
REPORT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 7th JUNE 2011

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * Mrs A Hayward

Councillors: * T Edwards
* Mrs M Jarrett
* R Kipps
* Mrs L Sutherland
* S Watkins
* Mrs J White
* Mrs J Worrall

*Denotes members present

There were no members of the public present
Cllr Green was also in attendance, Cllr Eve joined the meeting at 8.20 pm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no recommendations.

MINUTES

11/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

11/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

11/03 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting dated 15th March 2011 were agreed as a true and correct record.

11/04 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

10/63 Councillors Surgeries – It was agreed that the first Parish Surgery would take place on 2nd July 2011 at Chorleywood Library. Cllrs Mrs White and Mrs Worrall would attend from 10 am until 11 am and Cllrs Mrs Hayward and Watkins would attend from 11 am until 12 noon.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Library space be booked for 2nd July 2011.

That the Clerk advertise the Councillor Surgery on 2nd July in the Local Paper, notice board, Parish Council Website and Chorleywood Matters.

10/65 Health and Safety Update – The Senior Admin Officer updated the Committee stating that a letter had been written to TRDC regarding the Asbestos check on the Parish Office. There had been a swift

Response TRDC requesting a meeting, however key members from the Parish were unable to attend. Alternative dates were asked for. Since then there has been no further movement. Cllr Mrs Worrall proposed that the request be sent to the TRDC Executive Committee Members requesting that this issue together with the crack at the Bullsland Hall be dealt with urgently because as Landlords the District Council may be in breach of Health and Safety Regulations.

The Committee
RESOLVED

That a letter be issued to TRDC copied in to the Executive Committee asking for urgent action to be taken with regard the asbestos check at South Lodge and the crack in the wall at the Bullsland Hall.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Watkins and unanimously approved.

10/66 Emails and Website – Cllr Mrs Worrall requested that this item be deferred until the next meeting.

11/05 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2011/12

The Chairman requested that Councillors be given more detail on the finances of the Council. The Clerk asked what was required and it was agreed that various budget heads would be looked at in more detail in future meetings, when details of expenditure and income were known.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

11/06 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members considered the details of the internal audit report.

R1 -The Clerk advised that she would agree to get journals countersigned in the future, however she rarely did them as she preferred Members to see the true figures of overspend and under spend and ensure correct budget figures for the future.

R2 – This had been rectified at the last Council meeting –Cheque for the PCSO had been shown on the list.

R3 – An official order book had been created with all orders being placed in the book. A new stamp for invoices had also been ordered and was being used to incorporate this additional information on order numbers.

R4 – The P&R Committee considered using numeric cost centres and account codes rather than using the named system. Members stated that the current system worked perfectly well and was easy to understand. The agreed that the current system should not be changed.

The Committee
RESOLVED

That items R2 and 3 had been carried out and that items R1 and 4 would be noted.

This was proposed from the Chair and unanimously agreed.

11/07 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The Senior Admin Officer advised that the Health and Safety assessments review had taken a back seat during the staff shortages, however it was hoped that this would now resume. The main assessments currently being worked on were the cattle grazing and Village Day.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report.

11/08 WEBSITE AND EMAILS

Cllr Mrs White requested that the Committee consider opening a Twitter Account. She felt that this would be a good way of getting out information. She did not feel that it would be suitable for individual Councillors but could be very beneficial for the Parish Council. The Social Network site was modern and would help to engage with more of the community. She explained about how Twitter was used and that it would not take up a lot of officer time to manage. The Clerk asked if Cllr Mrs White could come into the Office to discuss the proposition further.

11/09 STAFFING OF THE PARISH OFFICE

Cllr Mrs Worrall read out a statement which had been previously circulated. A number of questions were raised regarding the data which the Clerk answered.

Cllr Mrs Lyn Sutherland stated that since 2005 when the last review had taken place, expectations were completely different. The Business had grown, the population had grown and expectation of the community had grown therefore the Council had to react and do something. It may mean that the office would need to go full time or get an additional member of staff. She felt that the Localism Bill would only compound issues and make the situation worse. She felt that it was only due to the fact that there were experienced staff that they had been able to contain the growth. Any decision would be difficult and may result in the cutting of services, but the situation could no longer be ignored.

It was suggested by Cllr Watkins that things like Village Day and Late Night shopping should not be carried out by the Staff. He advised that the Councillors had in fact organised Village Day one year. The Clerk advised that due to the changes in regulations regarding H&S and licensing etc there would have to be a serious commitment from Councillors. Cllr Watkins went on to say that he felt that perhaps the Late Night Shopping Event should be passed over to the Business Association.

Cllr Mrs Worrall stated that she felt the working environment was partly to blame as it was very difficult to concentrate in such a small space. The idea of moving the Council Chamber was discussed to allow additional space. The idea of partitioning areas or making officers was raised. The opening times and closing times that the office is open to the public were also discussed.

It was agreed that two Members of the HR Committee should look at the whole situation, including office space and report back to the next meeting.

The Council
RESOLVED

That the collection of data cease with immediate effect

That Cllrs Mrs Sutherland and Worrall investigate ways of improving availability of space, including where to re-locate council meetings, the cost of screens, and moving of electrical equipment and IT, to be reported back to the next meeting.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Watkins and carried seven in favour with one abstention.

The Clerk asked if in the future Councillors could ring the office to check availability before coming in to see Officers and perhaps make appointments, as sometimes due to work loads, deadlines or staffing levels it was not in the best interest of the Council to interrupt at a particular time.

11/10 CLOSURE

The meeting having started at 8.00pm, finished at 9.20 pm

These minutes have been checked by the Chairman.

Signature _____ Date.....

These minutes were agreed as a true and correct record at the Policy & Resources meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Signature Date