

Penistone Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Assets & HR Committee held in the IT Room, St John's Community Centre on Monday 11th November 2024 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Cllr. James Kitching (Vice-Chair/Acting Chair) Cllr. Jonathan Cutts, Cllr. Mandy Lowe-Flello (Town Mayor *ex-officio*), Cllr. Frances Nixon, Cllr. Nick Perkins, Cllr. David Walker

Nigel Bailey – Town Clerk

Brian Barnsley, Technical Manager, Paramount Cinema

Elaine Miller – Asst. Town Clerk

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Cllr. Wayne Chadburn, Cllr. Jonathan Cutts, Cllr. David Greenhough, Cllr. Anita Kimberley, Cllr. James Kitching (Vice-Chair), Cllr. Hannah Kitching, Cllr. Mandy Lowe-Flello (Town Mayor – *ex officio*), Cllr. Frances Nixon, Cllr. Jon Palmer (Chair), Cllr. Nick Perkins, Cllr. David Walker

There was one member of the public in attendance; who observed but did not address the meeting.

FAHR 2024/25 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from Cllrs. Wayne Chadburn, Anita Kimberley, Hannah Kitching and Jon Palmer were **NOTED**. Reasons for absence were unanimously **APPROVED**.

FAHR 2024/26 2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTEREST FROM COUNCILLORS

2.1 In accordance with Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 members to declare any disposable pecuniary interests in items on this agenda.

It was **NOTED** and **RECORDED** that there were no declarations of interest.

2.2 The Town Clerk to report any written dispensations in respect of items on this agenda.

The Town Clerk reported that there were none.

FAHR 2024/27 3. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC – PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS ACT 1960) S. 1 (2)

Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for the other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960.

The Town Clerk reported that Item 7.2 of the agenda related (in part) to discretionary changes of rates of pay; which matter is confidential. It was noted and **RESOLVED** that members of the public would therefore be excluded from the meeting for item 7.2. This was explained to the member of the public present and the Chair agreed to discuss this agenda item last so that they could leave after the conclusion of the remainder of the agenda.

FAHR 2024/28 4. TO CONSIDER THE REVISION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE IN LINE WITH LEGAL ADVICE FROM YORKSHIRE LOCAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION (LAW & GOVERNANCE BULLETIN JULY 2024)

The Assistant Clerk reported that the revision of the Terms of Reference included the incorporation of the Terms of Reference for the standing committee on Assets & Amenities which was amalgamated with the former standing committee on Finance & HR (minute no. Annual Meeting 2024/9(9)). She suggested to the committee that it would be advisable for a trained Human Resources professional to have some input; as the aforementioned Legal Bulletin advised that many Councils have inadequate Terms of Reference for committees dealing with HR and/or terms of reference which do not reflect their practice. This would put them at a disadvantage in the event of a dispute.

Further to discussion it was **AGREED** that the Assistant Clerk should set up a meeting with Cllr. Anita Kimberley (a Human Resources professional) to review the draft revision.

FAHR 2024/29 6. TO CONSIDER SMALL GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING WITH RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL.

- 6.1 Hoylandswaine Village Hall Ltd. – Request for a grant of £63.40 to pay rates for 2024. Further to discussion the Committee unanimously **DECLINED** to recommend that the Council should grant this request; noting that these are ongoing running costs and the applicants show a substantial bank balance.
- 6.2 Friends of St John’s Church, Penistone – Request for a grant of £500 towards the purchase of equipment for a new project to clear and maintain the churchyard. Further to discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Council should grant this request.

FAHR 2024/30 7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PREPARATION FOR THE BUDGET AND PRECEPT MEETING IN JANUARY 2025 (FINAL DECISIONS TO BE MADE IN JANUARY 2025)

- 7.1 Penistone Town Council Officers – To note the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) pay settlement backdated to 01/04/2024, statutory increase in Employers National Insurance Contributions from 01/04/2025; and annual changes to salary bands (dates of change related to employment start dates).

These increases will increase costs in 2025/26 by £7,740. These changes were **NOTED** by the Committee and will be reported to full Council at the next meeting.

- 7.2 **N.B. This item was considered at the end of the agenda further to minute no. FAHR 2024/27 (3).**
PTC caretakers and Paramount staff – to note the statutory increases to National Living Wage (NLW) and Employers National Insurance Contributions with effect from 01/04/2025; and to consider rates of pay for other staff above NLW.

The Finance Officer produced figures to demonstrate that maintaining the same pay differential as in 2024/25, these increases will result in extra costs of £29K to the Council (of which £12K is from increase to Employers NIC). This is broken down as £25,635 extra for Paramount staff and £3,606 for PTC caretakers. These changes were **NOTED** by the Committee and will be reported to full Council at the next meeting.

- 7.3 To consider changes to the following PTC charges from 01/04/2025 : allotment fees, St John’s Community Centre hire charges, hanging basket sponsorship, public toilet usage fee.

Allotments – the Committee asked the Finance Officer to produce the budget showing the same percentage increase as 2024/25 (44%) and alternatives both higher and lower for their consideration.

St John's Community Centre – The Committee were not minded to increase hire charges with effect from April 2025 but they may consider making an increase later in the year subject to the progress of the proposed building work and refurbishment. Prices in 2024/25 increased by £1 per hour.

Hanging basket sponsorship – the Committee were not minded to increase the sponsorship fee in 2024/25 but asked the Clerks to look into extending scope of the project to other main roads within the parish boundary.

Public toilet usage fee (20p) – no change in 2025/26.

7.4 To consider the provision of storage facilities for regular hire clients in St John's Community Centre (as agreed in OTC meeting 23 September 2024, minute no. 2024/45(5.2)); and the associated purchase / installation costs of such facilities – the Committee discussed the feasibility of providing storage for a monthly or annual fee. The Committee asked the Clerks to assess the number of suitable cupboards owned by PTC and their volume and investigate storage charges at other facilities.

7.5 To consider changes to the following Paramount charges from 01/04/2024 : admission charges, venue hire charges, income from live events, bar & kiosk prices, booklet advertising prices.

Brian Barnsley the Paramount Technical manager reported that film revenue has been down in the current financial year, largely due to the dearth of large scale, well publicised film releases up to the current date. Christmas 2024 is looking much better with the release of Paddington in Peru, Moana 2 and Wicked, all of which have accrued excellent advance sales. The pantomime in January 2025 is another well anticipated event and some popular releases are due in 2025 which should improve sales.

Mr Barnsley advised that prices for venue hire and live events will be increased in the next financial year. He further advised that it would be more profitable to charge a booking fee rather than raise the price of the cinema tickets as the venue keeps the booking fee but the distributor takes a substantial cut of the ticket price. Advertising prices in the Paramount booklet will also be increased. Mr Barnsley and the Finance Officer will create budget increases for these as well as the bar and kiosk prices for the January meeting.

7.6 To consider the Paramount subsidy for the financial year 2025/26 (£15,000 in 2024/25).

The Finance officer advised that the granting of the subsidy is largely a financial exercise as PTC and the Paramount are treated as a single entity for AGAR reporting purposes. It was **AGREED** that this matter will be discussed further in January 2025 once the Finance Officer has prepared the draft budget.

7.7 To consider the small grants budget for 2025/26 (£3,425 in 2024/25).

It was **AGREED** that this sum will not be increased. A final decision on the amount available for the forthcoming year will be made once the draft budget is available in January 2025.

7.8 To consider funding for Penistone Round Table events in 2025/26 (£2,750 in 2024/25 as no Gala event, £7,500 in 2023/24).

7.9 To consider the budget for PTC events in 2025/26.

Items 7.8 and 7.9 were discussed together. Due to greatly increased costs in the next financial year (Items 7.1 & 7.2) was **AGREED** that the Committee would recommend an overall budget for both Round Table and PTC events in 2025/26 and this sum will be set at £7,500. To be confirmed at the budget meeting in January 2025.

7.10 To consider the budget for floral displays (£8,000 2024/25) and Christmas lights (£15,000 in 2024/25) for 2025/2026.

Again due to increased costs faced by the Council it was **AGREED** that no additional purchases of Christmas lights or floral displays will be made in the forthcoming financial year. The Clerks to obtain additional quotations for planting and maintenance of the large planters on Shrewsbury Road and the High Street.

7.11 To consider the Mayor’s allowance 2025/26 (£3,000 in 2024/25).

It was **AGREED** that the allowance would not be increased for 2025/26

7.12 To consider contingency funds for 2025/26 (e.g. for unscheduled election costs/maintenance & repair costs etc.)

It was **AGREED** that the Finance Officer would include a sum for contingency funds in the draft budget.

7.13 To consider the budget for Council and staff training in 2025/26 (£2,400 in 2024/25).

It was **AGREED** that this sum will not be increased. A final decision on the amount available for the forthcoming year will be made once the draft budget is available in January 2025.

FAHR 2024/31 8. TO REVIEW THE LATEST MONTHLY BUDGET REPORTS (OCTOBER 2024)

The Finance Officer presented the budget reports for : Penistone Town Council, St John’s Community Centre and the Paramount Cinema.

The budget reports were **NOTED** by the Committee.

FAHR 2024/32 9. Date of next meeting

It was **AGREED** that the next Finance, Assets & HR Committee meeting (the budget / precept meeting) will be held at 7pm on **13th January 2025**.

Signed by.....Chair, 25th November 2024