



**MINUTES OF THE
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2017 AT 4.00PM IN THE GUILDHALL**

PRESENT

Councillor Mr J Beeson (Chairman)
Councillor Mr J Byng
Councillor Mr S Clee
Councillor Mrs Calne Edginton-White
Councillor Mr P Harrison

In attendance: Nick Farress, Town Clerk

106 Apologies

Councillor Mrs Linda Candlin, Councillor Roger Coleman and David Moore, Treasurer.

107 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Beeson and Mrs Edginton-White declared an Other Disclosable Interest in Minute 113 due to their connections with the Youth Café as a Trustee and relative of the Landlord respectively. Cllrs Beeson and Mrs Edginton-White left the room for this item.

Cllr Byng declared a Pecuniary Interest in Minute 118 as his wife is an employee of the Council. Councillor Byng left the room for this item.

108 Councillor Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

109 Minutes

The Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on the 21st August 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

110 Planning for the Death of a Significant Public Figure

As requested by the Committee at the last meeting, the Town Clerk presented an amended policy document setting out the actions to be taken by this Council on the death of a senior Member of the Royal Family or other significant local or national figure. The amended version included references to liaising closely with the Lord Lieutenant's Office and the District Council on certain matters, particularly in the case of a Royal death.

AGREED

To accept the amendments made by the Town Clerk and adopt the policy as presented.

111 Budget 2018/2019

The Chairman presented the draft budget as prepared by the Budget Working Group which recommended a Precept of £136,181 with a use of reserves of £14,500. It was noted that the reserves budgeted for in 2017/2018 would not be used. The Band D equivalent annual Council Tax would be £37.87 on this basis.

AGREED

To accept the draft budget as presented but allow for Members to make any further comments or suggestions to the Town Clerk before the next meeting of the Budget Working Group to be held in November.

112 Car Parks in Bewdley

Councillors Beeson and Edginton-White presented a report recommending that the Town Council add to its Corporate Plan the acquisition of an existing car park, and/or purchase suitable land for use as an additional car park.

AGREED

- (i) To authorise the Town Clerk to add this long term strategy to the Corporate Plan;
- (ii) To authorise the Town Clerk to open preliminary discussions with WFDC about a possible asset transfer of one of their Bewdley car parks;
- (iii) To instruct the Community Development Committee to set up a Working Group to look at potential sites for new car parking and to add this to a new town plan, should the production of such a plan be subsequently agreed.

Councillors Beeson and Edginton-White left the room at this point and Councillor Clee took the Chair for the following item.

113 Grant Funding Second Round 2017/18

A grant application for £1000 from the Youth Café to assist with the recent redecoration and the continuation of their “outreach” work was considered. The Town Clerk recommended that this application be deferred as up to date accounting information had not been supplied by the applicant as requested, and in line with the rules of the grant scheme.

AGREED

That the grant request be agreed in principle and that the Town Clerk is authorised to pay the grant on receipt of acceptable financial

information from the applicant without the need to come back to this Committee.

Councillors Beeson and Edginton-White re-joined the meeting and Councillor Beeson resumed in the Chair.

114 Local Government Finance Settlement 2018/19 – Consultation

The Town Clerk presented a DCLG consultation on the 2018/19 Settlement where the “capping” of town and parish councils was of particular concern. Advice from NALC and from the District Council was to object to any proposals to “cap” council tax increases in the parish sector, accepting the need to justify any proposed increases.

AGREED

To send a response setting out this Council’s general objection to the extension of council tax referendum principles (capping) to town and parish councils.

115 Town Plan

A recommendation from the Community Development Committee to produce a traditional “Town Plan” was considered. The Town Clerk pointed out that town plans had been around for a long time and sit alongside Neighbourhood Plans in many towns as they are able to contain non land-use related issues. Town Plans are relatively aspirational in nature and hold no statutory weight but actions resulting from the plan would inform the Council’s medium to long term strategies for the town. Councillor Clee pointed out that there were some examples of Neighbourhood Plans that did cover non land use related issues, namely Chaddesley Corbett and Kempsey, and questioned the relevance of such a plan for Bewdley. Councillor Edginton-White commented that issues such as road safety, tourism, signage, street cleansing, community safety and public transport can all be included in a town plan as they would not be relevant in a Neighbourhood Plan as has been advised by the planning consultant who is working on Bewdley’s Neighbourhood Plan.

AGREED

- (i) To allow the Community Development Committee to proceed with the development of a town plan on the understanding that that the plan can be produced at minimal cost to the Council;
- (ii) That the Town Clerk would circulate links to both Chaddesley Corbett and Kempsey Neighbourhood Plans for information.

116 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That in view of the confidential nature of business about to be conducted, the press and public were asked to leave the meeting.

117 Town Council Accommodation

A verbal report from the Chairman was received following the second meeting with WFDC in relation to the Guildhall and Museum site. Both parties set out their “non-negotiables” and it was apparent that agreement over the management and use of the Guildhall Chamber was where the two parties were furthest apart. However, the Chairman assured Members that the issues were not insurmountable and that the notes from this meeting would be circulated once they had been received from WFDC. It was noted that at this time, the Museum site was not being considered as part of the negotiations. It was also accepted that the purchase/lease of a different building in the town centre should remain an “option B”.

Councillor Byng left the meeting at this point.

118 Employee Excess Hours

The Town Clerk presented a report in relation to the excess hours of an employee and how this should be managed. Some of the hours had been accumulated during the early stages of gathering evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Clerk had also produced a policy in order to ensure that employees are aware of the rules surrounding Time off in Lieu (TOIL) and the authorisation of monthly timesheets.

AGREED

- (i) That 21.5 hours which are directly attributable to the Neighbourhood Plan are paid as an honorarium;
- (ii) That the remaining hours are to be taken back as TOIL to fit business need and carried over into next financial year if necessary;
- (iii) That the policy drawn up by the Town Clerk to manage TOIL going forward is accepted and adopted.

Councillor Byng re-joined the meeting.

The meeting was declared closed at 5.15pm.

Signed.....

Chairman

Policy and Resources Committee – 19th February 2018