

MELTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF PROPERTIES, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE HELD ON MONDAY 08 OCTOBER 2018

Present: Councillor Haigh (Chair), Councillor Bampton, Councillor Keighley, Councillor White and Councillor Wrathall.

PUBLIC SESSION: There were no members of the public present.

18/37 NOTICE OF MEETING

Public Notice of the meeting was taken as read.

18/38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

18/39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

18/40 ADMISSION TO THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That part of Item 6 on the agenda quotes for the tree works in the park be held in private as it would divulge commercially sensitive information.

RESOLVED: That the whole of Item 6 be moved to the end of the agenda but the remainder of the items to be considered as per the original agenda.

18/41 INTERNAL CONTROLS

Councillors considered the Schedule of Payments for July, August and September 2018 circulated with the agenda and noted the information in the net worth report also circulated with the agenda. After some questions for the Clerk it was

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for July 2018 in the sum of £14662.56 be approved.

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for July 2018 in the sum of £4918.73 be approved.

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for July 2018 in the sum of £14494.41 be approved.

In accordance with the internal control checks agreed by Council the Committee checked that the petty cash balanced with the petty cash book and that the monthly bank reconciliations matched the relevant current account bank statements and all was found to be in order.

18/42 BUDGET MONITORING/ BUDGET PLANNING / PRECEPT 2019/20

Councillors went through the budget monitoring report for the second quarter of the financial year circulated with the agenda and the information regarding the suggested budget for 2019/20 line by line.

It was suggested that the budget for copier costs be increased to £400.00. The Clerk suggested that the projected year overspend on professional fees was now likely to be

substantially more than that set out in the report due to additional surveys being commissioned as part of the Town Hall purchase. A discussion took place regarding the costs of litter picking in the park which the Clerk reported would exceed the budget again this year. After a discussion the Committee decided that the level of litter picking should remain the same, but that consideration should be given to increasing this budget. The Clerk reported that there was a substantial underspend against the budget allocated for devolved services but the reasons for this were understood. The Clerk reported that there was also a substantial underspend against the budget for the town enhancement fund but that the recent discussions about the number of accessible defibrillators in Meltham might lead to the Council using this money for the purchase of a further defibrillator.

Councillor Keighley referred to the need for longer term financial planning and the Chair said that this was under consideration by the Council Plan working group. Councillor Keighley had also done some work turning some of the financial information into diagrammatical formats which Councillors agreed were useful and made the complex financial information more accessible.

18/43 UPDATE ON CREATION OF RECEPTION AREA

RESOLVED: To defer this matter to the next meeting.

18/44 ALLOTMENTS

RESOLVED: To defer this matter to the next meeting.

18/45 ROBERT ASHTON MEMORIAL PARK

It was noted that the part of this item dealing with the quotes for the trees works in the park would be held in private.

Councillors considered the annual Wicksteed play inspection report and noted that the vast majority of the recommendations had already been actioned. The Clerk highlighted the recommendation as to signage and also mentioned a possible grant application to the national lottery fund. The Committee agreed to explore this and asked for the grant to be put on the next agenda of the Committee.

The Clerk reported back on the results of a trial to provide duck food in the park to reduce the feeding of bread which can be harmful to the birds and detrimental to water quality. The caretaker had created a duck food box by the pond filled with a wheat and pellet mix with instructions to use the food rather than feed bread to the ducks. The food is being used with the caretaker putting in a kilo each morning. Observations are that there is less rotting bread in the pond. It was reported that the cost would amount to approximately £12.50 per month. The Clerk suggested a review in three months' time and requested that the caretaker be reimbursed for the two bags of his own food used in conducting the initial trial. Councillors thanked the caretaker for his ongoing initiative.

RESOLVED: To approve the costs involved in a three months trial supplying duck food and to reimburse the caretaker for the two bags of his own food used so far.

18/46 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS:

Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press leave the meeting during consideration of the following: -

As determined under Agenda Item 4.

18/47 ROBERT ASHTON MEMORIAL PARK

Councillors received an update from the Clerk on progress getting quotes for the tree works in the park and feedback from one firm which was circulated with the agenda. A copy of the previous tree hazard survey was also circulated. The Clerk reported that she had approached 3 firms originally and Kirklees Council for a quote for the works arising from the tree hazard survey and only one firm had provided a quote. A revised specification had then been drawn up for the works arising from the tree hazard survey and additionally cutting back the trees on the boundaries of the park. The Clerk had again approached 3 firms and Kirklees Council for a quote but again only one firm had quoted for the works. The quote that had been received however looked very competitive when compared with the original quote which had been for less works (although it did not include the costs for felling tree T10a and Tree T25). Councillors noted the difficulty in obtaining quotes for the works.

It was noted that the firm providing the quote had strongly recommended getting a decay detection inspection on Tree T10a and the Committee decided to get this inspection done and then implement the recommendations.

The Committee also decided to have a climbed inspection undertaken on tree T25 and then implement the recommendations.

In relation to tree T30 the tree hazard survey recommends felling, but the contractors suggested it should be discussed on its merits and the Clerk was asked to liaise with the contractor about this matter, obtain any detection work that might be required and then implement any recommendations.

In view of the difficulties in obtaining quotes and as this quote appears to be competitive against quotes previously obtained it was agreed to go ahead with the tree works as per the quote received and as amended as the result of any further recommendations.

RESOLVED: That a decay detection inspection on Tree T10a take place and that the recommendations be implemented, and the associated costs be approved.
That a climbed inspection be undertaken on tree T25 and that the recommendations be implemented, and that the associated costs be approved.

RESOLVED: That in relation to tree T30 the Clerk is to liaise with the contractor and obtain any detection work that might be required and that the recommendations be implemented, and that the associated costs be approved.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk instruct the contractor to go ahead with the works as per the quote received (e-mail dated 10 August) and as amended as a result of any further recommendations arising from detection work or climbed inspections and that the costs thereof be approved.