**Market Drayton Town Council**

**Minutes of a virtual meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 25 February 2021 at 7.32pm.**

**PRESENT: Councillors: R. Aldcroft, Mrs. J. Beckett, T. Beckett, A. Cartwright, M. Erwin, S. Glover (Chairman), I. Nellins, M. Smith, R. Smith, and M. Whittle.**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**Present:** **Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk.**

The Chairman announced the meeting was being recorded and live streamed.

**1.FG APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Minnery due to work commitments.

**2.FG DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared.

**3.FG PUBLIC SESSION**

No members of the public had requested to speak.

**4.FG MINUTES**

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor R. Smith seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To confirm and agree the minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 December 2020.**

**5.FG NEW POLICIES**

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

1. **Health & Safety Policy**

The Chairman asked if members would like to make any comments on this new policy.

Councillor Cartwright said the policy has reference to The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations Act 1998; the year is incorrect it should be 1999. Under the heading ‘Risk Assessments’ he feels the wording ‘Insurance e.g. Public Liability’ needs to added to the second paragraph regarding contractors.

Councillor Aldcroft said under the heading ‘Training’ he would like to add the words ‘existing staff’ so it reads: The council has overall responsibility for training, all existing and newly appointed staff will be given a copy of the Council’s Health and Safety Policy with regular updates.

Councillor Erwin asked if there are regular fire drills carried out.

The Clerk said yes.

The Chairman thanked the Councillors for the valued comments.

There were no more comments made.

1. **Retention of Documents and Records Policy**

The Chairman pointed out the word ‘and’ needs to be added in the section A Council has a responsibility to ensure that records are: Retained only for as long as necessary ‘and’ disposed of appropriately.

The Clerk agreed this should be changed.

He asked if members would like to make any comments on this new policy.

Councillor Whittle said members had a training session in the Chamber a while ago; he remembers being told a request for information can go back twenty-five years and thought if we get rid of paperwork after a year this would cause an issue.

The Clerk said this comment is incorrect; this document is a recommendation template from the auditors and it includes the legislation. The longest time we keep paperwork for is twelve years and finance paperwork are seven years. The training session Councillor Whittle is referring to is regarding the GDPR Data Protection which is different.

Councillor Erwin asked if the electronic documents come under the same time retention as the paper copies and if so, how are they managed.

The Clerk said yes; we are currently working on this, it is a big job and tend to hold information a little longer just to be cautious; this is an example of what the auditors expect from the Council, it can be changed to longer if necessary but there will be a lot of paperwork within the offices.

Councillor Erwin said he feels the electronic documents needs to be separated from the paper documents on the policy because the work load it would take to delete the files is unnecessary whilst paperwork takes up a lot of space.

Councillor Whittle said we should differentiate between paper and electronic files.

Councillor M. Smith said in his past employment there was a lot of security on the electronic files; Council have CCTV coverage and recordings of meetings and thought we should be something in place for how long these are kept.

The Clerk said Council have a CCTV Policy; it has been agreed and is in place including how long the recordings are kept. With regards to audios from the meetings, once the minutes have been agreed and adopted, they are the legal document, the guidelines are the recordings are destroyed.

The Chairman said on page two of the document it states minutes are kept indefinitely; this answer Councillor Whittles concerns.

The Clerk said all minutes are kept and archived.

Councillor Whittle said the proposed policy was written years ago and paperwork and electronic files need to be separated on the policy. He thought Council should keep all the electronic files for twenty-five years and paperwork for twelve years.

The Clerk said the template for this policy is up to date and is the latest legal requirement.

Councillor Whittle proposed, Councillor M. Smith seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To keep all paper agenda and minute documents for twelve years and electronic files for twenty-five years.**

Councillor Whittle proposed, Councillor R. Smith seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To agree the following policies with the recommended amendments:**

1. **Health & Safety Policy**
2. **Retention of Documents and Records Policy**

**6.FG REVIEW OF POLICIES**

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

1. **Risk Management Strategy Policy**

The Clerk said this policy has been slightly updated.

* on page 8 under section 9.1, ‘Working Group’ has been replaced by ‘to report annually to the Finance & General Purposes Committee’ due to the Working Group no longer existing.
* on page 9 under section 11 Corporate Governance Policy and Whistleblowing Policy to be removed because we do not have them.

The Chairman asked if members had any comments they would like to make.

Councillor Whittle said the Council have three locations, the Town Hall, the Cemetery, and the outbuilding at the farm and asked if this policy covers them all.

The Clerk said yes.

1. **Discretionary Pension Policy**

The Clerk said this policy was agreed in March 2019, the slight change that have been made is the updated legislation figure on the first page which has increased to £7,194 from £6,755.

No further comments were made.

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Cartwright seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To agree the updated policies:**

1. **Discretionary Pension Policy**
2. **Risk Management Strategy Policy**

**7.FG SMALL GRANTS**

The Chairman said he would like members to consider a small grant request from Market Drayton Town FC to help support them purchasing PPE equipment and signage within the football clubs building as a result from Covid19 pandemic. There has not been a set amount asked for, the maximum amount to give out is £300 each and there is £2,200 remaining in budget.

The Chairman asked for members comments.

Councillor R. Smith said he fully supports this application.

Councillor Whittle declared an interest with this item due to him being a director on the Greenfields Sports Association.

Councillor Aldcroft declared an interest with this item as he sits on the Greenfields Sports Association.

After a brief discussion:

Councillor R. Smith proposed, Councillor Nellins seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To agree a small grant of £300 to Market Drayton Town FC.**

**8.FG CHAIRMANS WORKING GROUP MEETING**

The Chairman reported to members that the Working Group are reviewing the welfare facilities for the outside staff; councillors will be kept appraised of any changes in the situation.

Members **NOTED** the Chairman’s report.

**9.FG FINANCIAL REPORT**

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chairman asked if there were any comments members would like to make.

Councillor R. Smith said he has had a good look through the report and can not find any issues with it.

There were no more comments.

Councillor R. Smith proposed, Councillor Aldcroft seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

**To agree the income and expenditure report: 1 December 2020 – 31 January 2021.**

**10.FG INFORMATION**

Members **NOTED:**

The end of year close down of accounts will be completed virtually again this year.

Councillor Whittle wanted to take this opportunity to thank the Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer and staff for their hard work in getting all the end of year information together and the good audit reports we continue to receive.

The meeting concluded at 8.10 pm.

Chairman ……………………………. Date …………………………