



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR
Tel: 01747 823588 Email: GTC@gillinghamdorset-tc.gov.uk

Minutes of the **Policy and Resources Committee** meeting held on **Monday, 18th March 2019**, in the **Jubilee Room, Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham**, commencing at **7.30pm**.

These minutes do not constitute a true record until ratified by Full Council.

Present:	Cllr Mrs S Hunt (Chairman) Cllr P Harris (Deputy Chairman), Cllr Mrs S Cullingford, Cllr R Evill, Cllr A Frith, Cllr M Hill, Cllr Mrs D Toye, Cllr B Von Clemens.
Members of the Public and Press:	There was one member of the press present and no member of the public present.
In attendance:	Mrs C Ratcliffe, Deputy Town Clerk. Ms D Edwards, Responsible Financial Officer

472. To receive apologies.

Apologies were received from Cllr Poulter and Cllr Mrs Ridout. The Chairman informed the meeting of the reasons for the apologies. The reasons were duly recorded in the attendance register.

Cllr Hill proposed that **“the apologies received from Cllr Poulter and Cllr Mrs Ridout are accepted”**. Cllr Evill seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

473. To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday, 18th February 2019.

Cllr Mrs Toye proposed that **“the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Monday, 18th February 2019, should be approved as a correct record of that meeting”**. Cllr Mrs Cullingford seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.** The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

474. Questions. There were no questions.

Policy and Resources Committee Meeting – Monday, 18th March 2019 (continued):

475. Declarations of Interest - Members are required to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, Section 27 regarding disclosable pecuniary interests.

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

476. To receive working party reports for consideration and approval, if available:

a) Cycleway

There was no report this month.

477. Finance:

a) To approve cheques for payment for March 2019.

Cllr Harris proposed that **“the payments as listed for the first half of March 2019 to the gross value of £22,512.21 are approved for payment”**. Cllr Hill seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

b) To receive any virement requests, if applicable.

There were no requests for virements this month.

478. To consider and agree an internal auditor for FY 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22.

Cllr Harris referred to the report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix A. The report contained one recommendation.

Cllr Harris suggested that members consider opting for a longer-term agreement of up to five years; the rates were very favourable, and the yearly increases were in line with inflation.

Cllr Harris proposed that **“the sole tenderer is awarded the contract to supply internal audit provision for FY 2019/20 through to FY 2023/24”**. Cllr Von Clemens seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

479. To consider and agree the Health and Safety Policy Statement, Policy Manual and Policy Handbook which has been prepared by Ellis Whittam.

The Health and Safety Policy Statement, Policy Manual and Policy Handbook prepared by Ellis Whittam were circulated via email prior to the meeting. The documents are draft only and will need to be amended to refer specifically to Gillingham Town Council and its employees, where appropriate. This will be done by Ellis Whittam when the document has been agreed ‘in principle’.

Cllr Harris proposed that **“the Health and Safety Policy Statement, Policy Manual and Policy Handbook prepared by Ellis Whittam are approved ‘in principle’ prior to amendments being undertaken by Ellis Whittam to specifically reference the documents to Gillingham Town Council and its employees”**. Cllr Mrs Cullingford seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

480. To receive and consider a report on the future provision of a weekend town orderly.

Cllr Mrs Hunt referred to the report that had been sent by email prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix B. The report contained three recommendations, which were taken en bloc as follows:

Policy and Resources Committee Meeting – Monday, 18th March 2019 (continued):

480. To receive and consider a report on future provision of a weekend town orderly (continued):

Cllr Von Clemens proposed that:

“Contractor C is employed for two hours per session on the Sunday dates that he is available until a suitable replacement can be found and financed from monies held for FY 2019/20 under Service Devolution”;

Contractor A is contracted to work on a Saturday and offered to work on a Sunday, after a satisfactory trial period, to replace Contractor C and financed from monies held for 2019/20 for Service Devolution; “a weekend orderly contract/specification is drafted, in consultation with the Works Manager, and presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in due course”. Cllr Evill seconded, and the vote was unanimous. RESOLVED.

481. To consider and agree a draft advertisement for grant applications for FY 2019/20, as per the Town Council’s Grants Policy.

Cllr Mrs Hunt referred to the report that had been circulated via email prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix C. The report contained one recommendation.

Cllr Frith proposed that **“an advert inviting Grant Applications from local groups and organisations for FY 2019/20 is approved for publication in the Gillingham and Shaftesbury News in April and May at a total cost of £80 ex VAT and financed from budget no. 3.24 Running Costs Contingency and circulated via social media free of charge”**. Cllr Mrs Toye seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

482. To receive and consider recommendations from the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, 4th March 2019, as follows:

That **“a local contractor is instructed to carry out investigation trenches to ascertain the depth and location of the land drain at a cost not to exceed £250 ex VAT and financed from budget no. 3.18 – Environment and that quotation(s) is obtained following the investigation of the above to repair and/or relocate the land drain”**.

Cllr Mrs Cullingford proposed that **“a local contractor is instructed to carry out investigation trenches to ascertain the depth and location of the land drain at a cost not to exceed £250 ex VAT and financed from budget no. 3.18 – Environment and that quotation(s) is obtained following the investigation of the above to repair and/or relocate the land drain”**. Cllr Hill seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

483. To receive a grant application from Gillingham School Council for a Healing Garden at Gillingham School, if available.

A grant application made on behalf of Gillingham School Council (Gardening Section) was received prior to the meeting and due to its late arrival was also tabled at the meeting. A representative from the school attended the meeting and gave a short presentation and answered questions.

The grant has been requested to help finance a ‘healing garden’ at Gillingham School which will provide a quiet space for pupils away from noise, phones and academic life. The garden will be created by pupils and volunteers from the school community. The cost of the project is £2,343.57 but only £1,000 had been requested in the grant application. The remainder has yet to be sourced from further fundraising.

Cllr Harris considered that this was a very worthy project. Cllr Harris informed the meeting that there was £1,495 remaining in the monies set aside for grants FY 2018/19 and, with only a couple of weeks to go until the end of the financial year, was unlikely to be spent and, therefore, asked members to consider that the remainder of the budget was awarded to Gillingham School Council.

Cllr Harris proposed that **“Gillingham School Council is awarded £1,495 towards their ‘healing garden’ project and financed from budget no. 2.26 Grants”**. Cllr Von Clemens seconded, and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

Policy and Resources Committee Meeting – Monday, 18th March 2019 (continued):

484. To receive email correspondence for information regarding the ICT support contract with DCC and the creation of the new Dorset Council on 1st April 2019.

The information regarding future ICT charges was noted.

485. Matters Pertinent

There were no matters pertinent.

The meeting closed at 7.59 pm.

Minute no. 478

Gillingham Town Council

Provision of Internal Audit Services

Author: Julie Hawkins, Town Clerk/ Clare Ratcliffe, Deputy Clerk

1. Background

As per the Town Council's Financial Regulation, Section 2 Accounting and Audit, there is a requirement for regular internal and external audit.

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 set out the arrangements for external audit which, is currently undertaken by PKF Littlejohn. The town council does not decide the external auditor; however, it is responsible for the internal audit controls.

A detailed and comprehensive specification for the provision of internal audit for the next three years with an option of a further two years thereafter was issued by the Town Clerk. A total of five specifications were sent to accountants/auditors operating in the immediate vicinity, those within a 30-mile radius and those that had been recommended. The specification included the following timeline:

Activity	Date
Issue of Invitation to Tender	13th February 2019
Receipt of any queries from prospective tenderers	21st February 2019
Submissions of tenders	28th February 2019 (No later than 12 noon*)
Completion of tender evaluation	6th March 2019
Decision on award of contract by Policy and Resources Committee	18 th March 2019
Commencement of contract	1 st April 2019

Out of five companies contacted, only one return was received by Friday, 6th March 2019. There is no obvious reason for the lack of return apart from two companies who said that they were too busy to take on more work at this time.

2. The Objective

The Council is:

- required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to prepare its accounts in the form of an 'Annual Return' as set out in 'Governance and Accountability for smaller Authorities in England: A Practitioner's Guide' published by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG);
- subject to external audit under the provisions of the Local audit and Accountability Act 2014. The audit comprises of a Limited Assurance Review; and
- required to arrange for an independent internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes.

3. Scope

Tenders were invited for the provision of internal audit services that:

- meet the requirements for internal audit in 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioner's Guide';
- provide internal audit to allow completion of the Annual internal audit report within the Annual Return; and
- carry out an internal audit programme for Local Councils as appropriate including (but not limited to):
 - Proper book keeping;
 - Payment controls;
 - Risk management arrangement;
 - Budget controls;
 - Income controls;
 - Petty cash controls;
 - Payroll controls;
 - Assets Controls;
 - Bank Reconciliation; and
 - Year-end procedures

The Council seek written output comprising:

- Annual internal audit report within the Annual Return; and
- Reports as appropriate to Council detailing the scope of the work undertaken, the findings from that work and any recommendations.

4. Proposal

The completed tender documentation (see attached) has been scrutinised by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, Town Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer and meets with all the requirements laid out in the tender specification. The price for the work is fair and the company has a proven history of financial audit and is familiar with local council accounting procedures and requirements. References have been obtained.

5. Financial Implications

In the precept for FY 2019/20, a total of £2,900 had been allocated for audit purposes, Professional Fees, line no. 13.18. An estimate of £1,600 (ex VAT) will need to be allowed for the cost of the external audit. The tender price received for a three-year internal audit contract, is as follows:

Sole tenderer:

The tender price for internal audit – based on an anticipated audit time of 21 hours conducted over 3 visits (including mileage) at total of £877.46 (ex VAT).

6. Conclusion

The first-year tender fee quoted of £877.46 for audit requirements for FY 2019/20 falls within budget. A tender process has been carried out, as described above, the sole tenderer comes highly recommended and is competent. Therefore, there is no requirement to seek further quotations.

7. Recommendation

- **That sole tenderer is awarded the contract to supply internal audit provision for FY 2019/20 to 2021/22 with an option for a further two years at an estimated fee of £877.46 for the first year to be financed from Precept FY 2019/20, line no.13.18.**

Gillingham Town Council

Weekend Town Orderly Duties

Author: Julie Hawkins Town Clerk / Clare Ratcliffe Deputy Town Clerk

1. Introduction

The background surrounding the requirement for weekend town orderlies and their duties was reported by the Town Clerk to the Policy and Resources Committee last month.

As agreed, an experienced contractor has been employed to carry out town orderly duties over the last month. The contractor has carried out the duties to a high standard and has commented as follows:

“Having now completed the agreed tasking for 2 weeks and, although the weather has been atrocious, I think your 2 hour time scale is unrealistic and at least very optimistic, 3 hours is nearer the mark however I will complete the next 3 weeks as agreed.”

The current contractor is unable to carry out the duties on a Saturday as he is committed elsewhere. For the month of April and May the contractor is only available on the following dates: Sunday's 14th and 28th April and 12th and 19th May 2019.

2. Objectives

The town orderly duties should, ideally, be carried out every weekend on both a Saturday and Sunday due to the amount of rubbish that accumulates in public places, especially during the summer months. The Town Meadow and Hardings Park are very popular areas for families to socialise and meet for ad hoc picnics. The toilet facilities area also well-used.

In the past, weekend orderly duties were reduced in the winter months and increased during the summer months.

The Town Council is extremely grateful to the volunteer Gillingham Litterpickers and the work that they do to enhance the service that the Town Council provides; however, this does not reduce the amount of dropped litter that accumulates over a weekend.

3. Proposal

All three contractors were given a list of tasks that were required to be undertaken at the weekend, including the cleaning of the public toilet.

- **Option A**

Contractor A has quoted £45 per 2 hours cleaning on Saturday and £45 per 2 hours cleaning on a Sunday. Total per weekend £90. Prices ex VAT. No fixed contract. Pay-As-You-Go. Equivalent to £90 x 52 weeks = £4,680 per annum.

- **Option B**

Contractor B has quoted £100 for cleaning on a Saturday and £120 per visit on a Sunday. Prices ex VAT. Total per weekend £220. Prices are subject to a three-year contract with three months' notice either way prior to the contract anniversary (assume: a period of 9 months before notice to quit by either party). Price subject to annual increases. Equivalent to £220 x 52 weeks = £11,440.

Whilst a fixed term contract can provide mutual security, no initial trial period has been suggested, and without this there is financial risk. Unknown annual increases would also be a financial risk, especially if above inflation.

- **Option C**

Contractor C - the current contractor - is only available to work every other week on a Sunday. £103.80 per visit. Pay-As-You-Go. Equivalent to 26 weeks x £103.80 = £2,699 (if available)

4. Financial Implications

The cost of providing the town with the level of cleanliness that has been delivered and expected will, unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, be far costlier than anticipated prior to setting the precept.

There is funding allocated in the Precept 2019/20 for Service Devolution some of this could be used to finance a weekend orderly contractor(s).

Under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, Section 31, Procurement Information, it states that: *Local authorities must publish details of every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £5,000.*

Under the Town Councils Financial Regulations, Section 11, Contracts: at least three quotations should be obtained for goods and services worth over £3,000.

5. Conclusion

Gillingham Town Council prides itself on a clean and tidy town.

The town orderlies that were employed in-house are no longer available.

The amount of litter that accumulates over a weekend cannot be dealt with by the weekly town orderly and the volunteer litter pickers, therefore, sourcing a weekend town orderly is a necessity.

More information is required from Contractor A and Contractor B before entering into a formal contract.

It is evident from the research undertaken to-date that a formal specification should be drawn up in consultation with the Works Manager to obtain like for like quotations from at least three suppliers.

A temporary measure is required to cover the interim period while a reliable and satisfactory solution is found.

- **Temporary Option 1**

Contractor A is employed on a Saturday with Contractor C employed on a Sunday on the weeks that he is available (this will limit risk if Contractor A is not suitable).

- **Temporary Option 2**

Dispense with Contractor C and trial Contractor A on Saturdays and Sundays as soon as possible. This carries more risk than Temporary Option 1 but is considerably cheaper.

6. Recommendations

- **That Contractor C is employed for 2 hours per session on the Sunday dates that he is available until a suitable replacement can be found and financed from monies held for 2019/20 under Service Devolution.**
- **That Contractor A is contracted to work on a Saturday and offered to work on a Sunday, after a satisfactory trial period, to replace Contractor C and financed from monies held for 2019/20 for Service Devolution.**
- **That a Weekend Town Orderly Contract/Specification is drafted. in consultation with the Works Manager. and presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in due course.**

Gillingham Town Council

Grant Applications for FY 2019/20

1. Background

A grants criteria policy was approved on 21st January 2019 and a sum of £20,000 set aside for discretionary grants in the agreed Precept for FY 2019/20.

2. Proposal

The following advert inviting grant applications from local organisations has been drafted to appear in the Gillingham and Shaftesbury News (a local monthly newspaper). The advert size would be 3 columns x 8cm at a cost of £40 per publication. It is proposed that the advert appears in both the April and May editions of the newspaper, particularly as there is a long lead time to the closing date of 31st July. The advert would also appear on the Town Council's web site and circulated via social media free of charge.

DRAFT ADVERTISEMENT



Gillingham Town Council

Grant Applications Invited for FY 2019/20

Gillingham Town Council awards grants annually to charitable and voluntary organisations that benefit the Gillingham community.

We welcome applications that will: improve the quality of life for Gillingham residents; support the viability of small local organisations and groups; and clearly demonstrate financial need.

How to apply:

• **Download an application form:**

www.gillinghamdorset-tc.gov.uk/policy-and-administration/grants

• **Complete and return the application form along with a set of accounts and project details to:**

Gillingham Town Council, Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham,
Dorset SP8 4QR

Tel: 01747 823588 Email: gtc@gillinghamdorset-tc.gov.uk

The closing date for applications is 31st July.
Grants will be awarded at the end of October 2019.

3. Financial Implications

At the current time there is no specific budget for advertisements; however, there is a contingency budget no. 3.24 with a current balance of £6,155.50, which could be used for this purpose.

4. Conclusion

An advertisement inviting local groups and organisations that fulfil the Town Council's grant criteria policy to apply for funding, should be circulated as widely as possible for the purposes of transparency, fairness and equal opportunities.

5. Recommendation

- **That an advert inviting Grant Applications from local groups and organisations for FY2019/20 is approved for publication in the Gillingham and Shaftesbury News in April and May at a total cost of £80 ex VAT and financed from budget no. 3.24 Running costs Contingency and circulated via social media free of charge.**