

GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

Tel: 01483 523575
Fax: 01483 523077
E-Mail: office@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.godalming-tc.gov.uk

Municipal Buildings
Bridge Street
Godalming
Surrey GU7 1HT

8 March 2013

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU to attend the **POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** Meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Bridge Street, Godalming on THURSDAY, 14 MARCH 2013 at 7.15 pm, or at the conclusion of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting, whichever is later.

Louise P Goodfellow
Town Clerk

Committee Members: Councillor T Martin – Chairman
Councillor Poulter – Vice Chairman

Councillor P Martin
Councillor Thomson
Councillor C Gordon-Smith
Councillor Reynolds
Councillor Woodham
Councillor S Bott
Councillor Noyce
Councillor Thornton
Councillor Williams

Councillor R Gordon-Smith
Councillor Cosser
Councillor Lister
Councillor Wilson
Councillor A Bott
Councillor Hunter
Councillor Robinson
Councillor Welland

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on the 21 February 2013, a copy of which has been circulated previously.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman to allow members of the public to ask the Council questions, or make a statement or present a petition. This forum to be conducted in accordance with Standing Order 80.

4. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To receive from Members any declarations of interests in relation to any items included on the Agenda for this meeting required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

5. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee's work programme is attached for the information of Members.

Members of the Public have the right to attend all meetings of the Town Council and its Committees and are welcome.

Where items are listed on the programme the detail of those items (i.e. the work itself) may only be discussed if it is included elsewhere on this agenda, but all those items due for action at this meeting are included on this agenda.

6. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Town Clerk to report on the accounts paid since the last meeting.

A schedule of the accounts paid will be tabled for the information of Members. The vouchers relating to these payments will also be tabled at the meeting for inspection. All payments made are in line with the agreed budget or other resolution of this Committee or Full Council.

Members to agree that the Chairman should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

7. AUDIT SUB COMMITTEE REPORT INCLUDING REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT FOR GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL AND JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Members to receive the report and recommendations from the Chairman of the Audit Sub-Committee following the meeting of Sub-Committee held on 7 March 2013 (copy attached for the information of Members). Members will have received the minutes and attachments of the Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 7 March 2013 (distributed on 8 March 2013) and are advised to bring these to this meeting.

Physical Security

Members recommended that a new device endorsed by Surrey Police, relating to door access, that can be attached to individuals' computers, be considered when the cost review was undertaken regarding video access to the offices.

Review of Financial Regulations

Members recommended nine proposals relating to the review of Financial Regulations.

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 all bodies are required to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit annually by 31 March each year.

The five areas that must be covered are:

- Scope of Internal Audit
Has the scope of the internal audit been discussed with the Internal Auditor to ensure that all the relevant risks are covered?
- Independence
Is the Internal Auditor sufficiently independent, objective and unbiased?
- Competence
Does the Internal Auditor have sufficient knowledge to be able to carry out the audit?
- Relationships
Are the relevant responsibilities of Members, Clerk and RFO clearly defined?

- Audit Planning & Reporting

Is the body aware of a timetable of when the internal and external audits will take place and when the reports from these will be expected?

Internal Audit Process

Is the work of the Internal Audit reviewed regularly?

Are the reports on the work of the Internal Auditor presented to the committee?

Are the reviews and risk assessments undertaken from the Work Programme by the Audit Sub Committee on behalf of the Joint Burial Committee reported to the committee?

Are the annual reports from the Internal Auditor presented to the committee?

External Audit Process

Are the annual reports from the External Auditor presented to the committee?

Does the committee ensure that recommendations from the External Auditor are implemented?

Does the Audit Sub Committee provide regular reports relating to its recommendations and the agreed Work Programme to the Policy & Management Committee?

Mark Mulberry of Mulberry & Co was appointed as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2010/2011 and following a successful outcome has been reappointed for the current year.

BDO Stoy Hayward has been and continues to be the External Auditor for Godalming Town Council and Godalming Joint Burial Committee. As BDO is appointed by the Audit Commission to undertake the external audit for both Godalming Town Council and the Godalming Joint Burial Committee there is currently no facility to change provider if the Council so desired.

Characteristics of the Review

Can it be seen as a Catalyst for Change?

Evidence Work Programme and Reviews undertaken to assess Risk and the areas that are developed from these reviews

Does it Add Value?

The follow up actions that are taken from the work programme to make improvements to enhance our services.

Is it Forward Looking?

Identifies risks and incorporates them into the Work Programme which is reviewed and updated at each meeting of the Audit sub committee to ensure it is forward looking and meeting events e.g. Website added under Reputation

Is it Challenging?

It has created its own Work Programme identifying areas and risks over and above the norm that are considered and are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure

compliance and to allow Members to take ownership of the risks and how they are managed to meet best practice.

Are the right resources available for Internal audit to complete its work?

Good communication lines.

8. DRAFT STANDING ORDERS

NOTE THAT THIS ITEM WAS DEFERRED FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2013 AND MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO ENSURE THAT THEY BRING THE DRAFT STANDING ORDERS CIRCULATED FOR THAT MEETING WITH THEM

On 23 February 2012 this Committee agreed to appoint a working party to undertake a full review of the NALC model Standing Orders against Godalming Town Council's Standing Orders and membership of that group was agreed as Councillor Anne Bott, Councillor Cathy Gordon-Smith, Councillor Thornton, Councillor Williams and the Town Clerk (Minute 368-11 refers).

The Town Clerk convened that working group on 14 November 2012. The working group reviewed the Standing Orders and asked the Town Clerk to take their observations and to draft some new Standing Orders. Those draft Standing Orders are attached for the information of Members.

The Town Clerk has undertaken some further work since the working group met and has consulted NALC (the National Association of Local Councils) about a number of queries arising from their model Standing Orders. The Town Clerk has also consulted the Staffing Sub-Committee about Section Twenty of the draft document. The draft Standing Orders reflect the advice offered by NALC and the Staffing Sub-Committee.

On 23 February 2012 the Town Clerk reported the NALC model Standing Orders were significantly different from the Town Council's but that she had reviewed the mandatory elements of the model Standing Orders and confirmed that, with one exception, Godalming Town Council's practice (whether spelt out in Standing Orders or not) matched the mandatory elements. Members noted that the exception was Godalming Town Council's practice for the execution and sealing of legal deeds and indeed while Godalming's previous practice was lawful the new draft Standing Orders reflect NALC's advice upon this practice – see Section 14, page 23 of the draft document (and the Town Clerk discussed that point specifically with a legal adviser at NALC).

This amendment to how Godalming Town Council will execute and seal legal deeds is the only significant change in practice that will arise from adopting the new standing orders. The draft new Standing Orders provide more detail in certain areas (eg Section 20) than the previous ones; but where previous Standing Orders were silent Godalming Town Council was already observing the law and good practice.

The working group also wished this Committee to consider the status of the Audit Sub-Committee. Since a number of key pieces of work undertaken by the Audit Sub-Committee need now to be considered and agreed by Full Council (specifically the review of systems of internal control and agreeing the annual accounts and annual return) it is administratively cumbersome to have those items come via this Committee before Full Council. The working group recommends that consideration be given to making the Audit Sub-Committee a Standing Committee of the Council rather than a Sub-Committee of Policy & Management Committee. (Note that the draft Standing Orders in front of Members presume that the existing committee and sub-committee structure will continue – and will need further re-drafting to give effect to the changed status of the Audit Committee if Members are minded to agree the recommendation.)

Subject to their views on the status of the Audit Sub-Committee Members are asked to consider the draft Standing Orders and to recommend them to Full Council for adoption.

As originally drafted this item asked Members to note that two further items for the work programme follow from the re-drafting of Standing Orders – a detailed review of Financial Regulations must be undertaken before the end of the financial year (ie for the planned meeting of this Committee on 14 March 2013) and the Council needs to do more work on the Code of Conduct and how and what sanctions will be applied for breaches of the code (suggested timescale for this piece of work is for the planned meeting of this Committee on 25 July 2013). However, the detailed review of Financial Regulations has to be consequent upon the review of Standing Orders not consecutive to it, so this more detailed piece of work will be commenced upon adoption of revised Standing Orders – a simpler annual review of Financial Regulations is the next item on this agenda.

9. ANNUAL REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

In order to satisfy audit requirements it is necessary to re-adopt financial regulations each financial year, therefore, Members are asked formally to review the Financial Regulations for the financial year 2013/14 (a copy of the Financial Regulations are attached for the information of Members) and to recommend them to Full Council for adoption.

One amendment to Financial Regulations is proposed, at paragraph 3.4 it is proposed that the limit up to which the Clerk may incur expenditure on grounds of urgency should be increased from £750 to £1,000. Members are asked to agree this proposed change.

Standing Order 76 specifically requires that this Committee decide the limits set out at paragraph 12.1(h) of the Financial Regulations. No amendments to paragraph 12.1(h) are proposed this year and Members are asked to agree the existing limits.

10. REPORT OF THE STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE – GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Staffing Sub-Committee met on 7 February 2013 and reviewed the Town Council's Grievance Procedure. The Sub-Committee proposed two amendments to the procedure, that:

- The final bullet point at Step 2 should have the following words added at the end. "The employer's response may be that further investigation is required, subject to the agreement of the employee and to the investigation being concluded in a timely manner."
- At Step 3 the word "individuals" should be substituted for "Members" in the second bullet point in the phrase "to appoint an Appeals Panel to consist of two Members". The word "individuals" should have a footnote that says "These individuals need not necessarily be Members of Godalming Town Council."

A draft of the Grievance Procedure is attached for the information of Members with these amendments highlighted in bold and in italics. A third amendment is suggested by the Town Clerk to the third paragraph of the Introduction – this change merely reflects the recent name change of the Surrey County Association of Parish & Town Councils to the Surrey Association of Local Councils (SALC).

Members are asked to consider the recommended amendments and if agreed recommend the amended Grievance Procedure to Full Council for adoption.

11. DISABILITY ACCESS RAMPS – WILFRID NOYCE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Members will have noted from the work programme that the Audit Sub-Committee highlighted the need to investigate the provision of disability access ramps at the rear of the Wilfrid Noyce Community Centre in order to provide safe egress for wheelchair users exiting from the rear emergency exits. This issue was also highlighted in the Fire Risk Assessment & Fire Safety Inspection conducted at the premises in November 2012.

As required by Financial Regulation 12, two quotes have been obtained from companies who specialise in the provision of disability access ramps. The first from a local company based in Catteshall Lane is for bespoke ramps including installation at £1,233 + VAT the second quote is for standard components requiring self-installation at a cost of £1,305 + VAT. Officers recommend using the bespoke ramps. There is no budgetary provision for this but the cost could be met from the Wilfrid Noyce Community Centre maintenance reserve.

12. STAYCATION 2013

Members to consider a report from the Town Clerk (attached for the information of Members).

13. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES – REPORT ON GODALMING/MAYEN ASSOCIATION

Members are asked to note a report from Councillor Wheatley on the Godalming/Mayen Association (report attached for the information of Members) an organisation on which Councillor Wheatley represents the Town Council.

14. PURCHASE OF COMPUTERS

Town Council staff (particularly the Town Clerk) are experiencing increasing difficulties with IT equipment. The problems are different for different individuals – in the general office the difficulties lie with the age of the computers (5-6 years) and their software. For the Town Clerk the difficulty lies in an inherently unstable computer and in certain software being incompatible with the older versions being used in the general office.

The Town Clerk has placed an order to replace the three computers in the general office. At £1,950 this order is within the revenue budget and within the Clerk's delegated authority. However, the Clerk now seeks authority to commit further funds from the revenue reserve designated for that purpose. Currently the balance in the Computer maintenance/replacement reserve stands at £5,688. The Clerk estimates that further expenditure of £2,000 is required to purchase two further computers for her office (one for each workstation) and current Microsoft Office software for all five computers. Members are asked to agree the transfer of £2,000 from the computer maintenance/replacement reserve to the revenue budget in the current financial year.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 25 April 2013 at 7.15 pm in the Council Chamber or at the conclusion of the Planning & Environment Committee, whichever is the later.

16. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brought forward by permission of the Chairman. Requests to be submitted prior to commencement of the meeting.

THE COMMITTEE MAY WISH TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED IE. COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE AND STAFFING MATTERS.

17. THE WILFRID NOYCE CENTRE

Members to consider a confidential report from the Town Clerk (attached for the information of Members).

18. THE SQUARE

Members to consider a confidential report from the Town Clerk (attached for the information of Members).

19. STAFFING MATTERS

Members to receive a confidential oral report from the Chairman of the Staffing Sub-Committee and the Town Clerk.

GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

Disclosure by a Member¹ of a disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration at a meeting (S.31 (4) Localism Act 2011 and the adopted Godalming Members' Code of Conduct).

As required by the Localism Act 2011 and the adopted Godalming Members' Code of Conduct, **I HEREBY DISCLOSE**, for the information of the authority that I have [a disclosable pecuniary interest]² [a non-pecuniary interest]³ in the following matter:-

COMMITTEE:

DATE:

NAME OF COUNCILLOR: _____

Please use the form below to state in which agenda items you have an interest.

Agenda No.	Subject	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Non-Pecuniary Interest	Reason

Signed _____

Dated _____

¹ "Member" includes co-opted member, member of a committee, joint committee or sub-committee

² A disclosable pecuniary interest is defined by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) regulations 2013/1464 and relate to employment, office, trade, profession or vocation, sponsorship, contracts, beneficial interests in land, licences to occupy land, corporate tenancies and securities

³ A non-pecuniary interest is defined by Section 5 (4) of the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.