

ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee

Time and date

6.30pm, Wednesday, 10 January 2024

Place

The Lights, Andover

Details of Attendance:

Members of the Committee:

Cllr S Hardstaff (Chairman) (P)

Cllr K Bird (Vice Chairman) (P)

Cllr M Farren (A), Cllr L Gregori (P), Cllr J Hughes (P), Cllr R Hughes (P), Cllr R Kidd (A) Cllr R Meyer (A),
Cllr H Neate (P), Cllr E Reynolds (P)

Officers Present:

Gail Foster (Town Clerk)

Members of the Public: 1

Members of the Press: 0

PUBLIC SESSION

PR 040/01/24 There were no comments received from Members of the Public present at the meeting.

APOLOGIES

PR 041/01/24 Apologies were received from Councillor R Kidd.

INTERESTS

PR 042/01/24 Councillors were reminded of the Standing Declarations of Interests which had been approved by Council for Councillor E Reynolds as a Member of the Drove Allotment Association and a plot holder and Councillor H Neate as an allotment plot holder.

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Chairman/Vice Chairman:..... Date:.....

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MINUTES

- PR 043/01/24** It was proposed by Councillor E Reynolds and seconded by Councillor K Bird and **RESOLVED: FOR – 7, AGAINST – 0, ABSTENTIONS - 1**, that the [Minutes](#) of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 1 November 2023 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
Action: Committee Officer

CONTRACTUAL & DELEGATED PAYMENTS

- PR 044/01/24** Members received and noted the [contractual and delegated payments](#) that had already been made for the period 15 November 2023 to 31 December 2023, as per the report detailed in appendix 5 on the agenda.

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL

- PR 045/01/24** It was proposed by Councillor K Bird and seconded by Councillor H Neate and **RESOLVED: FOR – 7, AGAINST – 0, ABSTENTIONS - 1**, that the payment to Pitney Bowes in the amount of £570.84 be made if after checking with the contract it was valid.
The payment to BGH Services Ltd would be brought to Full Council for agreement with additional back detailing the variation. **Action: Town Clerk.**
Cllr L Gregori offered to help reading the contract if needed.

It was noted by all that Cllr J Hughes had set up some personal IT equipment to livestream the meeting to YouTube.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- PR 046/01/24** It was proposed by Councillor E Reynolds and seconded by Councillor L Gregori and **RESOLVED: Unanimously**, that the following financial papers be approved:
- a. [Bank Statements and Bank Reconciliation](#) showing balances:
 - i. UTB 1 = £509,271.81
 - ii. UTB 2 = £87,834.70
 - iii. Redwood Bank = £86,749.88
 - iv. Total = £683,856.39

The Town Clerk advised that the other usual reports were not available due to a bug in the Accounting system, which needed the suppliers to resolve. Reports would be brought to Full Council next week if possible.

FINANCIAL CHECKING

- PR 047/01/24** Members noted that the Policy and Resources Chairman had completed a check of the bank statements in accordance with Financial Regulations 2.2.
Cllr S Hardstaff explained that he had randomly picked two months of the year and checked every transaction in the accounting system against the bank account. This had then been verified by the internal auditor.

STAFF PENSIONS

- PR 048/01/24** Members received a verbal recommendation from the HR Working Group in respect of Staff Pensions. Some background data was given. Some members of staff receive an Employer contribution of 3% of total salary which is the legal minimum. This is compared

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Chairman/Vice Chairman:..... Date:.....

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to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which requires an employer contribution of 26% and the Civil Servant Pension scheme of 27.9% employer contribution.

It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor R Hughes and **RESOLVED: Unanimously**, that Employer contribution to Staff Pensions be increased to 15% and that it be recommended to Full Council, for approval. A more in-depth paper would be drafted to aid Full Council review.

Action: Town Clerk

BUDGET & PRECEPT

PR 049/01/24a [Budget Report](#)

Members considered the 2024//2025 budget suggestions. After great deliberation, it was proposed by Councillor K Bird and seconded by Councillor E Reynolds and **RESOLVED: Unanimously**, that the budget line for Grants be amended to show an amount of £20,500.00, and that this be recommended to Full Council for approval.

Action: Town Clerk

PR 049/01/24b [Options Table](#)

A discussion was held around the need to replace all the allotment fencing this year. Suggestions were mooted to use General Reserves, or the Earmarked Reserves for Allotments and or other Earmarked Reserves if Council felt that would be appropriate. No decision was taken, but it was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor L Gregori and **RESOLVED: FOR – 5, AGAINST – 1, ABSTENTIONS – 1**, that option B be recommended to Full Council. This would ensure that the books were balanced and mean that the Precept would be raised, by the amount of any shortfall that the Budget produced. The Budget report would be updated for the Full Council meeting.

BACK TO BASICS

PR 050/01/24 [Back to Basics Project Table](#)

Cllr R Hughes suggested that the report be amended to include:

1. HR structure review by Councillors.
2. Councillor training to be moved to a different column rather than being listed under training required.
3. Review of Staff Workflows.
4. A method to hold the Town Clerk accountable.

Councillors noted that a provisional discussion had taken place with TVBC on 30th November to understand the Andover Levy calculation.

No proposals were made, seconded or voted on.

BUSINESS PLAN

PR 051/01/24 [Draft Business Plan](#). After reviewing some questions were raised:

- a. Who is responsible for delivery?
- b. What is the outcome?
- c. Is adhering to the plan a Committee or Officer responsibility?

A suggestion was made that Council had a collective responsibility to progress the plan.

Cllr L Gregori felt the document was not sufficient.

No proposals were made, seconded or voted on.

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MISSION STATEMENT

PR 052/01/24

Members considered a [Draft Mission Statement](#). Cllr Neate suggested that the Mission Statement should drive the business plan and budget. Some examples of more inspiring Mission Statements written by Town and Parish Councils in Hampshire were given. It was suggested that members review Yateley, Weighbridge and Whitchurch, It was proposed by Councillor H Neate and seconded by Councillor L Gregori and **RESOLVED: Unanimously**, that a Working Group amend the wording for later review by P&R Committee.
Action: Deputy Clerk.

NEXT MEETING

PR 053/01/24

Members noted the next meetings:
Policy & Resources Committee on **Wednesday 31 January 2024**, to be held in **The Lights, Andover, starting at 6.30pm.**
Full Council on **Wednesday 24 January 2024**, to be held in the **Upper Guildhall, Andover, starting at 6.30pm**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.28pm.

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Chairman/Vice Chairman:..... Date:.....