

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY ON
MONDAY 10th JUNE 2024 AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT

Cllrs, Jo Day, Nigel Foot, David Harman, Steve Masters, Vaughan Miller, Andy Moore, Gary Norman (chairperson), Elizabeth O’Keeffe and Meg Thomas.

IN ATTENDANCE

Liz Manship, Finance & Corporate Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Pam Lusby-Taylor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Nigel Foot, as a Member of West Berkshire Council, has a general dispensation to discuss any matters relating to the business of that Council.

Cllr Nigel Foot, as Chair of the Flood Forum, and Cllr Steve Masters, as Flood Warden, declared a personal interest in agenda item 11.3 ‘To resolve a grant payment to the Flood Forum’.

3. MINUTES

PROPOSED: Cllr Steve Masters

SECONDED: Cllr Andy Moore

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Monday 29th April 2024, be approved, and signed by the Chairperson.

4. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions or petitions from members of the public.

5. MEMBERS’ QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

There were no questions or petitions from members of the committee.

6. LIST OF PAYMENTS & RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

6.1 List of Payments

Members of the committee agreed to approve the list of payments.

PROPOSED: Cllr Nigel Foot

SECONDED: Cllr Jo Day

RESOLVED: To approve the payments made during the period 1st April 2024 to 31st May 2024 as at appendix 2 of the agenda.

6.2 Reconciliation Statements

Members agreed to approve the Reconciliation Statements.

PROPOSED: Cllr Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Cllr David Harman

RESOLVED: To approve the Reconciliation Statements for the period 1st April to 31st May 2024, as at appendix 3 of the agenda.

7. BUDGET MONITORING MONTHS 1 & 2, 2024/25

Members of this committee received the Income and Expenditure Account for the period ending 31st May 2024 as at Appendix 4 of the agenda.

Members discussed the percentage spend for Energy Supply, specifically at the Town Hall, 4415/290 and at the Shaw Cemetery, 4415/305.

PROPOSED: Cllr Elizabeth O’Keeffe

SECONDED: Cllr Andy Moore

RESOLVED:

- a. To approve expenditure against cost centres that are over the annual budget, in accordance with this Council’s financial regulation (4.2).
- b. The RFO to update the Committee on the energy spend investigations at the next meeting. And to approach Cllr Steve Masters if helpful to discuss means of reducing energy expenditure.

8. DEBTS OVER £500 AND MORE THAN THREE MONTHS OLD

Members noted there are no debts over £500 outstanding.

Councillor Steve Masters commended the efforts of the RFO and Finance Officer on this recurring achievement.

9. AUDIT WORKING GROUP

Members discussed the current membership.

RESOLVED: Cllr Steve Masters

SECONDED: Cllr Elizabeth O’Keefe

RESOLVED: That the current 5 members continue: Cllrs Alistair Bounds, Nigel Foot, Steve Masters, Andy Moore and Sarah Slack.

10. BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members discussed the proposed amendment to the Financial Regulations, to move responsibility for reconciling the accounts from the Chair of P&R, also a bank signatory, to members of the Audit Working Group.

PROPOSED: Cllr Steve Masters

SECONDED: Cllr Meg Thomas

RESOLVED:

- a. To resolve that the bank reconciliation statements are reviewed monthly against the bank statements, by members of the Audit Working Group on a rotational basis.
- b. The RFO to call a meeting of the working group, where this can be discussed in greater detail, including the reports to be made available for the Audit Working Group & P&R Committee.
- c. To update the Terms of Reference for the Audit Working Group.

11. GRANT PAYMENTS

11.1 Grant Payment Process

Members reviewed the four types of grant funding and the mechanism for allocation.

PROPOSED: Cllr Gary Norman

SECONDED: Cllr David Harman

RESOLVED:

- i. Grants to support Community Projects: Awarded by the Grants Sub-Committee to projects registered with The Good Exchange, enabling matched funding.
- ii. Climate Change grants: Recommended by the Climate Emergency Working Group to the Grants Sub-Committee for approval.
- iii. Grants awarded under contract or SLA e.g. To Berkshire Youth: The CEO to review and update the process for releasing these grants, for P&R Committee consideration.
- iv. Grants allocated by Council within the annual budget for local organisations, in line with the Council's Strategy: A timetable to be drawn up for P&R signoff, with light-touch requirements.

11.2 To review a grant payment to Community United

PROPOSED: Councillor Steve Master

SECONDED: Councillor Vaughan Miller

RESOLVED:

That a grant of £3,000 be awarded to Community United.

11.3 To review a grant payment to The Flood Forum

Whilst recognising the excellent work undertaken by The Flood Forum, members agreed that additional information is required prior to consideration of grant funding.

PROPOSED: Cllr Gary Norman

SECONDED: Cllr Elizabeth O'Keefe

RESOLVED: This item to be deferred to a future meeting.

12. SATURDAY SURGERIES, COFFEE MORNINGS AND SATURDAY WEDDINGS

Members considered proposals to support the Council's programme of Saturday Surgeries, Coffee Mornings and Saturday Weddings, presented within appendix 9 to the agenda.

PROPOSED: Cllr Meg Thomas

SECONDED: Cllr Vaughan Miller

RESOLVED:

- a. Weddings and Coffee Mornings to follow the 'first in the diary' approach.
- b. On the occasion of a Saturday morning wedding, Saturday Surgeries will run from the Town Hall's side entrance. Officers to request the Market Manager widens the gap between market stalls to either side of the drainpipes, as offered. The flags to be available.

13. COUNCIL POLICIES

Members noted the list of key policies, currently being updated, appendix 10 to the agenda.

Members reviewed the Employee Supervision Policy commending the CEO for his work and consultation. It was suggested that reviews might be 4 – 6 weekly, but only if not over-demanding of staff time.

PROPOSED: Cllr Jo Day

SECONDED: Cllr Gary Norman

RESOLVED: The Committee was pleased to approve the Employee Supervision Policy.

14. CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

The report from the Climate Emergency Working Group was received. Cllr Harman, Chair of the Working Group confirmed he had nothing further to add. The Committee commended the Service Delivery Officer for his full report.

15. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The minutes from the Health and Safety Forum dated 22nd May 2024 and draft Health and Safety policy were received. The Committee recognised the time invested and thanked the CEO as author. The Committee suggested that the CEO consider a top-level signed front page.

16. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Forward work programme was received.

PROPOSED: Cllr Gary Norman

SECONDED: Cllr Jo Day

RESOLVED: That 'policies' be added as a standard item for all meetings.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRPERSON DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 21:17 HRS

CHAIRPERSON

Signature: _____ Date: _____

DRAFT