

Beaudesert & Henley in Arden JPC – Internal Audit Meeting 27th August 2019

Present; Gill Peacock, Bob Morgan

Grass Mowing and Maintenance Contract;

This contract represents the largest non- payroll expense that the JPC incurs operationally. During the previous contract renewal process there was significant failure to demonstrate good governance (IA report 5/10/17) and as a result the Finance Regulations were amended.

The latest contract renewal was started by the previous JPC and ratified in Private Session by the current JPC at their meeting of 13/5/19.

The contract was advertised in Henley Focus and the Stratford Herald.

Nineteen tender packs were sent out with six packs being returned by the due date. These were treated as sealed bids and opened by the Clerk with Councillors Garner, Field and Cornford in attendance.

The Clerk reviewed the bids and circulated a comparative analysis to all Councillors. This analysis was reviewed and discussed by the JPC in Private Session and a decision reached. The reasons for the decision were properly recorded by the Clerk, although the record is not dated.

The Contract has been placed in a way that fully complies with the JPC Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct.

Note; With the approval of payments on this contract now being made by the Finance Sub Committee rather than the full JPC, it was identified that it was possible to give this approval without the work having been signed off by the Maintenance Working Party.

Immediately following the Internal Audit the Clerk made arrangements with both groups to ensure sign off was achieved before payment.

Audit of payments made;

A number of payments were chosen at random and found to be correctly made in terms of authorisation for both expenditure and payment.

One of these payments, to Simms Garden Machinery, was for £1379 inc VAT for garden equipment. Although the expenditure covered multiple pieces of

equipment, each less than £1000, the Clerk had obtained two quotes for the total expenditure. This is considered good practice.

Once the equipment had been received it was handed over to the Community Payback Team with the intention of gifting the equipment to them. Due to the August break in JPC meetings, it had not been possible to ratify this gifting. In the meantime, the CPT are storing and using what are still JPC assets. The Clerk has confirmed with the JPC Insurers that this third-party use is covered for both public liability and property loss purposes.

JPC Policies Review;

The IA report dated 10th March 2019 identified a number of examples where the previous JPC were not meeting the requirements of their own policies. They were also failing to review these policies on a regular (annual) basis. The incoming JPC has nominated Councillor Jones to work with the Clerk to review all policies. They were later joined in this task by Councillor Duffin. The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations have been reviewed and approved at the JPC meeting on 15th July 2019.

The Clerk advises that, with the exception of the Risk Assessment , the review of the remaining policies has now been completed and it is intended to approve them at the September 2019 JPC meeting. The Risk Assessment to be reviewed by the Finance Sub -Committee.

Expenses;

There has been very little Councillor expense activity year to date but one claim, from the Chair for stationary, had been paid with the appropriate approval of two other Councillors.

Bob Morgan
Internal Auditor
2/9/19