

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY
ON MONDAY 16 OCTOBER 2017 AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT

Councillors Howard Bairstow; Lynne Doherty (Named substitute); Adrian Edwards (Chairperson); David Fenn; Sarah Greenall; Elizabeth O’Keeffe; Margo Payne; Anthony Pick; Kuldip Singh Kang (named substitute); Julian Swift-Hook; Martha Vickers.

IN ATTENDANCE

Hugh Peacocke, CEO
Gillian Durrant, RFO

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Jeff Beck; Miles Evans; Tony Stretton.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

The Chief Executive Officer declared that Councillors Howard Bairstow, Lynne Doherty; Adrian Edwards, and Anthony Pick are also Members of West Berkshire Council, which is declared as a general interest on their behalf and a dispensation is in place to allow them to partake in discussions relating to West Berkshire Council (WBC) business.

20. MINUTES

PROPOSED: Councillor Margo Payne

SECONDED: Councillor David Fenn

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Monday 17 July 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

21. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were none.

22. MEMBERS’ QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

Councillor Martha Vickers asked the following question:

“This year is the Year of Mental Health. In response to this Health Watch West Berkshire created ‘Brighter Berkshire’, a community lead initiative, which aims to reduce the stigma around mental health issues. Could this Council as a leading organisation in the Town make a pledge to support Brighter Berkshire? The aim being to increase the conversation and awareness around this frequently misunderstood and under resourced aspect of our Health and Well Being.”

Leader of the Council, Councillor Adrian Edwards replied:

“Brighter Berkshire is a community led and organised year-long initiative which aims to help reduce stigma about mental health and improve local opportunities.

This Council is happy to support the initiative and we will consider ideas or projects which come within our remit and for which we have the resources.”

Supplementary question from Councillor Martha Vickers:

“Will we be bringing this to a future Council agenda to confirm our report or discuss it further?”

Leader of the Council, Councillor Adrian Edwards replied:

“Yes, it will come to a future committee meeting for further discussion and any action to be taken”.

23. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The information was received and noted by the Committee.

24. LIST OF PAYMENTS

PROPOSED: Councillor Anthony Pick
SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for the period 1 July 2017 to 30 September 2017 is authorised.

25. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2017/18

The income and expenditure account to 30 September 2017 was received and noted by the Committee. The RFO reported that both income and expenditure on the revenue account were performing well against budget targets

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Greenall
SECONDED: Councillor Margo Payne

RESOLVED: That the over spends shown against the account codes on Agenda Appendix 4 & 4a be approved.

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

This item was deferred to item 24 on the agenda.

27. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The first internal audit report for the financial year 2017/18 from Auditing Solutions Ltd, as attached at Appendix 5 to the agenda, was received and noted by the Committee.

28. EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The external Auditors Report from Mazars for 2016/17 was received by the Committee.

The Leader thanked the RFO and her staff for these satisfactory reports.

29. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

PROPOSED: Councillor David Fenn

SECONDED: Councillor Anthony Pick

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Risk Register be approved.

30. REPORT ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – SECOND QUARTER OF 2017/18

The report was received and noted. It was agreed that the Newbury Youth Council Facebook and Twitter accounts should not be included in the NTC KPI figures. Councillors discussed the issues of the vacant allotment plots, and the work that is being done to reduce these numbers and noted that the Community Services Committee may be requested to review the target. Councillor Julian Swift-Hook asked when the KPIs would be reviewed for the next 12 months, the CEO said they would be reviewed annually and Committees would be invited to make recommendations for this Committee to consider and approve.

31. PREPARATION FOR THE 2018/19 BUDGET ROUND

The report was noted.

32. TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER & SUITE CHARGES

PROPOSED: Councillor Lynne Doherty

SECONDED: Councillor Julian Swift-Hook

RESOLVED: To agree the scale of charges for the Council Chamber and Suite 2 as per option 3 in Appendix 10 of the agenda, with immediate effect and to trial these charges for 6 months. The charges are to be reviewed at the April 2018 meeting of this committee.

33. SECTION 106 AND CIL MONIES

PROPOSED: Councillor Anthony Pick

SECONDED: Councillor David Fenn

RESOLVED: To agree with the planned future expenditure of Section 106 and CIL monies as set out in Appendix 11 of the agenda.

34. EXTENSION/RENEWAL OF INSURANCE CONTRACT

PROPOSED: Councillor Elizabeth O'Keefe

SECONDED: Councillor Howard Bairstow

RESOLVED: To agree with the recommendation to accept the two-year extension of the contract with Aviva, subject to negotiation with our brokers WPS to seek a better deal from September 2018.

35. TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS FOR 2018/19 BUDGET

PROPOSED: Councillor Anthony Pick

SECONDED: Councillor Margo Payne

RESOLVED: To include the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire annual grant in the matched funding agreement with The Good Exchange for 2018/19.

PROPOSED: Councillor David Fenn

SECONDED: Councillor Howard Bairstow

RESOLVED: That grant applications on the Good Exchange will only be considered for a Town Council grant if the applicant has included Newbury in the geographical area of beneficiaries when completing their application on the Good Exchange.

36. MAYORS BENEVOLENT FUND FINANCIAL REPORT 2016/17

The report was noted.

37. SWITCHING BANK ACCOUNTS FROM NATWEST TO HANDELSBANKEN

PROPOSED: Councillor Julian Swift-Hook

SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

RESOLVED: To switch current accounts from Natwest to Handelsbanken (once all signatories have signed the paperwork, and seven days notice has been given to Handelsbanken).

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

SECONDED: Councillor David Fenn

RESOLVED: That the relevant switching forms be signed.

38. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGY

The draft strategy was received and noted by the Committee.

PROPOSED: Councillor Anthony Pick

SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

RESOLVED: To recommend that Full Council on 30 October approve the draft strategy as presented in appendix 16b of the agenda.

39. WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE STREET CLEANSING AND LITTER PICKING SERVICE

PROPOSED: Councillor Anthony Pick

SECONDED: Councillor Howard Bairstow

Councillor Lynne Doherty abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that Newbury Town Council respond to the consultation as stated below:

- A telephone hot line is needed in addition to a website for reporting fly tipping for those without access to the internet.
- Litter bins –there must be space for litter in the bin if left unemptied.
- The Council should be proactive not reactive regarding flood prevention, e.g. drain clearance.
- Fly tipping – more prosecutions should be considered, which could also be a revenue stream.
- Newbury Town Council strongly agrees with re-educating the public not to drop litter.
- Relying too heavily on public reporting of litter and fly tipping may lead to some areas being more prone to litter.

40. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

SECONDED: Councillor David Fenn

RESOLVED: That under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

41. TENANTS IN THE TOWN HALL

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

SECONDED: Councillor David Fenn

RESOLVED:

To approve the temporary revised rent arrangements for the tenants of Suite 1 until March 2018. It was agreed that legal advice should be sought and an agreement put in writing that rent should be invoiced as normal, but that no action would be taken for arrears before 31 March 2018.

The committee also discussed pursuing the tenants of Suite 5 for payment of all arrears and seeking legal advice if the new lease from 1 October 2017 can be refused until all outstanding arrears are cleared.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.35PM.

CHAIRPERSON