

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY
ON MONDAY 16 JULY 2018 AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT

Councillors Howard Bairstow; Jeff Beck; Adrian Edwards (Chairperson); Miles Evans; David Fenn; Sarah Greenall; Elizabeth O'Keeffe; Margo Payne; Anthony Pick; Tony Stretton; Martha Vickers.

IN ATTENDANCE

Hugh Peacocke, CEO
Gillian Durrant, RFO

Before the meeting commenced the Committee congratulated the English football team on their achievements in the World Cup 2018.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Julian Swift-Hook.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

The Chief Executive Officer declared that Councillors Howard Bairstow, Jeff Beck, 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.

Councillors Howard Bairstow, Adrian Edwards and David Fenn declared a personal interest in item 16. Councillor Fenn is a committee member of the friends of Wash Common Library.

3. MINUTES

PROPOSED: Councillor Jeff Beck

SECONDED: Councillor Anthony Pick

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Monday 30 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

4. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were none.

5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

There were none.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The information was received and noted by the Committee.

7. LIST OF PAYMENTS

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

SECONDED: Councillor Tony Stretton

RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018 is authorised.

8. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2018/19

The income and expenditure account to 30 June 2018 was received and noted by the Committee.

PROPOSED: Councillor Tony Stretton

SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

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

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

The report was noted.

10. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The final 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. Councillor David Fenn pointed out that there were no recommendations or issues to be addressed and the report had concluded that the Council continues to operate effective control systems.

The Committee thanked the accounts officers for the satisfactory report.

11. GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillor David Fenn reported that the Grants Sub-Committee met on 27 June 2018 to consider relevant applications from The Good Exchange website posted between 1 June 2017 and 31 May 2018. £8,250 of the £15,000 main grants budget had been allocated, along with £5,500 of the £10,000 youth grant budget. The Sub-Committee will meet again on 21 November to consider allocating the remaining £11,250 to applications on The Good Exchange between 1 June and 21 October 2018. These grants should be match-funded by the Good Exchange. It was agreed that the Council would publicise the grants scheme in advance of the closing date for the next round of grants.

The report was noted by the Committee.

12. REPORT ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – FIRST QUARTER OF 2018/19

The report was discussed. Councillor Sarah Greenall explained that there are plans to reduce the number of vacant allotment plots, and the performance of the grounds maintenance contract was improving. A small error on the report regarding chamber lettings will be rectified and sent out to members.

13. NEW NTC BRANDED GAZEBO FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL

The report was discussed.

PROPOSED: Councillor Adrian Edwards

SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

RESOLVED: To defer the decision to purchase a new branded gazebo for events and promotions until the next meeting of this committee, and to explore quotes for a smaller gazebo and branded flags, to be used for Saturday Surgeries.

14. SOFTWARE FOR PRESS RELEASES

Members discussed the merits and cost of purchasing press release software.

PROPOSED: Councillor Tony Stretton

SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

RESOLVED: Not to purchase software for press releases but to ask that the officers explore other, less expensive ways to make our press release process more effective.

15. NEWBURY LIBRARY SERVICE

Councillor Sarah Greenall advised the committee that the Newbury Library Working Group had been active, and that West Berkshire Council had adhered to their suggestions regarding publicity and visitor information.

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

SECONDED: Councillor Tony Stretton

RESOLVED: To pay the first quarter of the annual budgeted contribution to West Berkshire Council for Newbury Library, i.e. £7,819.

16. WASH COMMON LIBRARY BUILDING

The Committee considered the responses from the recent consultation on the Town Council's proposal to take a 5 year lease from West Berkshire Council on the Wash Common Library building to enable the Friends of Wash Common Library to re-open the library.

PROPOSED: Councillor Howard Bairstow

SECONDED: Councillor Margo Payne

RESOLVED: To take a 5 year lease on the building from West Berkshire District Council, at a peppercorn rent and to approve the fixing of the Council's seal on the lease when finalised, subject to the heads of agreement as presented. (Any substantial changes to the terms and conditions to require further consideration by the Committee).

17. PUBLIC CONSULTATION RE BUDGET 2019-20

The Committee considered the proposal to consult the public on the Council's budget for 2019-20 and recommended that this should be in accordance with the Council's Strategy. It was agreed that the consultation would include a coffee morning in the Town Hall, as well as a public notice, to be funded from the P & R Projects fund, as set out in the report to the Committee. The Committee also agreed that the Newbury Youth Council should be involved in the consultation process.

PROPOSED: Councillor Anthony Pick

SECONDED: Councillor David Fenn

RESOLVED: To consult the public regarding the budget for 2019-20, in line with the Town Council's Strategy.

18. MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING GROUPS

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

SECONDED: Councillor Miles Evans

RESOLVED: The membership of the Audit Working Group for the 2018/19 Municipal Year as follows:

Councillors David Fenn, Sarah Greenall, Adrian Edwards and John Gardner. Councillors David Fish and Martha Vickers as substitutes

PROPOSED: Councillor Miles Evans

SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

RESOLVED: The membership of the Strategy Working Group for the 2018/19 Municipal Year as follows:

Councillors Jo Day, Adrian Edwards, Miles Evans, John Gardner, Dave Goff, Sarah Greenall, Arthur Johnson and Anthony Pick.

19. MAYOR'S BENEVOLENT FUND ACCOUNTS

The summary financial report for the Mayor's Benevolent Fund 2017/18 was noted. Councillor David Fenn pointed out that with match funding and other direct grants the total raised for the Mayor's charities in 2017/18 was £11,791.

20. UPDATE ON STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

The update on the implementation of the Council Strategy was noted. Councillor Miles Evans, Chairman of the Strategy Working Group thanked the members of the Working Group for their input. Councillor Martha Vickers asked when the consultation on City Recreation Ground and the drinking fountain at the Wharf Toilets would be implemented. The CEO explained that both items were due to come to the next Community Services Committee meeting to be finalised. Councillor Vickers also suggested that the building in Cheap Street that had formerly been Banjo Cycles had become dilapidated, and it was agreed that this should be reported to West Berkshire Council's, Conservation Officer.

Councillor Margo Payne was disappointed that Vodafone would not contribute to the project to mark Newbury's role in the development of mobile technology, as "The Home of Vodafone" but she was pleased that the Council and the West Berkshire Museum would aim to progress this project.

21. SEALING OF LEASE FOR SUITE 10

PROPOSED: Councillor Tony Stretton
SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

RESOLVED: To sign and seal a three year lease for Suite 10 with tenants Beyond.

22. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2018/19

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

23. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

PROPOSED: Councillor Miles Evans
SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Greenall

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.

24. STAFF REVIEW

Following changes to staff and staff duties since the last review in 2014, and anticipating further responsibilities being taken on by the Town Council from West Berkshire Council, members agreed a new staff review was necessary.

PROPOSED: Councillor Tony Stretton
SECONDED: Councillor Elizabeth O'Keeffe

RESOLVED: To authorise Chris Rolley and Associates to carry out a staff review and to approve expenditure of £2,920 from the P&R Projects Fund.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.45PM.

CHAIRPERSON