

RECOMMENDATION:-

F/5556 Financial Regulations

F/5558 Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) – membership document

6. SITE 12 (Office/Gym), FOREST GATE BUSINESS PARK
To consider a request from the applicant's agent to amend the Council's observation to allow the application to be determined under delegated powers (*Report A*)
7. STAFFING COMMITTEE
 - i) To receive the notes from the meeting of the Staffing Committee on 4th April 2018 (*Report B*)
 - ii) To consider the report in relation to oversight of staff pay and consider approving the principles proposed (*Report C*)
8. To receive such communications as the Town Mayor may desire to lay before the Council (Councillors are reminded that no decision taking may take place as a result of this item)
9. To Receive Reports from Ringwood Town Councillors and Student Advisors (Councillors are reminded that no decision taking may take place as a result of this item)
10. To receive Reports from County and District Councillors (Councillors are reminded that no decision taking may take place as a result of this item)
11. Forthcoming Meetings – to note the following dates:

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 2 nd May 2018
Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 4 th May 2018
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 16 th May 2018
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 30 th May 2018

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk, on 01425 484720 or chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

Council Members:

Chairman: Cllr Tim Ward, Town Mayor
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Philip Day, Deputy Mayor
Cllr Andrew Briers
Cllr Hilary Edge
Cllr Christine Ford
Cllr Jeremy Heron
Cllr Darren Loose
Cllr Anne Murphy
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly
Cllr Tony Ring
Cllr Steve Rippon-Swaine
Cllr Michael Thierry
Cllr Chris Treleaven
Cllr Angela Wiseman

Student Advisors:

Katherine Grubb
Rachel Carr

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

(Adopted 25th April 2018)

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 25th April 2018

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
 - 1.3.1. for the timely production of accounts;
 - 1.3.2. that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
 - 1.3.3. to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
 - 1.3.4. identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. A deliberate breach of these Regulations by an employee may be considered gross misconduct.
- 1.7. Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Finance manager has been appointed as RFO for this Council and the Regulations will apply accordingly.
- 1.9. The RFO;
 - 1.9.1. acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - 1.9.2. administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - 1.9.3. determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
 - 1.9.4. ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - 1.9.5. maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
 - 1.9.6. assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
 - 1.9.7. produces financial management information as required by the council.

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- 1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations¹.
- 1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
 - 1.11.1. entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
 - 1.11.2. a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
 - 1.11.3. wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
 - 1.12.1. procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
 - 1.12.2. procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
 - 1.12.3. identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
 - 1.12.4. procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
 - 1.12.5. measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:
 - 1.13.1. setting the final budget or the precept (Council Tax Requirement);
 - 1.13.2. approving accounting statements;
 - 1.13.3. approving an annual governance statement;
 - 1.13.4. borrowing;
 - 1.13.5. writing off bad debts;
 - 1.13.6. declaring eligibility for the power of well-being; and
 - 1.13.7. addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors,shall be a matter for the full council only.
- 1.14. In addition the council must:

¹ In England - Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations SI 2015/234. In Wales - Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005/368

- 1.14.1. determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - 1.14.2. approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £5,000; and
 - 1.14.3. in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability for Local Councils– a Practitioners' Guide (England) issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC) or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales - A Practitioners' Guide, available from the websites of One Voice Wales (OVW) and SLCC as appropriate.

2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate Guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Policy & Finance Committee.
- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
 - 2.6.1. be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;

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- 2.6.2. report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - 2.6.3. to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - 2.6.4. have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- 2.7.1. perform any operational duties for the council;
 - 2.7.2. initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
 - 2.7.3. direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING

- 3.1 The RFO must each year, by no later than the end of December, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Policy & Finance Committee and the Council.
- 3.2 The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.3 The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.4 The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.
- 3.5 Each individual budget entry will have an identified budget manager who will have overall responsibility for controlling spend against that budget. The budget manager will be an officer of the Council.

4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

- 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:
 - 4.1.1. the council for all individual items of £5,000 and above (This approval can be taken from Minutes of an appropriate committee meeting agreeing the expenditure of such funds).
 - 4.1.2. the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council, Chairman of the appropriate committee, the RFO or the relevant Budget Manager for any items between £1,000 & £5,000
 - 4.1.3. the relevant Budget Managers for items below £1,000.Such authority is to be evidenced by a Minute or by electronic authorisation or an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman, RFO or Budget Manager.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.
- 4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of Council, or duly delegated Committee, having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').
- 4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year, .
- 4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.5. In cases of extreme urgency and risk to the delivery of council services or to the reputation of the Council, the Clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council which in the Clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000 The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall

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show explanations of material variances. For this purpose “material” shall be in excess of 10% of the budget or £1,000 whichever is greater.

- 4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Council as part of the budget setting and budget control process.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND SCRUTINY OF PAYMENTS

- 5.1 The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be reviewed annually for safety and efficiency & as soon as reasonably practical following the departure of a signatory.
- 5.2 The RFO shall prepare a schedule of all payments, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and present the schedule to the Policy and Finance Committee. That Committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall approve payment by a resolution of the Policy and Finance Committee. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialed by the Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was approved. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.3 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the relevant budget manager to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.4 The relevant budget manager shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and assign them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, in a timely manner and in any event, within 28 days and report this at the next available Policy and Finance Committee Meeting
- 5.5 The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items as set out in section 4 and in the following circumstances:
- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee;
 - b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee; or
 - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £50,000, per month, per account, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee.
- 5.6 In respect of grants the Policy & Finance Committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the Council.

- 5.7 Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.8 The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.9 Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved by the Clerk or RFO.

6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2 Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 4 above, the Council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO may give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3 All instructions for payment shall be processed in accordance with a resolution of Council or duly delegated Committee.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall require any two signatures of the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, the RFO or Members for sums under £1,000 or two members of the Council or one member and countersigned by the Clerk in any other case. If a member who is also a bank signatory has declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, or has any other interest, in the matter in respect of which the payment is being made, that Councillor shall be required to consider Standing Orders, and thereby determine whether it is appropriate and / or permissible to be a signatory to the transaction in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. Any payment authorisation signatures, including cheque signatures that are obtained away from Council or authorised Committee meetings shall be reported to the Policy & Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable Direct Debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally Salaries) may be made by Banker's Standing Order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members and are retained and any payments are reported to the Policy & Finance Committee. The approval of the use of a Banker's Standing Order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments

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are reported to the Policy & Finance Committee. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

- 6.10 If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing how the payments have been approved.
- 6.11. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.12. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.
- 6.13. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall, software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.14. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The Bank Mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.15. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Intentional breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.16. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by two of the Clerk, the RFO and a Member. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.17. Any Debit Card, Credit Card or Charge Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to Budget Managers and will also be restricted to a single transaction with an appropriate limit and never more than a maximum value of £2,999 unless authorised by council or policy and finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.18. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Policy & Finance Committee. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Policy & Finance Committee and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Policy & Finance Committee.
- 6.19. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and/or the Office Manager and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.20. The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
 - a) The RFO shall maintain 3 petty cash floats of £200 (Office), £100 (Visitor Information Centre) and £100 (the Place) for the purpose of defraying

operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.

- b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to the Policy & Finance Committee under 5.2 above.
- d) A further float may be established from time to time to defray operational expenditure in respect of events. Such floats will be subject to the same controls that are set out above in paragraph 6.20, a) to c).

7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available Policy & Finance Committee meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Policy & Finance Committee.
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
 - a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
 - b) by the internal auditor;
 - c) by the external auditor; or
 - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the Staffing Committee.
- 7.8. Before employing interim staff the council must consider a full business case.

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8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for Borrowing Approval, and subsequent arrangements for the Loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal Borrowing Approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.4. The Council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 8.5. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.6. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.7. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. INCOME

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

- 10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Orders over £500 must be approved by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk. Orders under £500 may be approved by the Office Services Manager. Copies of all orders shall be retained.
- 10.2. Order records shall be controlled and maintained by the RFO.
- 10.3. All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11 (I) below.
- 10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

11. CONTRACTS

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
- a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
- i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and

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- vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- b) Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("The Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations.
- c) The full requirements of the Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceeds thresholds in the Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24EU (which may change from time to time).
- d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be set out in a recommendation to the council.
- e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council
- g) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £25,000 or if all the tenders are identical the council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- h) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- i) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £100 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.
- j) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest of any tender, quote or estimate, but reasons must be recorded for any such decision.
- k) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken.

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other

consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

- 12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council.
- 12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2. Delivery Notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.]

14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £500.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

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- 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Reg. 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.
- 14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. INSURANCE

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers [in consultation with the Clerk].
- 15.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

16. CHARITIES

- 16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk, with the RFO, shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 17.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk, with the RFO, shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council annually. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.
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Annex A to Planning, Town Environment Committee Minutes 6th April 2018
Ringwood Town Council - Planning Observations - NFDC

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
18/10083	Former Wellworthy Site Off Christchurch Road, Wellworthy Way, Ringwood.	Four-storey building for use as gym and offices; associated car parking to include the use of 7 car parking spaces within the overflow car parking; access and landscaping	Refusal (4)	The Committee maintained its view that parking was a significant concern. The Planning Officer's original report indicated that 79 spaces were required, according to the adopted Parking Standards SPD. The earlier application proposed 44 spaces and this amended application proposes 40 on site and 7 allocated in the overflow car park. This was seen as a regressive step. Members did not agree with the Planning Officer's comments that 'there is sufficient capacity in the over flow car park without compromising car parking within the business park' and drew on their local knowledge of the area, indicating that the parking arrangements would be inadequate. Cars are parked on the roads currently and the under provision of spaces would exacerbate parking issues in the area. They did not agree that it was acceptable to rely on an overflow carpark, which has already been designated for use by Premier Inn and can be used generally by other users of the site. In addition, 6 of the spaces proposed adjacent to the access points, may be difficult to utilise. The Committee maintained its objection to the height of the building. At 14.5m, it was too tall and the design was

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

06 April 2018

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Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
				<p>bulky and overbearing in the context of its position on the estate. There was concern that the approval of the height of the adjacent Premier Inn application should not set a precedent. It had been argued that the height of Premier Inn was acceptable due to its positioning at the 'gateway' to the site. However, the Ringwood Local Distinctiveness SPD advises against an increase in larger buildings at odds with the town's roofscape and valley landscape. Members wished to support the Landscaping Officer's view in respect of space for sufficient planting of trees and shrubs to be possible.</p>

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

FAO: Mrs Jo Hurd
Ringwood Town Council

BY E-MAIL - jo.hurd@ringwood.gov.uk

13th April 2018

Your ref: 18/00083
Our ref: AB/4732

Dear Jo

Re: Planning Application Ref. 18/00083 – Site 12, Forest Gate Business Park - FORMER WELLWORTHY SITE OFF CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, WELLWORTHY WAY, RINGWOOD - Four-storey building for use as gym and offices; associated car parking to include the use of 7 car parking spaces within the overflow car parking; access and landscaping

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me on Wednesday in relation to the application at Site 12; Forest Gate Business Park (18/10083 – Four Storey Building for Use as a Gym and Offices).

As you are aware, New Forest District Council recently re-consulted with Ringwood Town Council on the application, following the submission of amended plans and information by the Applicant. These details were provided to resolve concerns which were raised during the determination process about the level of parking provision for the site and landscape treatment following comments from the Council's Landscape Officer.

A revised briefing note was prepared by Richard Natt to the Town Council which confirmed that the plans now submitted overcome the issues which had been raised and as a result the intention was to recommend the application for approval; to be determined this week. Unfortunately, following receipt of the latest comments from the Town Council this is not currently possible.

The Town Council had, when first responding to the application, stated that it objected to the development on two grounds; parking and the design, height and position of the building, but that it was willing to accept a decision made by NFDC Officers under delegated powers. The Council and the Applicant thereafter worked proactively together to resolve the concerns with a view to reaching an approvable consent. The

second consultation sent to the Town Council was on the basis that the scheme was now at a stage where it could be approved; it was not anticipated that the Town Council would seek to change its recommendation so that Officers could no longer determine this under delegated powers.

With the Town Council issuing its response on 6th April this unfortunately left no time for the matter to get on to the committee agenda for Wednesday 11th April. We liaised with the Council to see if anything could be done to get the item on the agenda but, as I am sure you are aware, the agenda is finalised in advance of the meeting to allow members of the public to be appropriately informed of the items being heard and to give chance for speakers to register an interest on the items if they so wish.

As we stand at present therefore the application would need to be heard at the 9th May committee meeting.

Delaying the consideration of the application until this meeting and a decision thereafter creates a significant problem contractually for the Applicant. The additional 4-week delay puts the Applicant at significant risk of having one of their proposed operators; of the gymnasium, pull out of the contract and seek another opportunity elsewhere. Losing out on this operator would put significant doubt on the ability of the project to be brought forwards in the manner proposed and would result in the site sitting undeveloped for a further indeterminate period; and also a loss for Ringwood Town of the local economic benefit which is to be derived from the delivery of this facility. It is certainly neither in the Applicant nor the Town Council's interests to have this site sitting vacant and undeveloped. In order to ensure the contract the Applicant needs to be able to achieve a consent and make a commencement on the site as soon as possible; a months delay would significantly prejudice this.

We have discussed this with Richard Natt and Steve Clothier at NFDC and it has been suggested that we speak with you to see if the Town Council would consider altering their recommendation to allow the application to be determined under delegated powers.

This does not mean however that the concerns that the Town Council have regarding the application are simply being pushed to one side; we are not asking that the Town Council change their recommendation to recommend approval; but rather that the professional recommendation of the Council's Officers is followed in this case.

In order to allow the Town Council to consider this request we have responded below to each of the concerns which have been raised

(1) Car Parking

The Town Council will be aware that at the time the application was submitted the proposals sought to deliver 44 spaces on site. This level of provision was below the 79 spaces which Hampshire CC Highways originally considered necessary in order to comply with parking standards; which was later revised to a requirement of 47 spaces following discussions with the Applicant and understanding of the uses proposed. The 47 spaces comprise 32 spaces for the gym use (25 for patrons

and 7 for staff) and 15 for the offices. Hampshire County Council consider that this level of provision is appropriate given the likely nature of cliental for the proposed gym facility and given that it is unlikely more than 25 persons will be utilising the facility at any one time; particularly during working hours. The gym is modest in scale and delivers just workout space and two modest sized fitness studios for classes and does not as a result substantiate the same requirements for parking that the leisure centres, such as David Lloyd and Ringwood Leisure Centre do. The range of activities on offer is much lesser and there are no extra sports pitches, pools or otherwise which themselves significantly increase occupancy rates and thus parking need; it is this manner of use which would justify the higher parking requirement originally suggested. The parking requirement for the gym was discussed with Hampshire CC and has been formally agreed upon. The requirement for the office spaces is based on national standards for the number of spaces required which correlates with the gross internal floorspace of the offices. This is again more than sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed occupants, or similarly any other occupying office use.

During the course of conversations with NFDC Officers it was considered that the site would benefit from an amendment to the landscaping scheme; the result of an increase in the area of soft landscaping being the loss of four parking spaces from the site. The amended scheme therefore delivers 40 spaces on plot and it is proposed that it will have the use of 7 spaces within the overflow parking area. The 40 spaces provided on the site are apportioned to the proposed uses on the following basis – 16 for use of the offices and 25 for the use of the gym, in addition to the 7 proposed for the use of this site within the overflow car park.

As the Town Council will know, the overflow car park area was provided as part of the application for the Premier Inn hotel. The hotel itself provides for much of its parking needs on its plot, but there was a need for further parking spaces in order to meet NFDC parking standards. The hotel required a total of 84 spaces to be policy compliant. The approved scheme provides 109 spaces in total, comprising 68 spaces on its plot and 41 within the overflow parking area; the result being that the hotel required 16 of the 41 spaces within the overflow area, leaving 25 spaces unrequired and for general use of the estate.

These 25 spaces are not required by any of the existing businesses or facilities on the site – this is simply a supplemental facility to cater for any exceptional demands and was provided as a benefit as part of the Premier Inn scheme. It is entirely reasonable therefore for the proposed development on Site 12 to seek to make use of 7 of these 25 spaces – still retaining 18 spaces for general use. The 7 spaces within the overflow area will be sign posted and utilised by staff – providing the spaces on site for the use of gym patrons. Staff will, as is common practice, be encouraged to travel to work by sustainable transport means; walking, cycling or use of public bus services if at all possible, which will reduce any strain upon this provision.

It is recognised that the Town Council have seen some sporadic parking on road within the estate in recent times; this is almost inevitable at a time when the estate

is still not complete, and tradespersons and contractors are going to and from the site.

It is anticipated that when the site is completed this will not occur; particularly with the overflow parking which will be available – delivering 18 spaces which are not required by any of the existing or proposed uses. There is no question that these will be available.

There is in particular some sporadic parking at present where due to the development taking place on the Millstream Trading Estate, parking for that site is being off-set on to the Forest Gate Business Park as the closest location for unrestricted parking. This is not indicative of any parking problem on the Forest Gate site and will be resolved once the development is complete.

Each of the individual businesses on site has delivered a level of parking to meet the NFDC parking standards. These sites are not under strain in terms of their parking demand and as Richard Natt cites in his briefing note, there is superfluous parking availability on these premises.

Both NFDC Officers and Hampshire CC have confirmed that they support the parking strategy proposed and the application has been recommended for approval following the changes made. There is no salient reason to maintain an objection on parking grounds and this is certainly not something which Committee Members could hold an objection to at any Planning Committee meeting. As is very normal practice both David Groom and Steve Clothier would be mandated to make clear to members that they would not be able to uphold any objection on parking grounds and would be at significant risk of a costs award against the Council at appeal if a refusal were motioned on this basis.

(2) Height and scale of the building

The proposed building stands at a maximum height of 14.5m to its ridge. This is at 3rd floor level where a pod of development is recessed significantly from the north-west and south-west facing elevations with the total area of the 3rd floor element comprising approximately 25% of the floorplate of the building – this is a modest element which will not read significantly from the street scene due to its set-back. The building in the main reads as 3 storeys in height having an area of roof garden at 3rd floor plate level. The building in the main therefore reads at 10.2m in height with a glazed balustrade sitting above this at a height of approximately a further metre; 11.2m in total.

These figures mean little in isolation, so it is necessary to compare this to the heights of the neighbouring approved; and in the case of the Colten Care site, completed, buildings. The approved Premier Inn is also 4 storeys in height, albeit for almost the full length of the building. The hotel stands at 12.4m to its eaves at 3rd floor level and stands at a total 16.2m to its ridge – significantly higher in both regards than the proposed building on Site 12. The Premier Inn sits at the head of the road on entering the Forest Gate Business Park and thus in urban design terms a larger building was justified in this context. The proposed building for site

12 will sit comfortably alongside this and does not compete with it in height. It is much lower order, reading in the main at 10.2m in height, substantially lower. The Colten Care building is 3 storeys in height and stands at 13.7m in height to its ridge; again, substantially taller in the main than the proposed building for site 12. In this context the building proposed is perfectly reasonable in terms of its scale and in no uncertain terms is not out of character.

NFDC Officers have not raised any concern with the height or design of the building at any stage. Richard Natt has confirmed this within both briefing notes. Having regard for the design of the surrounding buildings; which are all of a relatively similar material palette and linear rectangular form; respective of their location on a business park, the building will sit comfortably and appropriately on the site. There really are no reasons to object in this regard. Design is of course a very subjective matter, but National Policy sets out the baseline considerations in this regard and it would not be reasonable to refuse planning consent for a building which is very similar in its character to what has already been approved on the business park.

We hope that the comments above make the details of the application a little clearer for the Town Council and that, as a result, consideration can be given to changing the recommendation which has been put to the Council to allow Officers to determine the application under delegated powers. As detailed, delaying consideration of the application will seriously prejudice its delivery and the site coming forwards in a reasonable timeframe; clearly not in anyone's interest.

As discussed with you, I know that Steve Clothier and Richard Natt will be more than happy to talk to Councillors should there be a desire for a conversation and similarly we will be happy to answer any further queries.

Given that we are making this approach to you on the basis that time is very precious to the Applicant in terms of being able to deliver this project, we would very much appreciate a response to this request next week. If any application documents are required to facilitate this reconsideration, please let me know and we can coordinate these being provided.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Adam Bennett.

Adam Bennett BA (Hons)
Town Planning Consultant

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 4th April 2018 at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr Philip Day, Deputy Mayor
Cllr Anne Murphy
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly
Cllr Christopher Treleaven

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk

**S/0001
ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Treleaven was proposed by Cllr Day and seconded by Cllr Murphy. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED: That Cllr. Christopher Treleaven be appointed Chairman of the Committee.

Cllr. Christopher Treleaven took the Chair.

**S/0002
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none; all members being present.

**S/0003
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr. Day declared that he would not participate in any discussions or votes concerning the meetings administrator since she is a personal friend.

The Town Clerk declared a personal financial interest in respect of item S/0005. Members were satisfied that, even so, there was no need for the committee to seek further independent advice on this matter.

**S/0004
REVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT-RELATED POLICIES**

The Town Clerk reported that staff concerns about the current Appraisals Policy had been prompted him to seek advice from Ellis Whittam (the Council's adviser on employment law and human resources management). That firm had offered to review all the Council's employment-related policies and suggest updates to reflect current law and best practice. This offer has been accepted and is likely to result in simpler and clearer versions of the Staff Handbook and Members' Handbook.

Members noted that periodic review of such policies is normal practice among all employers and there is no need for every review and every change to be scrutinized and approved by members. However, it is important that staff are properly consulted and the members are informed about changes in general terms and given the opportunity to see the detail of these if they wish to.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk:
(i) consult Council staff members about proposed changes to policies which affect their employment before such changes are brought into effect and

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- (ii) report to the Policy & Finance Committee when changes are made to such policies and explain how councillors can obtain copies.

ACTION C Wilkins

S/0005

OVERSIGHT OF STAFF PAY AND BENEFITS

The Town Clerk referred Members to the report on the provision of parking clocks to Town Council staff circulated with the agenda (*Annex A*). Members discussed the possibilities of (i) withdrawing this benefit when the current clocks expire or (ii) retaining it for current staff but withdrawing it for future recruits but concluded in both cases that the likely adverse impact on staff morale and goodwill would outweigh the modest saving achieved. However, members felt that this ought to be kept under review since the cost is likely to increase faster than general inflation over time and that in the meantime staff be informed that it is a discretionary concession. Members also felt that the value of the benefit ought to be taken into account when recruiting in future.

The Town Clerk also sought members' views about member oversight of staff pay and benefits generally (especially the awarding of increments and specifying terms on recruitment). Cllr. Day said that members had been advised previously that the automatic awarding of increments is a provision of the Green Book and therefore not amenable to further scrutiny. Members also felt that their direct involvement in the recruitment of the Town Clerk and the involvement of the Policy & Finance Committee in considering recommendations in respect of other recruitment provides a sufficient degree of oversight and control

- RECOMMENDED:**
- (i) That the provision of parking clocks to council staff should continue on the present basis but that staff be informed that this is a discretionary benefit;
 - (ii) That recommendations for the pay and benefits for new staff be subject to approval by the Policy & Finance Committee at each future recruitment but that current arrangements continue in all other respects.

ACTION C Wilkins/J Hurd

S/0006

EQUAL OPPORTUNITES MONITORING

The Town Clerk explained that all applicants for Council jobs are asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Information Form but the anonymised data thus collected is not otherwise collated at present. Advice has been obtained from Ellis Whittam that the Council is not obliged to collect this information but doing so may be useful in defending potential discrimination claims particularly in respect of recruitment. The Town Clerk observed that the data is only likely to be useful in practice if it is collated and preserved in some accessible format.

- RESOLVED:** That Council staff involved in recruitment:
- (i) continue to request equal opportunities monitoring information (in a suitable format) from all job applicants; and
 - (ii) give thought to how that information received in response can best be collated or preserved to ensure that it is useful in practice.

ACTION C Wilkins/J Hurd

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 6.55pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

RECEIVED
25th April 2018

APPROVED

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

DRAFT

25th April 2018

Oversight of staff pay

1. Introduction and reason why decision required

The Staffing Committee has identified a need to clarify the council's controls over changes to staff pay.

2. Background information, options, impact assessment and risks

2.1 For some time the Council has:

2.1.1 Paid staff by reference to the NJC scale; assigning each post either to a single pay point on that scale or to a specified range of pay points (with the result that changes to the pay rates agreed at NJC are automatically applied to Council staff);

2.1.2 For posts assigned to a range of pay points, awarded a single "increment" (that is movement up one point on the scale) with effect from 1st April each year unless and until the top point on the scale is reached; and

2.1.3 Reviewed the relevant pay point or range of points whenever an employee has requested a "re-grade".

2.2 It emerged at the recent Staffing Committee meeting that members were under the impression that the practice described in paragraph 2.1.2 above is mandated by the "Green Book" (a set of standard employment terms negotiated between local government employers and trades unions that are incorporated into this council's employment contracts by reference). However, that is not the case and there is nothing in the Council's current contracts of employment requiring it either. There is nothing inherently improper in the practice but good governance requires that it be approved by members after a properly informed and conducted debate and that approval be recorded in writing. It is undesirable that a practice having such implications for the use of public money should rest on unwritten tradition (especially one possibly based on a misunderstanding).

2.3 The Staffing Committee was not minded to propose any substantive changes to current practice but considers that expressing that practice in writing presents an opportunity to specify clearly a few desirable points of detail.

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

Whether to approve the following principles regarding changes to staff pay:

(i) Changes to the rates of pay agreed by NJC should continue to be applied automatically to Council staff whose pay is specified by reference to the NJC scale;

(ii) Council staff whose pay is specified by reference to a range of points on the NJC scale should continue to receive a single increment on 1st April each year except for individual cases where one or more of the following circumstances applies:

a. Their employment with the Council commenced less than six months previously;

b. Their existing pay point is at the top of the range for their post;

c. Their performance has been judged (by their line manager or by the Staffing Committee) to be unsatisfactory;

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d. The Staffing Committee has resolved that exceptional circumstances justify the award of more than one increment.

For further information, contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk