

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE
COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE MUSEUM ON
MONDAY 21ST JUNE 2021**

Meeting Commenced: 7:00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.35 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Peak (Chairman), Mark Canniford, Roger Bailey (S), Gillian Carpenter (S), Dave Dash, Peter Fox, Robert Payne, Ian Porter and Tim Taylor.

IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk - Public Services) and Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer/Officer Manager).

52 Election of Chairman

The Deputy Town Clerk invited nominations for the position of Chairman.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Tim Taylor

SECONDED BY: Councillor Dave Dash

RESOLVED: That Councillor Alan Peak be elected Chairman of the Policy & Finance Working Party for the year 2021-22.

Councillor Alan Peak took his place as Chairman of the meeting.

53 To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from Councillors Helen Thornton who was substituted by Councillor Gillian Carpenter, Councillor Sarah Codling who was substituted by Councillor Roger Bailey and Councillor Lisa Pilgrim with no substitution.

54 Election of Vice Chairman

The Chairman invited nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Robert Payne

SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mark Canniford be elected Vice-Chairman of the Policy & Finance Working Party for the year 2021-22.

55 To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

56 To approve the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 24th April 2021

The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.

It was noted that the date of the previous minutes should be corrected to the 26th April 2021.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Tim Taylor

SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED: That with the above amendment the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

57 The minutes of the Working Party to Review Expenditure & Governance held 6th May 2021 (unapproved)

The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Working Party to Review Expenditure & Governance held on 6th May 2021 (unapproved) be noted.

58 Monthly Financial Reports: March & April 2021

a) For Approval

Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

SECONDED BY: Councillor Pete Fox

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

58.1 RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure for March & April 2021 be approved.

b) For Noting

- i. Bank Reconciliations
- ii. Budgetary Control Report
- iii. Bank Interest Report
- iv. Schedule of Receipted Income
- v. Overspend Month end report
- vi. Bad debt report

It was clarified that Health & Safety across all cost centres was over budget subject to the pandemic and compliance requirements.

It was informed that the over budgeted figure for Uphill Play Area was the cost of the equipment and fence.

It was explained that the figure for the toilets was a holding budget and a rounding issue subject to call outs. The Deputy Town Clerk would be happy explain this to any members outside of the meeting if requested.

Since the writing of the bad debt report some of the debt had been cleared or written off and the debt was reducing. An updated report reflecting the debt to date could be emailed to members on request.

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

58.2 RESOLVED: That reports 5b i – vi be noted.

59 To receive the Final Interim Audit Report for the year 2020-21

The Audit report had been previously circulated.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that it was an overall acceptable audit with a few areas of improvement to be made. As a result of remote working and staff shortages, some accountancy housekeeping errors had been made. The team was now actively working on a time table from the office and were back on track with processes.

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Final Interim Audit Report for the year 2020-21 be received.

60 Year End Accounts for the year ending 31/03/21

The yearend accounts had been previously circulated.

As part of the Audit requirement members were requested to

- a) Consider the Accounting Statements (AGAR – Annual return) by members as a whole;
- b) Approve the Accounting Statements (AGAR – Annual return) by resolution; and Sign and date as required (AGAR – Annual return)
- c) Sign and date as required (AGAR – Annual return)
- d) Receive and Note the accompanying Statement of Accounts (not audited) as supporting documents to the (AGAR – Annual return)

A vote was then taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was

60.1 RESOLVED: To approve the Accounting Statements (AGAR – Annual return) by members as a whole;

60.2 RESOLVED: To approve the Accounting Statements (AGAR – Annual return) by resolution; and Sign and date as required (AGAR – Annual return)

60.3 RESOLVED: That the Chairman sign and date as required (AGAR – Annual return)

60.4 RESOLVED: To receive and note the accompanying Statement of Accounts (not audited) as supporting documents to the (AGAR – Annual return)

61 To receive the Planned Maintenance proposals for 2021 / 2022 and relevant update

- a) To approve the PPM schedule for the 2021 / 2022 to enable works to occur within the year as per the report

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the PPM schedule was a 60-year schedule, broken down into 5year programmes of which 2020/21 was the last year within the current 5year programme.

It was reported that there were substantial works on the cemetery wall and trees to be done.

It was noted that there would be a 12 week delay in the alterations to Grove House due to the quotes for works exceeding the budget and having to go back out on contact finder.

The vandalism to Grove Park toilets had been partly addressed by the contract cleaners and Deputy Town Clerk was considering whether or not an insurance claim was needed.

The Museum roof had been completed and the leak fixed which was funded from the capital works budget from the previous year.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Council tendered for the PPM every 5years.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

61.1 RESOLVED:

1. To note the reported works completion for the year 2020/2021 (section 2.0, page 4).
 2. To approve the recommendations set out in (section 3.0, page 6/7) for the programme of works for the year 2021/2022.
- b) To consider and approve the recommendation for essential works at Milton Road Cemetery – quotation report and recommendation previously circulated.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the funds for the Quarry were separate to the PPM schedule and would come back to committee additionally. At December 2020 the works were reported at £120,000, which will have increased and would be funded from CIL monies and the capital works budget.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Fox

SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

61.2 RESOLVED:

1. To receive and note the contents of the tender report from SJ Surveyors.
2. To approve the recommendation to award contract to S Babbage at a value of £32,550.

62 To review the updated Procurement Guide

The report of the Deputy Town Clerk had been previously circulated which explained that from further work carried out by the climate change working party, a review of the procurement guide was required in order to accommodate a social value policy.

It was advised that a social value policy would encourage the council to consider more than cost when procuring goods and services, as well as other considerations such as: real living wage, community engagement, community partners and stakeholders and the community.

The existing procurement guide had been updated and previously circulated for members to consider. Changes in relation to social value were highlighted in red for ease of finding.

Discussion ensued on the how the social value criteria would be weighted, as this would differ in perspective. Further investigation was needed around a scoring matrix.

The Deputy Town Clerk agreed that the criteria were very subjective and the weighting of design/cost/social value needed to be considered.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED: That the updated Procurement Guide be referred to the Expenditure and Governance Working Party for further investigation around criteria and a scoring matrix.

63 Notes for Tree Charter motion

The reference from the Climate Change Working Party and report of the Deputy Town Clerk and Tree Officer had been previously circulated.

The Assistant Town Clerk - Public Services recommended the adoption of the Tree Charter as this would improve the Town Council's relationship with North Somerset Council and would benefit the Town Council long term. She had met with Officers at North Somerset Council who were very encouraging of the adoption of a tree charter.

It was advised that the Town Council had its own procedures in place for diseased or dangerous trees.

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED: To approve the adoption of the Woodland Trust Tree Charter.

64 Insurance

The report of the Deputy Town Clerk updating on policy options for members' consideration within the current fixed term agreement had been previously circulated. The current insurance agreement was a 3 year fixed agreement with the option to extend for a further 2 years (1 year remaining).

Officers met with the insurers annually to review the policy detail to ensure that the insurance in place was adequate for the needs of the council, prior to the policy annual date of 1st July. The current insurers have provided the council with an option within the

current policy to change insurer - information had been previously circulated for member's consideration.

The current insurers, during their time insuring town and parish councils over the last 2 years, have identified that their core business was outside of the sector and as such were willing to allow transfer (at the wish of clients) to another more bespoke insurer. However, if councils wished to remain with them, no changes to the original agreement would be made and it would be fully honoured.

The benefits of changing insurers were outlined within the report. It was highlighted that changing to a Mutual Insurer, the council would not pay Insurance premium tax and the non-payment would enable a small reduction in the current policy (up to 5% saving).

Other considerations were Building revaluations, April 2022 and options for additional cover, Terrorism.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the council had procedures in place for Terrorism within its Health & Safety policies.

It was clarified that the council could move insurers without undertaking procurement and that the policies were like for like, subject to the 5% tax saving.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Pete Fox

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED:

64.1 To approve the change of insurer to MTT from RSA, with WPS remaining the Council's insurance broker, effective from 1st July 2021.

64.2 That the 5% tax saving fund the re-evaluation of the insurance policy in 2years time, to include Building revaluation costs in the budget for 2022 / 2023.

65 Renewal of NALC ALCA Membership

The report of the Town Clerk requesting members' instructions on whether to renew the Town Council's membership had been previously circulated with the agenda.

Members felt that the council was adequately advised with the expertise of the senior management team and therefore should not renew the membership.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Pete Fox

SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED: Not to renew the **NALC** ALCA Membership.

*It was **resolved** under the Public Bodies (Admissions of Meeting) Act 1960 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for reasons of confidential nature of the following business.*

66 Town Quarry Lease

The report of the Town Clerk had been previously circulated.

On behalf of the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk summarised that there were two areas of concern that had arisen and it was the recommendation of the Town Clerk to defer completion of the head lease of the Quarry for up to three months.

Discussion ensued and officers clarified queries from members.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Pete Fox
SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED:

- 66.1** To defer the completion of the head lease of the Quarry from North Somerset Council for up to three months.
- 66.2** That authority be given for necessary works to buildings 1 and 6 to enable the safety and financial issues to be resolved.
- 66.3** That authority for negotiation and completion of a sub-lease of Building 7 to The Stable and with individual occupiers be agreed.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35 pm

Signed.....Dated.....
Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee