

## **PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 17 November 2015 at 7.00 pm in the Council Offices, Unit 5B Treceus Industrial Estate, Padstow**

**Present:** R Higman (Chairman), F J Bealing, R Buscombe, K Freeman, A Rickard (part), Mrs A E Symons and Mrs T Walter

**In Attendance:** Mrs N Barnes (RFO) and Mrs K Pemberton (Town Clerk)

- FGP2015/29      Apologies for absence and Announcements:** i) Apologies were received from Councillor C Watson-Smyth; ii) There were no announcements.
- FGP2015/30      Declarations of Interest:** None.
- FGP2015/31      Public Participation:** None
- FGP2015/32      Minutes 18 August 2015 and Tuesday 6 October 2015:**  
**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday 18 August 2015 and Tuesday 6 October 2015 were a true record and they were signed by the chair.
- FGP2015/32      Clerks Report/Work Programme:** was noted for information.
- FGP2015/33      Correspondence:** None
- FGP2015/34      Budget Report 2015-16:** was noted for information.
- FGP2015/35      Padstow Tourist Information Centre:** Councillor Buscombe advised he had chaired the meeting with representatives from the TIC. A note of the meeting had been taken and sent with the agenda.

He considered some things needed to be thought about such as, who would be best placed to provide a TIC if in the future things were to change. He considered that at this moment in time the Town Council were not in a position but perhaps when it moved back to Station House it could be.

There was a general feeling that the town needed a centre for information and that there was the high possibility that when Station House was refurbished the Town Council would see more enquiries coming their way.

Big expenses for the TIC were their staffing costs and their booking system. Mention was made that the landscape seemed to be changing with more people accessing their own mobiles and computers booking and researching their own accommodation.

An issue mentioned at the TIC meeting, was that they were struggling with volunteers. Indeed one of their directors would soon be leaving his position. It was difficult to see how they would be able to work up viable solutions for the future if they were struggling with people to help.

Mention was made with regards to being able to offer a longer term assurance for funding, as requested. Current policy was that grant requests were dealt with on an annual basis and that this was discretionary year on year. The level of grant available was determined each year based on the Council's income and expenditure. It was felt that it would not be prudent to provide a longer term solution in this regard.

Further comment was made that it was confirmed at the meeting with the TIC that the DMS system was funded by its members and therefore not appropriate for the Town Council to fund this system if already being paid for by its members.

Overall there was genuine concern for the viability of the TIC going forward, not just future funding but also the level of support of its volunteers. It was considered that when the Council move back to Station House that other potential options could be explored with regards to town information. Factors to consider would be staffing and availability of space.

**RESOLVED** that i) the request for a 3 year financial plan to support the TIC be refused but the TIC be encouraged to apply via the Council's Grants Policy; and ii) the Council not fund the TICs DMS system as this was funded by its members.

#### **FGP2015/36**

**Budget 2016-17:** Committee discussed the papers for consideration and recommendation on to Council.

In response to a member, the RFO clarified staffing costs and LGPS contributions.

Last year Council had considered Earmarked Reserves for larger projects, which were linked to the Council's Business Plan, once the end of year accounts were known. It was considered this was a good approach and be the same this year. This would be expected to take place May/June time.

It was considered that the grants pot should be increased by £5,000 (taking it to £30,000) for 2016-17. The RFO confirmed this could be taken from Capital Expenditure. It was outlined how the budget fund is spent was up to the Grants Meeting in February and was not part of the discussion this evening. However, it was felt this increase

could be a "buffer" particularly as there were fewer funding sources available.

The RFO outlined that if setting a precept for Padstow, approximately £70 for a band D property would raise £100,000. The Town Clerk added that good reasons would need to be given if a precept was to be raised.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL THAT**

- a) no Member Allowance be set.
- bi) the grants fund be increased to £30,000 for 2016-17 (from £25,000) this increase to be taken from Capital Expenditure; **Councillors A Rickard and A E Symons asked their names be recorded as voting against this decision.**
- bii) the draft budget 2016-17 be approved with the above addition;
- c) approval of updated Business Plan; and
- c) no precept be set for 2016-17

**FGP2015/37**      **Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 16 February 2016 at 7.00 pm (Grants Meeting) was noted.

**FGP2015/38**      **It was RESOLVED to exclude the press and public due to the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.**

**FGP2015/39**      **Confidential Minutes 18 August 2015 and Tuesday 6 October 2015: RESOLVED** that the Confidential Minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday 18 August 2015 and Tuesday 6 October 2015 were a true record of the meetings and they were signed by the chair.

**FGP2015/40**      **Budget 2016-17 and Padstow Tourist Information Centre:** Both these items were discussed previously with no confidential issues raised for further discussion.

**FGP2015/41**      **Leeway Charges: RESOLVED** that leeway charges remain the same as they are at present for 2016-17.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm