

Swanley Town Council

Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU

Tel: 01322 665855

www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

POLICY AND FINANCE

MINUTES

Wednesday 21st November 2018

Present: Chair Cllr M Horwood, Cllr V Southern, Cllr L Ball, Cllr C Barnes, Cllr P Darrington, Cllr R Morris

Also Present: Cllr J Barnes, Cllr T Searles, Cllr H Willingale

Officers: CEO - Steve Nash,
RFO - Steve Innes,
Democratic Services Officer - Barbara Playfoot

Public Participation

None

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr M Hogg, Cllr L Dyball

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

10593 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 21st November 2018

APPROVED

10594 TO RECEIVE THE MONTHLY FINANCES

- Cllr Southern commented that the format of the reports now that they were showing 6 months of 2017/2018 and 7 months of 2018/2019 were difficult to follow. The RFO said that he would adjust the format to accommodate this.
- Cllr Southern went on to mention that the cost to the council of the Silent Soldier project was far less than expected as the result was a great success and again thanked the CEO Steve Nash for this initiative which was agreed by all.
- Cllr Southern also commented that on several points regarding rental charges for football pitches, tennis courts etc. and suggested that all should have a rent review as maintenance costs are constantly rising and the rents were not nearly covering the costs.
- Cllr Southern noted that the 1812 event had increased expenditure this year. The CEO explained that the RFO was preparing separate budgets for all the planned 2019 events and these will be presented at the next Policy & Finance meeting on the 23rd January 2019.
- Cllr Horwood said that he felt that the 1812 event should not be diminished in any way as it was a great evening for all.

- Cllr C Barnes asked why the Firework Night event clashed with Hextable, the CEO explained that he had been advised that Hextable is normally on a Saturday night and the Swanley event date had been publicised since the beginning of the year. He went on to say that Firework night event will be on the nearest Friday to the 5th November going forward rather than the actual day.
- Cllr Southern noted that the Alexandra Suite is going to make an increased profit for the year 2018/19 and had observed that Purchases against Sales is matching the national levels.
- Cllr Southern said that the Olympic hiring's were down by approx. £40,000 and that expenditure was still at a high level. The RFO responded by saying that costs are being looked at and contracts for Linen cleaning etc. had been incorporated into one with the Alexandra Suite to reduce costs. Cllr Horwood said that he would like to see a profit being made to bridge the gap in lost income.
- Cllr Southern said that he was very happy with the Swanley Park accounts and was a great asset to Swanley residents. The CEO said that there was further income due to the Park by way of payment for hirings.

RESOLVED: To accept reports A/B/C/D/E/F/G

10595 BUDGET SETTING 2019 – 2020 – Reports H – L

To approve the 2019-2020 to Full Council on 5th December 2018

- Cllr Horwood explained that it was agreed that there would be a 3% increase across the board, at this point the RFO updated the meeting that he had contacted SDC to confirm the tax base level which enabled him to produce a more realistic budget prediction. Cllr Southern said that it was a sensible level of increase and Cllr Horwood added that it allowed flexibility to allow funding for any 'one off' projects to increase the appearance of the town over the coming year.
- The CEO said that the budget did cover some project costs which included Swanley Park being connected to the main drainage, additional disabled play equipment and adjustments to paths to accommodate disabled users. He also mentioned there were costs in the budget to refurbish the flooring in the Alexandra Suite.
- Cllr Southern said he had spent time with the CEO/RFO and commended the budgets.
- Cllr Morris asked if there was a planned rent review for the Taxi office, the CEO confirmed that this was in progress but is proving difficult as the original company were hard to locate as the firm had changed hands several times. The RFO said that all the rents would be reviewed this year.
- Cllr Southern pointed out that when the Sale of the Woodlands is finalised that all costs currently being paid from the Civic budget for Security, Insurance etc. should be paid back to the Civic for further investment into improvements, for example IT upgrades. This was agreed by all members of the committee.

RESOLVED: Approved the 2019-2020 to Full Council on 5th December 2018

10596 CORPORATE PLAN – REPORT M

To consider the draft Corporate Plan and make recommendations

The CEO explained that the plan outlined the way the Council would like to operate in the future and the intention to encourage partners to work with the

Council. This then could feed into several areas, the priority being youth employment and training and the Neighbourhood plan.

Cllr Southern felt that there was a lack of direction for young adults and that schools may not be helping the situation.

Cllr C Barnes explained that the schools have to meet academic targets which are leaving those non-academics behind. The curriculum no longer lends itself to technical and manual skills. The CEO said that part of the plan was to find funding to help these young adults through partnerships with the schools and local businesses.

Cllr Ball agreed with all the points and said that if there was no volunteer help then help would have to be paid for as long as it was good value.

Cllr Horwood added that another priority should be the Town/Community, it should ensure that the town is kept clean, graffiti free and rubbish free roads to give the residents a sense of pride in their town. He felt the Town/Community section should come first, and making the above the first section of that document.

APPROVED - CEO to continue with draft Corporate Plan

Date of next meeting – 23rd January 2019

MEETING CLOSED AT 20.50

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mr Steve Nash, on 01322 611663 or snash@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

Committee Members:

(Chair) Cllr M Horwood, (Vice Chair) Cllr V Southern, Cllr L Ball, Cllr C Barnes, Cllr P Darrington, Cllr M Hogg, Cllr R Morris