



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 22 October 2015

Place

Town Council Offices, High Street, Andover

Details of Attendance:

Cllr S Hardstaff (Chairman) (P)

Cllr K Bird (Vice-Chairman) (P)

Cllr C Bartholomew (A)

Cllr L Gregori (P)

Cllr R Hughes (P)

Cllr D Marriner (A)

Cllr G McBride (A)

Cllr V Pond (P)

Cllr R Rowles (P)

Officers Present: Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) (Taking the minutes)

PR45/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr C Bartholomew and Cllr G McBride.

PR46/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

PR47/15 MINUTES

The Chairman signed as a correct record the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 5 August 2015.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Meeting held on 5 August 2015 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PR48/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Cllr J Msonthi – Andover Town Councillor

Recently visited the Town Council offices and was shocked to see how little space there was for our meetings and staff. There was a meeting taking place in the main office and therefore a member of the public had to sit in the Town Clerk's office.

Cllr B Long – Andover Town Councillor

With reference to item 5, the report referred to was obsolete in the 1980's. All our comments are available on the Test Valley Borough Council website.

With reference to item 8, Business Cards, the logo which has been distributed is not correct.

With reference to item 9, Visitors Book, would it be acceptable for the Town Council to just have a signing in book?

ITEMS REFERRED TO POLICY AND RESOURCES FROM FULL COUNCIL

PR49/15 MOTION FROM CLLR C ECCLESTONE

With regard to the second part of Councillor Ecclestone's Motion *"All such properties will then be flagged on a special page of the Andover Town Council website so that estate agents and residents can know which properties have failed this standard"*.

Members considered the above Motion from Cllr Ecclestone.

The following concerns were raised, would there be litigation on the Town Council were it to publish such lists on its website?

What would the legal status of such lists be?

The Neighbourhood Plan should consider the inclusion of minimum sized properties.

The comments of the Planning Committee are published via the Test Valley Borough Council website and the planning portal. Is there a need for the Town Council to publish them as well?

Members concluded that the item should be referred to the Website Working Group as to how it could be implemented and to the Staffing Sub-Committee to consider whether there would be resource implications and to make recommendations back to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Website Working Group and Staffing Sub-Committee consider the implications of 'listing small sized properties on the Andover Town Council Website' and report back to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

PR50/15 CHARITY STREET COLLECTIONS

Members noted that the Town Council has been approached by Test Valley Borough Council with the proposal for the Town Council to take over the Management and Administration of Charity Street Collections.

Members considered a report in detail but were concerned about the costs to provide the service and that not enough information had been provided.

Members were in general in favour of taking on the service but requested the Town Clerk to gather more information from Test Valley Borough Council on the costs and provision of the service.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council would welcome the adoption of the Charity Street Collections in principle, pending negotiations on costs.

That the Town Clerk investigate with TVBC the costs of the Charity Street Collection Service and resources that would be required.

PR51/15 FACEBOOK AND TWITTER ACCOUNTS

Members were asked to consider whether the Town Council should open a Facebook and Twitter Account.

Members agreed that the Town Council should in the future open a Facebook and Twitter account, however, the Town Council's Website should be brought up to date first.

It was agreed that the Website Working Group should consider whether it would be possible to create a Facebook page in the future.

RESOLVED: That the Website Working Group consider whether the Town Council could operate a Facebook Page in the future, once the website had been brought up to date.

PR52/15 BUSINESS CARDS

Members noted that it had been suggested that all Members of the Town Council have business cards. Cllr R Rowles kindly designed 2 versions of Business Cards. Members were asked to consider whether they wish to agree a design.

Members discussed whether the Town Councillors should have business cards. It was agreed that if Members wishes to have them, they should. However, the business cards should all be uniform and of the same design.

The landscape design proposed was agreed and Cllr Bird agreed to amend the Logo proposed to remove the black around the lion's tail.

It was agreed that the cost of printing the business cards should be considered within the Budget for 2016/2017.

RESOLVED: That the landscape design for the Business Cards be approved.

**The Logo would be redesigned to remove the black around the lion's tail.
The cost of printing the business cards would be considered within the budget for 2016/2017.**

PR53/15 VISITORS BOOK

Members were asked to consider whether the Town Council should operate a Visitors Book for the Town Council office.

Members discussed that having a Visitors Book would ensure that the Town Council was complying with Health and Safety Legislation.

Members agreed that it would not be practical for every single visitor to sign in, however a draft policy would be drawn up with guidelines for use and officers would trial using a visitor's book. The Policy and report on the usage of a Visitors Book would be reported at the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED: That a Draft Policy for a Visitors Book be drawn up and that its usage be trialled by Officers in the Town Council Office. The Draft Policy and report on the usage of the Visitors Book to be reported at the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

PR54/15 CASE WORK FOR COUNCIL – WORKING GROUPS

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

PR55/15 PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON MAYOR

Members discussed whether the Town Council should consult the public on the option for the Town Council to appoint a Mayor for the Town of Andover.

Members noted that the Chairman who is elected in May of any year can call themselves 'Town Mayor' (Local Government Act 1972).

Members considered that although the Chairman could call themselves Mayor it would be in the public interest to consult with the public beforehand and keep people informed.

However, Members agreed that the Town Council did not have enough time to consult the public prior to consideration of a Mayor in January 2016.

Some Members suggested that information should be issued from the Town Council explaining that having a Mayor was a consideration of the Town Council.

Members debated this matter at length. A vote was taken on sending out information in the lead up to the Annual Meeting in May, 2 for, 5 against.

RESOLVED: That no information would be distributed on the Town Council's option to have a Town Mayor.

Members then considered that if the Town Council were to have a Mayor, it would be prudent to consider a budget to cover the costs of the position. Also that literature should be prepared in the event that a Chairman were to call themselves Town Mayor to explain the legal status. A further vote was taken 6 for, 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: That a Budget be set aside in the event of a Chairman calling themselves Town Mayor.

That Literature be prepared to explain the role of the Town Mayor and their legal status.

PR56/15 CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

This item was deferred to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

PR57/15 EXTERNAL AUDIT AND ANNUAL RETURN YE 31 MARCH 2015

Members received the Audited Annual Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2015. Members also noted the short report from the External Auditors and agreed to recommend the Audited Annual Return and Report to full Council for adoption.

RESOLVED: That the Audited Annual Return and short report be submitted and recommended to full Council for adoption for the year ended 31 March 2015.

PR58/15 FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/2017

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee to be considered with the Budget for 2016/2017.

PR59/15 ANNUAL BUDGET

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

PR60/15 MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members considered the request that the Town Clerk had received to hold Council meetings every month.

Members considered that an increase in Council meeting would have an impact on the Town Council's limited resources and agreed it should be considered by the Staffing Sub-Committee. Members were generally in favour of having the meetings on a rolling programme of every six weeks.

Members however were still concerned that the current staffing levels would not be able to manage the number of meetings required, particularly if another committee were to be added in following a review of the committee structure.

A vote was taken to refer the matter of increased frequency of meetings to the Staffing Sub-Committee. The vote was unanimous.

RESOLVED: That the question of increased frequency of Council meetings be referred to the Staffing Sub-Committee to take into consideration current Town Council resources.

PR61/15 TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2016

The Town Clerk asked Members to consider whether the timetable of meetings could be considered up to the end of the financial year, 31 March 2016, as the meeting frequency for that period would only differ slightly from the current one.

Members agreed to recommend to full Council the timetable of meetings up to 31 March 2016.

RESOLVED: To recommend to full Council the timetable of meetings up to 31 March 2016.

PR62/15 NAME BADGES FOR COUNCILLORS

Members considered whether to release funds to allow name badges to be made up for Councillors.

A design for the name badges was agreed – Landscape Design (attached to record minutes).

Members agreed that funds would be released for the making of the name badges.

RESOLVED: That the agreed design for the name badges for Councillors (attached to record minutes) be used and funds released to have the badges manufactured.

PR63/15 CAMPAIGN TO EXEMPT PUBLIC TOILETS FROM BUSINESS RATES

Members noted that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) was campaigning to exempt parish and town councils from paying business rates on public conveniences. Members noted that a survey had been released asking for input from Town and Parish Councils.

Members agreed that they were against business on public conveniences run by town and parish councils and asked the Town Clerk to complete the survey on behalf of the Town Council.

RESOLVED: That authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to complete the NALC Public Conveniences Survey on behalf of the Town Council. The Town Clerk to confirm that the Town Council was against business rates being imposed on public conveniences run by town and parish councils.

PR64/15 DIRECT ACCESS SCHEME

Members considered a proposal from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) regarding obtaining direct legal advice from NALC. The option was to either receive direct legal advice from the Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) or NALC.

Members considered the proposal letter and agreed to receive direct legal advice from HALC rather than NALC.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council would receive legal advice from the Hampshire Association of Local Councils.

PR65/15 A STUDY OF TOWN COUNCILS

Members noted a study of Town Councils of similar size to Andover Town Council compiled by Cllr R Rowles. Members noted that the report recorded the method he used to collect the information and the standing orders, committee structures and the functions of the Councils.

PR66/15 POLICIES REVIEW

Members noted that following the Town Clerk's recent training on Employment Law Updates, the following Policies need to be written by the Town Clerk and adopted by full Council:

Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking

Public Sector English Fluency

Dismissal Procedures for Statutory Posts

Members further noted that the following policies need to be reviewed and amended:

Equality (including discriminations for caste)

Fir for work

Shared Parental Leave (this will need to be reviewed again in April 2016 as the law will change again)

Right to be accompanied (this is included in Grievance and Disciplinary Policy)

Sickness and Pay.

PR67/15 FINANCE

Reconciled Bank Statements

Members received and approved the following reconciled Bank Statements – 31 August 2015.

Approval of Payments

Members received and approved the following payments up to 20 October 2015 and salary payments for November 2015.

October 2015			
Cheque No/ BACS Ref	Supplier	Service/Product Supplied	Total (£)
120990323	Custom Studio	Website hosting October 2015	35.94
388616956	Baxter Confidential	Collection and recycling confidential waste Oct15	78.00
DDBES0CT15	BES Commercial Electricity	Electricity charges 19.09.15-15.10.15	70.83
283509265	Town Clerk	Reimbursements Oct 2015	26.54
393872935	Town Clerk	Salary November 2015	2379.28
300255	H M Revenue and Customs	November 2015 Tax contributions	1687.36
54575527	Office Administrator	November 2015 Salary	1204.92
TOTAL PAYMENTS			5482.87

PR68/15 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members discussed items on the current Work Programme and that the following items be added to the work programme.

Review of Standing Orders (before March 2016).

PR69/15 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: To exclude members of the public and press from the meeting at Part 2, Items 26, 27 and 28 of the agenda, due to consideration of

- 1. Confidential contractual matters contained within the Andover Levy**
- 2. Confidential contractual matters relating to staffing for the Expansion of Services**
- 3. Confidential contractual matters relating to the office accommodation.**

The following items are minuted under separate cover for Members of Town Council only.

PR70/15 ANDOVER LEVY

PR71/15 TOWN COUNCIL – EXPANSION OF SERVICES

PR72/15 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.00pm.

Chairman

Date