

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE MUSEUM ON
MONDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2021**

Meeting Commenced: 7:00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7:58 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Mark Canniford (Chairman), Sarah Codling, Dave Dash, Peter Fox, Pete McAleer (S), Lisa Pilgrim, Ian Porter and Tim Taylor.

IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer/Officer Manager) and John Christopher (member of the public).

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman chaired the meeting.

171 To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Helen Thornton who was substituted by Councillor Pete McAleer and Councillors Alan Peak and Robert Payne with no substitutions.

172 To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

173 To approve the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 23rd August 2021

The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Sarah Codling

SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox

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

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

174 The minutes of the Working Party to Review Expenditure & Governance held on 9th September (unapproved)

The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.

An update with regards to the toilets and progress on partnership working with North Somerset Council (NSC) was requested. It was advised that two meetings with NSC had already taken place and third scheduled for November. It was hoped that a plan could be put in place to address problems in Grove Park by the end of the year.

Members noted that the vandalism problems were nearly impossible to resolve but stressed the importance of a solution as soon as practically possible.

The Town Council's relationship with Alliance Homes was queried in respect of the Dartmouth Close play area transfer. The Town Clerk advised that the process had been very slow and although verbal approval of the freehold transfer had been received, confirmation in writing was still awaited.

It was noted that there seemed to be communication problems within the Worle community groups which was holding up the releasing of funds and that relationships needed to be improved.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Working Party to Review Expenditure & Governance held on 9th September (unapproved) be noted.

175 Monthly Financial Reports: August 2021

a) For Approval

Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

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

.1 RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure for August 2021 be approved.

b) For Noting

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

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

.2 RESOLVED: That reports 5b i – v be noted.

176 To approve the updated Procurement Guide

The updated Procurement Guide had been previously circulated.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that no further changes had been made by the Expenditure & Governance Working Party since the previous Policy & Finance meeting in June.

Discussion ensued regarding what Social Value was and how this should be weighted.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that members may wish to weight social value differently for contracts over or under £25k. Finding a policy/guide for comparison had proved difficult as there seemed to be none for town/parish councils, only unitary authorities whose budgets were far larger.

Members direction on the definition of social value and how this should be weighted would be helpful for officers when undertaking Procurement.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter

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

RESOLVED: That a small cross party working group of interested members meet to agree the parameters of social value within the procurement process (it's meaning) and to devise guidelines on how this should be consider within the current scoring matrix system used currently – for approval at the next meeting.

177 CIL Annual Report for year ending 31.03.21

The annual report which had been sent to NSC and published on the Town Council's website had been previously circulated.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed that £150k had been received to date and that these monies needed to be spent within a 5 year turnaround from the time each instalment was received.

Members would like to see definitive areas identified for the funding and infrastructure to support developments such as maintenance of community areas and play areas.

The Deputy Town Clerk clarified the policy criteria and advised that CIL money could be spent on projects within the revenue budget. Funds were received twice a year and a bid request form was suggested which could be displayed on the council's website for applicants.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Sarah Codling

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

RESOLVED:

1. To receive and approve the CIL Annual Report for year ending 31.03.21.
2. That a bid request form and criteria be produced for approval at the February 2022 Policy & Finance Committee meeting.

At the request of the Chairman, item 9 was brought forward for discussion.

178 Proposed Relocation of the Town Council

The Town Clerk verbally reported that as instructed by the council at its meeting on 20th September, an offer had been made and following negotiations a purchase price of £450k had been negotiated for the freehold premises at 32 Waterloo Street. This was over £100k saving on the initial guide price and the Town Clerk gave his thanks to the Deputy Town Clerk for completing the negotiation in his absence.

It was noted that a professional valuation had been undertaken and confirmed that the deal was good value for money. Solicitors had been instructed on both sides and the next step was to instruct a full structural survey.

A full report including a specific proposal for Public Works Loan Board borrowing would be submitted to the full council meeting on 22nd November.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed that the structural and condition/ME surveys were anticipated w/c 1st November and there was provision within the Climate Change budget (£150k), previously earmarked for Grove House, to address heating improvements. Monies earmarked for Grove House works and accrued revenue budget at the yearend 31.03.22 would accrue to £500k which was in excess of the agreed building purchase price and so monies could be allocated without identifying further budget or loan.

It was agreed that the decision to purchase the premises and relocate the Town Council would need to be articulated and communicated effectively to the public.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

179 *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.*

180 Legal Claim Update

The Town Clerk verbally updated members on the litigation and counsel's advice. A claim for summary dismissal was being made as per resolution in August and that a report would be submitted to the next Policy & Finance Committee meeting in December.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.58 pm

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