

MIDDLEWICH TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council's Internal Committee, held in Room 3A, Victoria Building on Tuesday 4th June 2019, commencing at 7.15pm

PRESENT

The Chairman, Councillor Helen Watkinson, and Councillors Mike Hunter, David Latham, Jonathan Parry, Rachel Pendleton, Russell Watkinson and Gareth Williams

Officer in attendance: Denise French, Assistant Town Clerk

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Sean Boyle

Jackie Weaver, Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Chalc)

Samantha Moss – former Councillor and former Chair of the Personnel Committee

3 local residents

PART 1

INT 1 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED: That Councillor Helen Watkinson be appointed Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

INT 2 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED: That Councillor David Latham be appointed Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

INT 3 Apology for Absence

An apology for absence was received and approved from Councillor Pauline Hickey due to illness.

INT 4 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations made.

INT 5 Minutes

The Committee considered the Minutes of the following meetings:

- (a) Finance Policy and Governance held on 20th March 2019;
- (b) Community, Environment and Assets Committee held on 2nd April 2019; and
- (c) Personnel Committee held on 23rd April 2019.

Members sought an update on Minute 278 of Community, Environment and Assets Committee relating to IT equipment and the purchase of new computers. Members discussed the need for a wholesale review of IT provision including a new server, its location and a support package; this could include leasing rather than purchasing equipment. Members suggested a presentation on options could be made to a future Committee. The views of other local Councils should also be sought around their IT provision.

RESOLVED:

(a) that the minutes of the meetings of Finance Policy and Governance held on 20th March 2019; Community, Environment and Assets Committee held on 2nd April 2019; and Personnel Committee held on 23rd April 2019 be confirmed as correct records as far as the Committee is aware; and

(b) a wide scale review of IT provision be undertaken based on the discussion as outlined and a report back on progress and options be made.

INT 6 Terms of Reference

The Committee considered draft Terms of Reference for the Committee which included comments from Jackie Weaver of Chalc. Members suggested that the banking arrangements remain with the Clerk as Councillors were not yet set up with online banking. Jackie explained that the reference to Disciplinary Matters on page 4 was unnecessary as this was covered in the disciplinary procedures themselves.

RESOLVED: That:

(a) the draft Terms of Reference be approved with the inclusion of the comments made by Jackie Weaver subject to page 1 item 9 remaining as Town Clerk and page 4 item 6 Column 2 (Disciplinary Matters) being deleted; and

(b) the Terms of Reference be reviewed in around 6 months' time.

INT 7 Internal Audit

The Committee considered a report on options for the appointment of an Internal Audit company to undertake a wide ranging review of the Town Council finances, as agreed at the Town Council meeting on 20th May. Jackie Weaver explained the statutory nature of the internal audit. It was noted that the internal audit had very recently been undertaken by a local accounting firm under the direction of the Town Clerk due to timescales. This was a separate matter to the wide ranging financial review being discussed.

RESOLVED: That Company A as listed on the report now submitted be approached to undertake a wide ranging review of the Town Council's finances.

PART TWO

RESOLVED:

That the Meeting be moved into Part Two Session, and the Public and Press be excluded from the Meeting, on the basis that the item to be discussed involved staffing matters.

Councillor Boyle and members of the public left the meeting at this point.

INT 8 Staffing Matters – HR Investigation

Members welcomed Samantha Moss to the meeting and thanked her for providing continuity in the transition from the old Personnel Committee to the new Internal Committee. It was generally agreed that a written report would have been valuable but members noted that Ms Moss had not been asked to provide such by the previous administration and therefore could not have been expected to do so. Ms Moss updated members and answered questions; she then left the meeting at this point.

With regard to the Solicitor’s Report which was tabled just prior to the meeting it was agreed that Members needed more time to consider the Report.

RESOLVED: that a further meeting be held on the 11th June to formally discuss the Report and agree what actions needed to be taken.

Members also considered the Invoice which accompanied the Report and agreed that it should be paid forthwith.

RESOLVED: that Invoice No 7031498 be paid.

Date of next Meeting

Tuesday 11th June at 7.15pm

The Meeting concluded at 9.10pm

Chairman