

**MINUTES of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019 at 6.30PM**

**Present:** Cllrs Dr Walsh KStJ (Chair),  
Baker and  
C Blanchard-Cooper  
The Mayor attended Ex-  
Officio.

**2018/2019**

- 58. EVACUATION PROCEDURES**  
The evacuation procedures were noted.
- 59. FILMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS, USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE PHONES**  
The procedures were noted.
- 60. MOBILE PHONES**  
Members and the public were reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) was prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.
- 61. APOLOGIES**  
There were apologies from Councillor Buckland.
- 62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted, and no further declarations were made.
- 63. MINUTES**  
The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.
- 64. CHAIR'S REPORT AND URGENT ITEMS**
- 64.1** The Chairman provided an update on the JEACC meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019. He reported that concerns on Town Centre policing and the lack of regular foot patrols had been raised. It was **RESOLVED** that:

***The update be noted.***

**64.2. Standing Order / Urgent Action – Progress Newsletter**

The Committee received (attached to the minutes) an urgent action regarding the appointment of RWP to design and print the Summer issue of Progress. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The urgent action be noted.**

**64.3 AccessAble**

The Committee was asked to consider providing financial support to Arun District Council's contribution to Accessible who provided a website giving details of the accessibility to shops and places in Arun. The consensus was that every effort should be made to ensure this information was widely publicised. However, Members considered that the costs should be shared with other Parishes in the District who would also benefit from it and that consideration needed to be given to the information already provided by the Arun Access Group. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

**The Town Clerk be delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair, to explore funding alongside Arun District Council and local parishes for Accessible, whilst also considering whether it added to the information afforded by the Access Arun Group.**

**65. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were two members of the public present.

**65.1** Councillor Chester addressed the Committee from the public gallery on a number of points. Noting the progress with the skate park scheme, he stated that in his view the proposals were excellent. Regarding the proposed redevelopment of the former Waitrose site, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the response to the planning application consultation by Arun District Council's Economic Development Team. They had raised no objection, whilst also identifying several concerns. He hoped they could be encouraged to object to the application. Councillor Chester's comments were noted and would be considered further by the Committee as part of the Town Centre Management Update.

**65.2** Regarding the Review of the Progress Newsletter, he stated that in his view the Newsletter should be a community publication. The Chair of the Committee explained that the aim of the newsletter was to inform residents of the services provided by the Town Council and how it supported community groups and events. Acknowledging Councillor Chester's comments however, he confirmed that this did not exclude relevant adverts about community matters, including signposting for events, etc.

**65.3** Mr Terry Ellis addressed the Committee on a number of points. Regarding the AccessAble website, Mr Ellis informed the Committee that Arun Access Group also provided information relating to accessibility in the Town including disabled parking and toilet provision. He also asked if a response had been received from the local MP regarding healthcare provision in Littlehampton and when the installation of the Welcome Signs would take place. Regarding the Highstreet, he asked if there was anything that could be done to improve the appearance of the Town Centre street scene.

**65.4** In response it was noted that a reply from the local MP was awaited and that the timetable for the installation of the Welcome Signs had yet to be finalised. Mr Ellis' comments regarding the High Street were noted and would be addressed by the Town Centre Regeneration Officer later in the meeting.

## **66. OFFICER'S REPORTS**

### **66.1 Town Centre Management**

**66.1.1** The Committee received a presentation from the Town Centre Regeneration Officer (TCRO). This provided Members with an outline of current work and ongoing projects. It was noted that there were currently four large retail sites vacant and work was being undertaken to promote the Town through campaigns, markets and events to encourage new businesses. Regarding shop frontages, the TCRO explained that screens or acetates would be sourced to fill the empty shop windows. Members wished to see these installed as soon as possible when a vacancy occurred.

**66.1.2** Observing the concern raised earlier during the Public Forum regarding the recent planning application to redevelop the former Waitrose site, it was noted that the Town Council had registered strong concerns regarding the balance of the development. It was thought that the District Council's Economic Regeneration Team's response was disappointing, and the Town Clerk was asked to write to them asking if they could reconsider this response with a view to formally objecting to the application.

**66.1.3** Regarding the regeneration proposals for the Town Centre, the District Council had submitted a Stage 2 funding bid under the Coastal Communities Fund. If successful, this would provide funding of nearly £2.5m for improvements to the public realm in the town centre. The outcome of the bid was expected this summer. Regarding this, Members expressed concerns on the loss of the Town Clock from the plans and asked that this be investigated as there was support for reconditioning this.

**66.1.4** Regarding the proposed Judicial Review of the M&S planning application on the A259, Mr Edjvet reported that this had been withdrawn and that therefore the Section 106 funds for Littlehampton Town Centre would hopefully become available.

**66.1.5** Addressing the increased levels of anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre, the ongoing concern regarding the lack of police patrols remained. The importance of communication and reporting still remained and residents were urged to report any crime and anti-social behaviour to the police. It was noted that a new system was being worked on to allow Traders to upload and share intelligence regarding incidents with the police.

**66.1.6** Members wanted to see improvements to the cleanliness of the Town Centre and see maintenance to certain buildings in order to make the Town more inviting. Mr Edjvet would investigate this with the Street Cleansing Team with a view to incorporating additional sites that needed attention. It was suggested that a cleaning scheme could be explored similar to the Great British Spring Clean in order to get businesses engaged in the appearance of the High Street. Regarding the Friday Market, Members wished to see the layout made more accessible in relation to the positioning of stalls and street furniture. It was noted that the Friday market would be reviewed in the forthcoming months and comments made would be taken into consideration. The Chairman thanked the Town Centre Regeneration Officer for the update, and he left the meeting. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) ***1) The Town Clerk write to the District Council's Economic Regeneration Team regarding their comments about the "Waitrose" application as set out above.***
- 2) ***2) Mr Edjvet progress the concerns raised by the Committee and***
- 3) ***3) The update above be noted.***

## **66.2 Progress Newsletter Review**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) setting out the review of the Progress Newsletter, its aims and objectives by the Editorial Board. The proposed were supported by the Committee. The Town Clerk explained the cost implications of the change of layout and size for the Progress newsletter, which would become an A4 issue of between eight and twelve pages. It was noted that further exploration of the quality of the paper used would be made prior to the change in format being implemented. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) ***1) The revised Terms of Reference (paragraph 3.2 and Appendix 1 of the report) be approved.***

- 2) *The revised Principles and Guidelines Document (paragraph 3.3 and Appendix 2 of the report) be approved.*
- 3) *Officers be instructed to develop a tender document for the delivery of a new-style newsletter in line with the proposal set out in paragraph 3.4 of the report.*
- 4) *The Town Clerk be delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair, to explore the quality of the paper used for the Newsletter.*
- 5) *The contents of the report be otherwise noted.*

### **66.3 Financial Regulations Review**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which outlined proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations to reflect the change to electronic banking. It was **RESOLVED** that:

*The proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations be agreed and RECOMMENDED to Full Council for approval.*

### **66.4 Policy and Procedure for the Management of Policies**

The Committee had before it a draft Policy and Procedure for the Management of Policies (previously circulated). This provided a framework for the development of policies and procedures. Regarding paragraph 8, Approval Process, it was noted that the existing practice of all strategic / corporate policies being approved by Council be continued other than those relating to Human Resources, which were delegated to the Property and Personnel Committee. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

*The Policy and Procedure for the Management of Policies be agreed and RECOMMENDED to Full Council for approval.*

### **66.5 Death of a Senior National Figure**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) that outlined the need to have in place procedures to mourn the death of a Senior National Figure. It was proposed that Arun District Council would also be consulted to ensure there was coordination. Flexibility regarding the final arrangements was necessary to ensure actions reflected the mood of the nation / Town. Members agreed that it was necessary that an Action Plan be put in place outlining the necessary protocols. Regarding the Town Council's website, it was acknowledged that temporary changes would be required recognising the sensitivities and

to keep members of the public informed. It was also noted that meetings or events would need careful consideration as to whether they would be cancelled or rescheduled should they fall within the mourning period. The Town Council would liaise with local churches to discuss church services. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **Subject to the inclusion of text to reflect the comments set out in Minute 66.5, the Action Plan be Recommended to Full Council for approval.**
- 2) **Full Council be recommended to approve that the costs of the required materials to deliver the Action Plan be met from the Community Initiatives Budget as set out in paragraph 4 of the report.**

#### **66.6 Photocopier Contract Review**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) recommending the approval of a contractor to supply a new photocopier. Observing that if approved the proposed new contract would produce savings of £635.89 per annum, the Committee **RESOLVED** that:

**The three-year contract for the supply of a photocopier be awarded to Company C.**

#### **66.7 Skate Park – Wheeled Sports Facility**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which outlined the progress with and the estimated final costs of the new skate park facility. It was noted that the offer of grant funding from Sport England was contingent upon lighting being included in the final scheme. The Scheme would require both Councils to increase their financial commitment to the scheme by £16k. It was therefore proposed that the Town Council draw on the provision included in the Loan Capital EMR 2019/20 budget for this purpose. Members were pleased to note the progress to date and supportive of this proposal. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **The estimated revised cost be noted and agreed that the additional costs be met from the Loan Capital EMR 2019/20 budget.**
- 2) **The Town Clerk be delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair, to agree the Town Council's contribution and authority to progress the Scheme.**
- 3) **The remainder of the report including the timescale for the delivery of the Scheme be noted.**

**67. FINANCE**

**67.1 Committee Finance Report 2018/19**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) highlighting significant variances from Budget in terms of income and expenditure relating to this Committee's Budget. It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) *1) The proposed investment for the Capital receipt (paragraphs 3.5.6-3.5.8 of the report) be approved.*
- 2) *2) The potential transfers to Earmarked Reserves delegating authority to the RFO to make the final transfers when all current year expenditure is known (paragraph 4.1 and Appendix 2 of the report) be noted.*
- 3) *3) The report be otherwise noted.*

**67.2 Annual Investment Strategy 2019/20**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which set out the review of the Annual investment Strategy for the financial year 2019/20. It was **RESOLVED** that:

*The Annual Investment Strategy 2019/20 be agreed and RECOMMENDED to Full Council for approval.*

**68. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There was none.

The meeting closed at 8:12pm.

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**CHAIR**