

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
WEDNESDAY 4TH JANUARY 2023**

Meeting Commenced: 10:00 am

Meeting Concluded: 10:32 am

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Peak (Chairman), Robert Payne and Ian Porter. Councillor Peter Crew (non voting member) was also in attendance.

IN ATTENDANCE : Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer), Molly Maher (Senior Development Officer) and Kevin Hebditch (Member of the Public).

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| 240 | Election of Chairman PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne RESOLVED: That Councillor Alan Peak be elected Chairman of the meeting. |
| 241 | To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes There were no apologies for absence received. |
| | <p>At this point in the meeting, the Chairman suspended standing orders and invited questions and observations from members of the public present.</p> <p>Mr Kevin Hebditch addressed the meeting with concerns that the meeting had not been included within the published calendar of meetings and had been called in haste, not allowing sufficient democratic representation for the spending of half a million pounds of tax payers money. He questioned the legality of the meeting and felt the decision should be made by the full council where members would be given sufficient time to digest the reports.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the meeting was a Special meeting called by the Policy & Finance Committee and therefore would not have been included on the calendar of meetings. The agenda had been publicised both on the council's website and the noticeboard and was distributed within legal timeframes.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mr Hebditch for his address and welcomed him to stay for the rest of the meeting.</p> <p>Standing Orders and the meeting resumed at 10.10 am</p> |
| 242 | To receive Declarations of Interest |

243 To consider the tenders and award the contracts for HQ and other works

The report of the council's Surveyor had been previously circulated on the 28th December 2022. A revised report following scrutiny by the Deputy Town Clerk in discussion with the Surveyor had been circulated the day prior to the meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that both the Policy & Finance Committee, Town Council and the dedicated HQ Working Group set up by the Town Council had overseen all aspects of the project to date at the appropriate meeting for the business being conducted. At the Policy & Finance meeting held on 12th December 2022 it had been agreed for a Special Policy & Finance Sub-Committee consisting of the three group leaders to meet on the 4th January at meeting to make the decision.

The main changes to the initial report were reiterated for members which were; that the roof works had been previously approved and awarded 15th August 2022, noting that works would be delayed to have regard not only for weather conditions but in addition noting the need for works programmes to be devised in line with planning permissions needed and also the access and complexities of scaffold designs to be able to access the roof area needed. With this in mind the council were working towards commencement in April. In addition the lightening conductors, which it was unclear if there were any, had now been identified by the council's insurer as an insurance risk and as a result had led to an high percentage increase to excess charge (maximum of £50k). The lightening conductor issues had been reported to the HQ Working Party, noting that the insurer had corresponded to confirm the 'Risk' situation today, which the Deputy Town Clerk reported to the Town Clerk accordingly ahead of this meeting.

Members, having received the report from SJ Surveyors were recommended to choose a contactor from the top two tenders outlined within the report: 1. Chedvale or 2. John West. The Deputy Town Clerk advised members of the implications of working under JCT conditions and a 10% management fee applied if more than one contractor was working on site. The Deputy Town Clerk added that the Surveyor's recommendation was not to delay the roof works.

John West had verbally agreed that if awarded the contract, they could apply a saving of £35k up to £45k as they were already on site, which would bring the difference of the tenders down to £8,395. This coupled with the cost/quality matrix within the report, made the decision very tight.

Debate ensued. It was recognised that savings could be made by delaying other works but the shortfall from the original budget allocation was around £50k.

It was noted that Chedvale could start the work within 6 weeks and John West in 4 weeks. Planning permission was hoped to be sourced by the end of March but works that did not require planning permission could commence.

A member reported that he had been in consultation with the Chairman of the HQ Working Party and the Surveyor. The report was indicative of what had been expected when the tenders were opened and he considered that John West was the logical choice.

Members agreed that that the roof was a priority and that in order to recover the shortfall, other works could be phased rather than written off as an overspend.

It was advised that areas that could be phased would be brought to the HQ Working

Party for consideration:

It was suggested that some superficial works could be offered to the college for enrichment opportunities and would potentially make cost savings for the council of which would be explored.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED: To award the contract for HQ works to John West Contactors, up to the budget allocation figure of £493,404 and to negotiate the phasing of the works within the report with the contractors and HQ Working Party.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.32 pm.

Signed.....Dated.....

Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee