.
19.30.02	To receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were none.

19.30.03	<p>To receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda</p> <p>There were none.</p>
19.30.04	<p>To consider Full / Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared</p> <p>It was noted that there had been no requests for dispensations.</p>
19.31	<p>OPEN FORUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO TALK TO COUNCILLORS</p> <p>There were no members of the public present.</p>
19.32	<p>TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the FERM Committee held on 10 April 2019 (Minutes FRM(19)M02 and FRM(19)M02 <i>Confidential</i> previously distributed).</p> <p>Proposed by: Cllr Taylor Seconded by: Cllr Abbott</p>
19.33	<p>TO REVIEW THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FERM COMMITTEE AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL</p> <p>Paper FRM(19)33 previously distributed was received. Following discussion it was AGREED to recommend the following changes to Full Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose (vii) amend to read: "Oversight of the internal financial controls including Internal Audit arrangements" • Purpose (xviii) amend to read: "Strategic management of the Council's Budgets" • Add new Purpose (xxi): "To have oversight of the Council's website and all communication channels."
19.34	<p>TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL AND INTERNAL CONTROL MATTERS</p>
19.34.01	<p>To consider the Management Accounts – 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019 (Papers FRM(19)34.01 and FRM(19)34.01a-i)</p> <p>The Clerk reported on the Council's financial position as at the end of June 2019. Gross income received was £192,670 including Community Infrastructure Levy monies (CIL) of £147,932. Without the CIL, the income was £44,738 which amounts to 40.7% of annual budgeted income. Expenditure for the first quarter at £30,203 was 23.7% of budgeted expenditure. In terms of cash resources, after allowing for unpresented cheques, as at 30 June, cash in the Council's three bank accounts totalled £317,827.35, of which £228,441.14 relates to the balance of CIL monies held as a restricted reserve, and £6,113.04 as earmarked reserves. Therefore the general reserves total £83,273.17 (of which £69,885 represents the general reserve b/f at 1 April 2019). Following a discussion, it was AGREED to NOTE the report.</p>
19.34.02	<p>To consider the detailed budgetary position as at the end of the 1st Quarter of 2019/20 (Paper FRM(19)34.02)</p> <p>The Clerk took Members through the revised budget figures. Given the slightly lower figure than anticipated for the Public Works Loan Board loan repayments, the budgeted expenditure for 2019/20 has been revised downwards, and the anticipated in-year budgetary deficit will now be £17.9k.</p> <p>In response to questions about the position relating to the leasing out of the 1st floor, it was reported that there has been no serious interest since the</p>

	<p>public sector consortium which withdrew because of inadequate toilet and access provision.</p> <p>The Clerk suggested that given the state of the office rental market, the fact that the Council's financial position is relatively sound, as well as the ability to use CIL funds where appropriate, it might be worth considering abandoning the idea of a commercial let, and using the building to create a Community Hub as well as a Council meeting room and offices. In using the building as a whole, the matter of toilet provision would be less of an issue, and a passenger / wheelchair lift could be installed. That would enable the office to be relocated to the front area upstairs (which is almost a separate area anyway) whilst the back area upstairs would provide an enlarged Council meeting room, whilst the whole of the downstairs area could then be used as a Community Hub, for letting to groups for meetings, gatherings, classes etc. For that to happen a change of use to Use Class D1 would be required; also the change would have to be supported by Riduna Holdings as the owner of the Business Park. For such a use to be sustainable Melton PC would have to take about £300 (£360 including VAT) a week in booking fees. If these assumptions are confirmed, a move of use to a Community Hub could deliver an adequate financial payback and provide a new space for use by community groups.</p> <p>Following discussion it was AGREED that the Clerk will talk to both Riduna Holdings and the East Suffolk planners and report to Full Council in September.</p> <p>Budgetary provision for funds to support the Council's opposition to the latest Melton Hill planning application was discussed. It was AGREED that <i>if required</i>, the Clerk can use his powers to spend up to £2.5k in an emergency to protect the Council's interests in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council.</p>
<p>19.34.03</p>	<p>To consider the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2019/20</p> <p>The Clerk reminded Members that it has already been decided to change the Internal Auditor for 2019/20. Following discussion it was AGREED that the Clerk will approach (1) a former Parish Councillor (former Chair of FERM Committee, and an accountant by profession) and (2) Suffolk Association of Local Councils, to ascertain interest, the service that can be offered and cost, and report back to the next meeting of FERM Committee.</p>
<p>19.34.04</p>	<p>To receive a report on the implications of compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 (Paper FRM(19)34.04)</p> <p>This paper sets out in detail the information that Melton PC must publish on its website, together with the current position, and recommendations. In summary, the Council needs to publish on its website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of expenditure updated each quarter • Details of each of its land / building assets • A register of grants made • An organisation chart • Pay multiple, defined as the ratio between the highest taxable earnings for a given year and the median earnings figure for the workforce as a whole. <p>It was AGREED to adopt all the recommendations in this report for publication on the new website.</p>

19.34.05	<p>To agree to make future payment of salaries and payments to HMRC electronically</p> <p>The Clerk explained that, at present, all these payments are made by cheque. In future it is desired to make these payments electronically for which FERM Committee needs to give its approval.</p> <p>It was AGREED that these payments in future shall be made on the Barclays Bank mixed Payments Account.</p> <p>In discussion on bank signatories, it was AGREED to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove Cllr Martin as a signatory on the Barclays Accounts • Remove former Cllr Corston as a signatory on the Barclays Accounts • Appoint Cllr Banks as a signatory on the Barclays Accounts • Arrange for the Council's Finance & Information Mgt Officer to hold a debit card on the Barclays Mixed Payments Account with a ceiling on any one transaction of £500.00.
19.35	<p>To consider 1st draft of the updated Business Plan (Papers FRM(19)35 and FRM(19)35a)</p> <p>The Clerk took Members through the Business Plan which had been previously distributed. The Plan was updated for the financial year 2019/20, and reflected the position in terms of CIL projects as at June 2019.</p> <p>It was AGREED to commend this draft to Full Council, subject to making the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On page 7 amend "Vice-Chairman" to "two Vice-Chairmen" • On page 9 amend "massive savings" to "substantial savings".
19.36	TO CONSIDER EMPLOYMENT MATTERS
19.36.01	<p>Clerk to the Council including workload issues</p> <p>Workload remains high, because following the appointment of the Finance and Information Management Officer, the office is now doing things that have had to be put on one side because of lack of resources, and there has been the need for induction. In the longer term the situation should improve.</p>
19.36.02	<p>Staffing report</p> <p>The Clerk reported on the current position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Finance and Information Management Officer has settled in well and is highly productive. • The Village Handyperson, because of a mixture of new projects and seasonal tasks, is very busy, and consideration needs to be given to increasing his hours between 1 April and 30 September in future years to better reflect seasonal peaks. The Clerk will be carrying out his annual appraisal later in July and will raise the matter of working hours. Resulting proposals for change will need to be reflected in the budgetary process for 2020/21.
19.36.03	<p>Report on duties required by the Pensions Regulator</p> <p>The Clerk reported that Melton PC will be required by law to re-assess and re-enrol any eligible staff who have left the pension scheme and complete a new declaration of compliance by 2 March 2020. There are currently no staff in such a category and as soon as it is possible to complete and submit a re-declaration of compliance it can be done.</p>

19.37	TO REVIEW RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES
19.37.01	<p>Risk Register (Paper FRM(19)37.01)</p> <p>Members of FERM Committee reviewed in detail the Risk Register updated for July 2019. A separate report on the award of a contract to build a new Council website will be considered in the Confidential part of the Agenda at Item 19.45. Otherwise the report was NOTED.</p>
19.37.02	<p>Safecouncil.uk membership</p> <p>The Clerk reported receipt of a flyer from Safecouncil.uk, a health and safety resource and advice service for local councils. There are 3 subscription levels, basic (£6.99 a month), standard (£9.99 a month), and premium (at £14.99 a month). Given Melton's increasing level of responsibilities and activities, consideration might need to be given to subscribing to such a resource to ensure that the Council remains always compliant in this important area of risk. Following discussion it was AGREED that the Clerk shall make further enquiries.</p>
19.38	TO CONSIDER GOVERNANCE MATTERS
19.38.01	<p>Report of Decisions Made by Clerk under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>
19.38.02	<p>To consider draft policy on Member / Officer protocol (Paper FRM(19)38.02)</p> <p>The Clerk took Members through the draft protocol, written afresh to reflect the changes introduced by the Localism Act 2011, and the needs, requirements and recent experiences of Melton PC. Following discussion, and subject to incorporating under Section 1 – Roles and responsibilities of Members – reference to the need for Members to come to meetings properly prepared (a point made by Cllr Martin in her recent paper <i>Reflections of an experienced Councillor</i>), it was AGREED that the paper can be presented to Full Council with a recommendation for adoption.</p>
19.39	<p>TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR USE OF MEETING ROOM FOR MONTHLY SURGERIES BY MELTON DISTRICT COUNCILLOR</p> <p>A request by the new District Councillor for Melton to use the Council's meeting room for monthly surgeries on a Saturday morning was considered. Whilst there was a broad desire to be as helpful and supportive as possible, there were genuine concerns about safety and security that made such a proposal a difficult one to agree without further discussion. It was AGREED accordingly that Cllrs Porter and Gradwell will have a further discussion with the District Councillor.</p>
19.40	<p>TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL MATTERS RE MELTON VILLAGE FETE</p> <p>The Clerk tabled a preliminary set of accounts in respect of the village Fete. Total income was £2,561.15 and expenses paid / payable were £1,070.91. Profits therefore are £1,490.24. Following discussion it was AGREED to recommend to Full Council that payment of £300.00 should be made to each of Melton Primary School, Burness Parish Room and St Andrews PCC, and retain the balance (£590.24) as a budget for next year's fete.</p>

19.41	<p>TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON SNAGGING & OTHER WORKS TO THE COUNCIL'S MEETING ROOM / OFFICE</p> <p>The Clerk reported that all the snagging items have now been completed. It is anticipated that the eco hand dryers ordered for both the ground floor and 1st floor toilets will be installed shortly. Additionally, the provision of a water supply stopcock and separate meter for the 1st floor, and the capping off of the pipes to fit dishwashers to avoid accidental flooding, are still awaited.</p>
19.42	<p>EMERGENCY PLAN</p> <p>Cllr Taylor reported that there will be a training session on Rest Centres on 26 September, which he will try to attend.</p>
19.43	<p>FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>
	<p>PART TWO - CONFIDENTIAL</p>
	<p>Exempt / Confidential Item</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business on the grounds of their confidential nature.</p>
19.46	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 9 October 2019 commencing at 19:00, at 17 Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton IP12 1QT. Cllr Abbott offered her apologies in advance for that meeting. There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.00.</p>