



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee

Time and date

6.00pm, Tuesday, 1 December 2020

Place

Virtual On-Line Meeting via Zoom

Details of Attendance:

Cllr R Meyer (Chairman) (P) Cllr D Coole (Vice Chairman) (P) Cllr J Coole (P) Cllr C Ecclestone (P)
Cllr L Gregori (P) Cllr R Hughes (P) Cllr D Treadwell (P)

Officers Present:

Tracy Predeth (Locum Clerk)

Members of the Public:

Members of the Press:

BS 112/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies submitted at the meeting.

BS 113/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made relevant to the Agenda.

BS 114/19 MINUTES

Councillor D Coole requested an amendment to the previous Minutes, BS 102/19, be made and the following wording to be added:

“The current underspend was £7,984.00 and so there was insufficient funds in the current underspend to support the motion.”

It was proposed by Councillor R Meyer and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that the amended Minutes of the Budgets & Staffing Committee meeting held on 14 October 2020 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

A recorded vote was as follows:

For: Councillors R Meyer, J Coole, D Coole, R Hughes, C Ecclestone and L Gregori.

Unanimous

RESOLVED: That the amended Minutes of the Budgets & Staffing Committee meeting held on 14 October 2020 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

BS 115/19 ACTION LIST

Members noted the Action Plan.

Councillor D Coole requested the following amendments be made:

BS 105/19 – Standing Orders review should be listed as ongoing. The Policy and Procedure review should be postponed.

BS 108/19 – The locum Town Clerk was asked to investigate the delay and a suggestion was made to delegate this item to the Members.

BS 091/19 – The Risk Assessments needed to be separated out. The Ceiling blind needed to be added back onto the list.

BS 103/19 – needed to be added back onto the list.

BS 106/19 – An action needed to be added to the list which showed the item of Allotment Portaloos had been transferred back to the Allotment Committee Action list.

BS 107/19 – Members training course dates needed to be added back onto the list. Members' visits to other successful Town Councils required a follow-up.

BS 111/19 – Confidential Minutes actions.

BS 116/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no Members of the Public whom spoke at the meeting.

BS 117/19 DRAFT BUDGET

Members noted the Draft Budget for 2021/2022 and explanatory report.

An observation was made that the proposed budget for Payroll should be set at £229,997.72. This would need to be amended in the Draft Budget. It was suggested that consideration be given to the addition of a link or Minute number, on the Draft Budget in order to enable the understanding of any changes made.

A member commented that the Policy and Resources budget remained largely the same as it was at the previous meeting. The only changes noted were an increase of £500 for the website, water rates had been reduced by £100, rates are reduced by £10 and the New Building Fund has been increased by £4,000.

The Locum Clerk reminded Members that they needed to agree the Budget before agreeing the Precept and that this year in particular had been a difficult year for many Councils. Some Councils that ran services have run at a loss.

Members discussed the new items for consideration. It was commented that similar budget lines for assets, services and responsibilities would be needed for where the Town Council starts to introduce its own services, like cemeteries. This would be discussed further at the next Assets and Communities meeting.

No further additions or recommendations were made to include in the Policy and Resources Draft Budget.

BS 118/19 STANDING ORDERS

Members discussed the appointment of Members to the Standing Orders Review Team.

It was agreed that Councillors D Coole, R Hughes and R Meyer would be appointed as members of the Standing Order Review Team.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

For: Councillors R Meyer, J Coole, D Coole, R Hughes, C Ecclestone and L Gregori.

Unanimous.

RESOLVED: That Councillors D Coole, R Hughes and R Meyer would be appointed as members of the Standing Order Review Team.

Members discussed the Terms of Reference of the Standing Order Review Team.

Councillor D Coole made the following suggestion:

“To review existing Standing Orders and consider and make recommendations for revised Standing Orders.”

Councillor L Gregori requested the following wording be added:

“Along the lines of the model Standing Orders.”

It was agreed that the Terms of reference should read:

“To review existing Standing Orders and consider and make recommendations for revised Standing Orders, along the lines of the model Standing Orders.”

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

For: Councillors R Meyer, J Coole, D Coole, R Hughes, C Ecclestone and L Gregori.

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference for the Standing Order Review Team read as “To review existing Standing Orders and consider and make recommendations for revised Standing Orders, along the lines of the model Standing Orders.”

BS 119/19 REVIEW OF MEMBERS SERVICES PROVISION

Members considered the provision (or non-provision) of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for Members.

The Locum Clerk clarified that the allowance would be one set amount and taxable. In addition, if any Councillor travelled outside of the town boundary for Council business, mileage could be claimed. The Locum Clerk advised that a lot of councils are moving to a system called Modern.gov which is a paperless system for agendas, recording of Pecuniary Interests and attendance to meetings and iPads were issued to Members for these purposes.

It was further advised that the usage of council iPads and Councillor email addresses, would enable council business to be kept separate from personal business in the event that any Freedom of Information Requests or Subject Access Requests were received.

Other Members debated the idea of allowances as Town and Parish Councils are as predominately set up with volunteers. A concern was also raised that the idea came from members that were already Borough Councillors in receipt of an allowance. It was also commented that the provision of an allowance for the Members of the Town Council would equate to approximately £34,000 a year extra for the tax payers, which would potentially mean an increase in Council Tax.

A Member commented that an allowance would be justified as an incentive to attract quality candidates as future Members of the Town Council.

Councillor D Coole proposed and Councillor C Ecclestone seconded that this Council pays a basic allowance to Members, which members can opt out of voluntarily, a sum of £100 per calendar month, subject to adoption by Council.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

For: Councillors R Meyer, J Coole, D Coole and C Ecclestone.

Against: Councillors R Hughes and L Gregori.

RESOLVED: That this Council pays a basic allowance to Members, which members can opt out of voluntarily, a sum of £100 per calendar month, subject to adoption by Council.

BS 120/19 ENGAGEMENT OF TEMPORARY STAFF/EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Members noted the Temporary Staff/External Support Report.

Councillor D Coole requested assurance that the Town Council was fully compliant with legislation regarding the engagement of a HR Consultant. The Locum Clerk confirmed that it was absolutely lawful to appoint a HR Consultant under delegated authority.

Councillor D Coole also suggested that if the Town Council had not yet recruited for the temporary Allotment Officer Maternity cover, a resolution should be made to engage full time Maternity cover. This would be split with 20 hours used on allotment business and the remaining 17.5 hours be used for other projects.

The Locum Clerk clarified that temporary Maternity cover had to be on a like for like basis only and that the Officers have been advised that the position would need to be advertised to ensure a fair process.

BS 121/19 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

Members noted the Banking Arrangements Report – **attached to Record Minutes.**

BS 122/19 TIMETABLE OF COUNCIL/COMMITTEE DATES 2021/2022

Members noted the draft timetable of Council/Committee Dates up to May 2021.

It was commented that the dates needed reviewing as the Locum Town Clerk was unable to attend meetings held on a Wednesday. It was further suggested that an Assets and Communities meeting needed to be held prior to the Policy and Resources meeting in January 2021, due to the splitting of the previous Assets and Communities Agenda which was too large.

BS 123/19 MEMBERS TRAINING

The Locum Clerk advised that she had discussed this item with the Monitoring Officer at Test Valley Borough Council and was advised of Code of Conduct training for the Members. The Locum Clerk would look into this and the availability of other courses and report back.

BS 124/19 WORK PROGRAMME

This item was not discussed during the meeting.

BS 127/19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the date of the next meeting was **Wednesday 13 January 2020, virtually via Zoom starting at 6.00pm.**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.50pm.

Chairman

Date