

Main points arising: VAT and room hire/ Payment schedule for January 2014/ Bank reconciliation for end-January 2014/ Insurance cover from April 2014

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 8.00PM ON MONDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2014 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HALL, POYNTON.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr C Gorst

Cllr Mrs J Saunders

Attending under SO 54 Cllr Mrs J Sewart substituting for Cllr M Sewart and Cllr R West substituting for Cllr L A Clarke

Attending under SO 56 – Cllr Mrs S Horsman

PART A

50. Apologies for absence

Cllrs. G Bartos, M Beanland, L A Clarke, H Murray and M Sewart and A Smith

51. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Interests

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or other Interests.

52. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th January 2014

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Extraordinary Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 20th January 2014 are approved as an accurate record (NC)

53. VAT and Room Hire

Members considered the Clerk's written brief and the proposals concerning VAT and "Opt to Tax". In order to be able to reclaim the significant amount of VAT from the building work to be carried out on the Civic Hall later this year, the Town Council's Accountant had recommended that we "Opt to Tax". A consequence of this is that we will be required to apply VAT to our room hire rates. One of the Clerk's recommendations was that we only pass on 10% of

the VAT on room hire in 2014/15, and that the Town Council absorbs the other 10% until 2015/16, when that too is passed on to hirers.

The Chairman asked who the users of the Main Hall included. The Clerk explained that the Main Hall is used during the week by three badminton clubs. The maximum charge is not applied because this would not be affordable on the part of the players. Instead a charge of around £40 to £50 is made per evening session. If other potential hirers paying the full rate required the Main Hall on a weekday then the badminton session would be cancelled at our request. There are however not many other takers for the Main Hall on weekday evenings. From time to time, about twice a month, there are special activities held in the Main Hall, usually at weekends. These include for example exhibitions, receptions, dances, and Gilbert and Sullivan, and these events are a good source of revenue.

Cllr Mrs Saunders asked about the rate applied to U3A for their monthly weekday meeting. The Clerk explained that U3A are charged at the half session charity rate for their main meetings in the Hall, at £34. This is to ensure there is some balance in terms of promoting the Civic Hall as a community hub and groups such as U3A, who are popular and important to the area.

Cllr Mrs S Horsman suggested that the charge for the Royal British Legion hall could also be included in the local hire rate matrix. The Clerk will establish this and include it. Following discussion Members agreed that the Civic Hall hire rates are favourable in comparison to other local venues, and are both reasonable and competitive.

The Chairman clarified that the information regarding a decision to “Opt to Tax” is based on the advice of our accountants.

RESOLVED: That the five proposals at paragraph 7 of the Clerk’s written report are approved (NC)

54. Payment Schedule for January 2014

The Chairman asked about the quarterly charge for the Town Management services of Diane Smith, a Cheshire East officer. The Clerk explained that the charge is £250 per day, so we need to bear this in mind when requesting her services.

Cllr Mrs Saunders enquired about the type of service Diane Smith now provides to the Town Council - could the Town Council do without this provision? The Clerk said this tends to be on events such as the Music Festival and Christmas Fest. Diane Smith has a wide network of contacts at CE for street cleaning, supplying security barriers and arranging street closures during events. She only attends one or two meetings but she is a very useful contact, and her services are used sparingly.

RESOLVED: That the Payment Schedule for January 2014 is received (NC)

55. Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED: That the Bank Reconciliation for end-January 2014, signed by the Chairman, is noted (NC)

PART B has been removed from the public record on the basis of Poynton Town Council's Standing Order 71 (b) (iv)

“Any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Council in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services, if and so long as disclosure to the public of the terms would prejudice the Council in those or any other negotiations”

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm