

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the Meeting held in the Large Hall of the Town Hall, Calne on Monday 7 November 2016

PRESENT: Councillor T W B Rounds – **Town Mayor**
Councillor A J Trotman – **Deputy Town Mayor (Chair)**
Councillor Mrs M J Baggs
Councillor D I Conway
Councillor H R Marshall
Councillor D L Warnett

OFFICERS: Mrs Jeannette Young (JY) – Acting Proper Officer
Mrs Clare Harris (CH) – PA to the Town Clerk
Mr Stuart Wilbur (SW) – Management Accountant

PUBLIC & PRESS

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

23/16 ELECT A PROPER OFFICER

It was proposed by the Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Trotman, seconded by Councillor Marshall and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to elect Mrs Jeannette Young as Proper Officer for this meeting.

The Chair reminded members that whilst Jeannette Young has agreed to assume the role of Acting Proper Office in the Town Clerk's absence, she is not CILCA trained and has no legal or financial qualification in this sector. Jeannette may be unable to answer some questions from members at meetings however, she will take any unanswered questions away, seek advice and/or guidance and respond as soon as practicable.

24/16 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Ansell, Councillors Boase, Hill & Muir.

25/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26/16 MINUTES

Councillor Warnett questioned the accuracy of the statement in the minutes whereby members agreed that the meeting was quorate. It was confirmed that members of that meeting believed they were quorate, acting in accordance with Standing Orders.

Councillor Warnett requested an update on the progress of the Maintenance Programme as detailed in minute 21/16 – Strategic Action Plan. JY confirmed that the Outdoor Services & Facilities Manager is working on this however it is not yet complete. When complete it will come back to this committee for members' information.

Councillor Warnett requested that as a general rule, any agendas/minutes for meetings which involve discussions within confidential session should include an indication as to the items for discussion.

With the above notes, the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 26th September 2016, having previously been circulated, was confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

27/16 GRANTS & DONATIONS

The list of grants and donations awarded for 2016/17 was noted.

28/16 GRANT UPDATES

28.1 WILTSHIRE MUSIC CENTRE

Members noted the letter.

29/16 FINANCE WORKING GROUP

Councillor Warnett referred to Minute 21.1 of the notes and requested that the reasoning behind the overspend is minuted in more detail. It was clarified that whilst these items were ordered in the previous financial year (2015/16), the invoice was not received until this financial year (2016/17). Unfortunately the earmarked reserve was not rolled over and as such the funds were taken from the general reserve, hence an apparent overspend. Whilst Councillor Warnett did not approve of the purchase of these items, questioned the lack of consultation with Members prior to their purchase, he accepted the financial explanation provided.

Councillor Warnett referred to Minute 24/16 - Recreation Club Rent Review, suggesting that the wording is changed, removing the word 'modest', as in his opinion an increase from £5,400 to £8,500 is not modest.

With the above comments, the notes of the Finance Working Group meeting held on 17th October 2016 were noted.

30/16 POLICY & RESOURCES DRAFT BUDGET 2017/18

Stuart Wilbur (SW) explained that a zero increase in Council Tax is being proposed with the precept support grant, which currently stands at £140,000, having been built up over the years, starting to be drawn down within the 2017/18 budget. This will address the deficit in funding withdrawn by Wiltshire Council.

SW explained the proposed budget changes as follows:

- **101/4101 & 101/4107 - Printing, Stationery and Postage** – these budgets have been reduced due to the increase in electronic communications.
- **101/4130 – Insurance** – It was noted that if we self insure our play areas we could reduce the premium by circa £3,000. We would put ourselves at risk of vandalism however it was noted that most, if not all of the equipment is manufactured out of metal and as such is pretty indestructible. Members would need to consider and understand the risk to the Town Council in self insuring before this decision could be made.

It was proposed by Councillor Warnett, seconded by Councillor Marshall and

***UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to request that the Outdoor Services & Facilities Manager conducts a risk assessment in relation to self insuring the play areas under the ownership of the Town Council.*

- **105/4000 - Salaries** – The salaries budget is within the accepted parameters
- **105/4027 – Training & Staff Development** – The increase in budget is to take account of the new structure moving forward and the training needs which will arise from this. It was suggested that a training and development exercise needs to be conducted for all staff.
- **105/4150 – Credit & Debit Cards** – This is a new budget heading to deal with the transaction charges which can apply when we do not hit transaction targets.
- **105/4157 – External Audit Fees** – It was noted that we are still waiting to hear back from Grant Thornton in respect of the investigation. Dependant on the outcome we could be looking at a bill in the region of £10-15,000 however this has not been budgeted for and would have to come out of reserves.
- **106/4200 – Elections/Meetings** - £10,000 has been included to cover the May 2017 elections which may need to be funded by the Town Council. This was questioned and it was suggested that officers contact Wiltshire Council to find out if there is a requirement for us to fund and feedback to the next Finance Working Group meeting.

Questions on the budget were raised by members as follows:

101/4120 - Subscriptions & Publications – the 12.5% increase was questioned. It was confirmed that this budget covers subscriptions to professional bodies such as SLCC, WALC and NALC and that these fees have increased.

102/1010- Property Rent – the figures reflect the fact that The Old Bank House remains rented out however 9 Patford Street is currently vacant. It was suggested that to incentivise officers to fill the vacant premises an amount of rental income should be included in the 17/18 budget. It was agreed that this suggestion is taken back to the next Finance Working Group meeting for consideration.

There was some discussion over the funding of the All Weather Pitch and other Campus associated projects at Beversbrook and any agreements, loans applications and liabilities associated with these. Officers were requested to investigate this further to ensure Calne Town Council is not compromised moving forward and update at the next Finance Working Group meeting.

Councillor Warnett questioned the relationship between the budget and the Five Year Strategic Plan. SW confirmed that the budget will interact with the Five Year Plan which is a live document.

Members noted the above comments, some of which will be taken back to Finance Working Group at their next meeting for consideration. Members were happy with the Draft Budget as presented.

SW confirmed that he will update the Policy & Resources Draft Budget 2017/18 accordingly and feed amends back into the overall budget which will be presented to Full Council on 21 November 2016.

31/16 STRATEGIC PLAN - POLICY & RESOURCES ACTION PLAN

Councillor Warnett commented that this Action Plan is owned by this committee and as such members should understand and take an interest in the items listed. In light of this, Councillor Warnett requested an update on the staffing review. It was confirmed that the staffing review is on-going, pending the appointment of the third Head of Service role and that more information will be forthcoming after the 16th November 2016.

An update was requested on the Local Council Award Scheme. JY confirmed that due to exceptional workloads at present, this item has not yet been finalised, however CH is working to complete this as soon as possible to ensure the Town Council progress to the next level of award.

32/16 CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

It was proposed by Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Baggs and

***UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that in view of the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted, that the public and press be excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.*

32.1 PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was noted that a resolution relating to item 22.2 within these minutes is required to come back to this committee for approval.

It was proposed by Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Mrs Baggs and

***UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the Confidential Minutes of the Policy & Resources committee meeting held on 26th September 2016.*

The meeting closed at 7.25pm.