

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
MONDAY 17TH JUNE 2019**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Peak (Chairman) Ray Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Gill Bute, Ciaran Cronnelly, David Dash, Peter Fox, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Lisa Pilgrim, Ian Porter, Tim Taylor and Helen Thornton.

IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer) Fiona Walsh (Finance Officer), Steve Matthews (SJ Surveyors), Henry Woodsford (Mercury) and Barry Edwards (Wsm Night Assessment Centre) (part attendance).

37

Election of Chairman

The Town Clerk invited nominations for the position of Chairman.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor David Dash

SECONDED BY: Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly

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

RESOLVED: That Councillor Alan Peak be elected Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee for the year 2019-2020.

Councillor took his place as Chairman of the meeting.

The Chairman suspended standing orders at 7.01pm to invite Barry Edwards to address the meeting in relation to the Night Assessment Centre.

Barry wanted to thank the Town Council for their continued support and advised that all was working very well. He was happy to answer any questions from members.

Members offered their praise in the success of the facility and showed interest in visiting the centre to which Barry claimed they would be very welcome.

The Town Clerk would collect names of members wishing to visit the centre and pass on to Barry to arrange a visit.

A member asked if the Town Council could do anything to help the continued future of the centre to which Barry explained that the council's continued support with funding was vital.

Barry thanked members and *left the meeting at 7.04pm and standing orders were resumed*.

<p>38</p>	<p>To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Marcia Pepperall with no substitution.</p>
<p>39</p>	<p>To receive Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
<p>40</p>	<p>Election of Vice Chairman</p> <p>The Chairman invited nominations for the position of Vice Chairman.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ray Armstrong SECONDED BY: Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Councillor Robert Payne be elected Vice Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee for the year 2019-2020.</p>
<p>41</p>	<p>To approve the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 15th April 2019</p> <p>The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the year date on the agenda needed to be amended to '2019'.</p> <p>The word 'substitutions' needed to be amended on page 1.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Tim Taylor</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: That with the above amendment the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.</p>
<p>42</p>	<p>The minutes of the Working Party to Review Expenditure & Governance 4th March 2019 (unapproved)</p> <p>The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A member queried the absence of two referrals to the Policy and Finance Committee.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that one had been resolved through the Expenditure and Governance Working Party and that the other had been dealt with via the annual charging schedule approved by members.</p>

	<p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the of the Working Party to Review Expenditure & Governance held on held on 4th March 2019 (unapproved) be noted.</p>
<p>43</p>	<p>To note the Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>The committee terms of reference had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the committee terms of reference be noted.</p>
<p>44</p>	<p>Monthly Financial Reports: March & April 2019</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO explained the format of the financial reports for the benefit of new members and was happy to answer any questions. She highlighted and apologised for a typo on report 8bi where the balance read £4,237,412.41 was incorrect and confirmed the report would be re issued.</p> <p>Debate ensued. It was felt the price of heating Grove House was very high. The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO explained that this had been reviewed 5 years ago but that the building had no access to gas and was heated via night storage heaters which were considered at the time, the most cost effective option. Steve Matthews, the councils appointed Surveyor advised that there may have been more cost effective heating systems developed since then and that it may be worth reviewing again in the future.</p> <p>A member suggested the use of solar panels on Grove House’s south facing roof to which the Town Clerk informed that he had investigated the option before and that North Somerset Council as Landlord had said they would not consent to this.</p> <p>The Town Clerk encouraged members to digest the reports and ask any questions.</p> <p>In response to a question the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO confirmed that budget training would be covered at the member’s induction day scheduled for Saturday 29th June.</p> <p>a) For Approval Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p>

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure for be approved. 2. That a review of the Grove House heating system be referred to the Expenditure and Governance Working Party. <p>b) For Noting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Bank Reconciliations ` ii. Budgetary Control Report iii. Bank Interest Report iv. Schedule of Receipted Income <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: That reports 5b i – iv for be noted.</p>
<p>45</p>	<p>Year End Accounts for the year ending 31.03.19</p> <p>The year end accounts had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>For the benefit of new members, The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that as part of the Audit requirement members were requested to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consider the Accounting Statements (AGAR – Annual return) by members as a whole; b) Approve the Accounting Statements (AGAR – Annual return) by resolution; and 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) e) To approve the Earmarked Reserves for the Year 2019—20 <p>A member queried to what extent the public were invited to view the accounts, to which the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO explained that the council displayed these on the website, advertised in the Mercury and were very open.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>45.1 RESOLVED: To Approve the Accounting Statements (AGAR Annual return) by members as a whole.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>45.2 RESOLVED: To approve the Accounting Statements (AGAR – Annual return) by resolution.</p>

	<p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>45.3 RESOLVED: That the Chairman sign and date as required (AGAR – Annual return).</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>45.4 RESOLVED: To receive and note the accompanying Statement of Accounts (not audited) as supporting documents to the (AGAR – Annual return).</p> <p>It was noted that former Councillor Derek Mead’s name on the AGAR needed to be replaced by former Councillor Denise Hunt’s.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Tim Taylor</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>45.5 RESOLVED: To approve the Earmarked Reserves for the Year 2019—20.</p>
<p>46</p>	<p>To receive the Final Internal Audit Report for the year 2018-19</p> <p>The Audit report had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that this was part of a 5year audit strategy of the council which wasn’t just financial. She was pleased to present that for the 4th year running, there were no reported issues and was a good audit.</p> <p>In response to questions, the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO confirmed that they used a company of Auditors with a different Auditor appointed each year and that staff salary pay rises were retrospective.</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: To receive and note the Final Internal Audit Report for the year 2018-19</p>
<p>47</p>	<p>To receive the Planned Maintenance proposals for 2019/20 and relevant update</p> <p>The planned maintenance proposals (PPM) for 2019/20 had been previously circulated with the agenda. The report as detailed on page 3 in the introduction was a summary that worked in conjunction with the five-year plan previously approved by council. The PPM programme had been running at the council since 2012. Should members wish to see the complete document and 60-year cyclical analysis this was available upon request via the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO as due to its size, was not practical to print.</p>

The covering update report of the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO outlined three recommendations for consideration.

Steve Matthews, the councils appointed Surveyor, gave some context to the programme and was happy to go through it for the benefit of members. The 5-year plan was broken down in to annual plans and designed to forecast when things were likely to need replacing based on insurance information.

There were two main issues for members to be aware of. One was the Blakehay electrics. Design work was starting on the 1st phase of a 5 year rewire. This had been phased for financial reasons but also to work around the event calendar. The works were retendered each year. A capital budget provision was in place for these works in addition to the PPM budget within the report.

The second issue was the replacement of the Museum's flat roof. Initially the replacement of the roof was planned within phase 2 of the HLF Project but needed urgent attention. The funds could be found through the PPM programme if other works were sacrificed, or the funds would need to be sourced from elsewhere.

The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO drew members' attention to point 6. Capital Schemes of the report where the Museum roof options were outlined. Option 1 was to apply a sealant which would provide a 5 year expected life which would allow the pursuit of grant funding and was estimated at £47,000. Or option 2 was the replacement of the flat roof coverings which would have a 15-20 year guaranteed life depending on product specified which was estimated at £119,000.

In answer to a question regarding ownership of the facilities the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that the Blakehay was owned freehold but had a loan secured against it and that the Museum was owned outright.

A status update on phase 2 of the HLF project was requested. The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO informed that the planning was in place and a funding bid could now be commenced which was a 4/5-year process. Funding was not as accessible for capital works and so the team had to be more imaginative with the application. There was no guarantee that the roof would be funded under the project and the finance team were exploring every funding option to raise the money.

Steve Matthews clarified that the guttering problems had been rectified and that localised repairs to the roof leaks had been undertaken, transpiring that there were no obvious defects. The quotations for the roof had been obtained by the appointed Quantity Surveyor.

A member suggested a loan to raise the funds to which the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that the council could only borrow from designated loan schemes. This could be explored through the Public Works Loan Board but would need to be a decision taken by full council.

	<p>The Surveyor confirmed that there was no substantial damage to the Museum as yet but there were multiple leaks. Any delay in works would result in price inflations.</p> <p>Members felt that any decision needed to be made in line with the strategic plans for the Museum and were adamant that the Policy and Finance Committee should make the decision.</p> <p>The Surveyor reported that full detailed breakdowns of the costings were available of which a summary was outlined on page 10 of the report.</p> <p>A member queried whether if the council did nothing this would invalidate the insurance to which the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO would investigate.</p> <p>In response to a question the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that the level of reserves at (31.03.19) was £430,000 based on the loose guideline of 4 months' revenue expenditure.</p> <p>The Surveyor advised that there was a 3rd option for funding which was to cut back on the PPM programme. The Council had followed it for 7years and so the buildings were starting to see a level of maintenance.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To note the reported works' completion for the year 2018/2019.2. That the recommendations set out for the programme of works for the year 2019/2020 be deferred subject to the funding of the Museum roof.3. That full and detailed costing options for the funding of the full replacement of the Museum roof, including a solar panel review, be brought back to the next meeting in conjunction with the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO exploring the possibility of a loan with the Public Works Loan Board.
<p>48</p>	<p>Town Council Insurance Renewal – July 2019</p> <p>The covering report of the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>In light of recent weather events, members queried whether the council was covered for lightning strikes. The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO would investigate and confirm this. The Surveyor advised that the council had lightening protection in place so this would mitigate the risk but it was still worth asking the question.</p>

	<p>The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that the current insurance policies expired on 1st July 2019. Due to the change in administration it had left the council in a tight spot. The insurance was bespoke and the tenders were due in Friday; a decision would have to be made the following week.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To delegate the renewal of the Town Councils Insurance policy and appointment of insurer to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee. 2. To approve authority to consider either a 1 year or multiple years contract (usually 3 with option to extend for 2) in order to achieve best value for the council at the discretion of the Town Clerk.
<p>49</p>	<p>Request to release Night Shelter funding</p> <p>The report by Project Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk added that the project was progressing well and provided all year round. Members needed to consider future funding of the project and release pre-approved funds.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly SECONDED BY: Councillor David Dash</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: To release the funds of £25,000 in quarterly instalments.</p>
<p>50</p>	<p>Dog Bins Contract Cost increase</p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The report outlined the background of dog bin provision by the council, its current position and recommendations of how to progress the situation.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that it was a service that needed urgent review by the council but that an overspend of £4,733, which could not be avoided needed approval.</p> <p>Some members were appalled by the service provided by the current contractors and were inundated with complaints from parishioners.</p>

	<p>The Town Clerk informed that he was meeting with the current contractors that week to discuss these issues and review the dog bin locations.</p> <p>A member suggested that considering the overspend, the council needed to be thinking about awarding the contract elsewhere as the contractors had proved incompetent.</p> <p>The Town Clerk explained the difficulties experienced with waste licenses which severely limited the number of contractors being able to quote.</p> <p>Further debate ensued. It was reported that North Somerset Council were renewing their street cleaning contract before 2020 and had shown an interest in working with town and parish councils. The Town Clerk advised that he had expressed the council's interest in working with North Somerset before which had not been forthcoming. However, it would be a favoured option and so he would pursue this further.</p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that the contractor had been given good reviews by other parish councils and that he thought they had underestimated the work involved with the number of bins and had experienced capacity issues.</p> <p>The matter needed to be delegated to the Community Services Committee for further review in conjunction with North Somerset Council's contract renewal before 2020. The council had no choice but to approve the overspend at this stage.</p> <p>In answer to a question the Town Clerk advised that the contract was flexible and there were no penalty charges, however the council did not pay for missed collections.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the aim was to improve the quality of the service with a view to reducing costs if possible. The recent change in legislation had meant that dog faeces could be put in any litter bin and the council needed to consider this when undertaking the review as it would open up the contract to a wider range of contractors.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To approve the overspend of £4,733 on the basis that a renewed contract be entered into with Greenways Ltd, fixed at the new price until the end of March 2020.2. To request the Community Services Committee to review the dog bin service with a view to reducing overall costs if possible.
51	To confirm the fourth signatory position on the Town Council Bank

	<p>Accounts</p> <p>The report of the Deputy Town Clerk had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: To appoint the Deputy Leader and Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee as the fourth signatory for the council's bank mandates.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.33 pm</p>

Signed..... Dated.....

Chairman