
REPORT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 19th JULY 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
Cllrs Eve, Green, Khroya and Mrs Lantree were also in attendance,

In the absence of the Chairman Cllr Mrs Hayward, the Vice Chairman, Cllr Mrs Sutherland chaired the meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no recommendations

MINUTES

11/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Edwards, Mrs Hayward and Mrs White..

11/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

11/13 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting dated 7th June 2011 were agreed as a true and correct record.

11/14 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

10/63, 11/04 Councillors Surgeries – Cllr Watkins advised that three members of the public had attended the Councillor surgery, and all queries had been related to the District Council. However it was felt that the process could not be judged on the first event. It was agreed that the next surgery would be arranged for October, and would be better in Chorleywood Matters before the event, and in addition to all the other agreed areas of publicity that posters would be put up a week prior to the event in the village.

10/65 Health and Safety Update – The Clerk updated the Committee stating that a letter had been written to TRDC regarding the Asbestos check on the Parish Office. Whilst there had been no response she was trying to arrange a site meeting in August to deal with a number of issues relating to the Councils buildings.

10/66 Emails and Website – Cllr Mrs Worrall apologised that she had not prepared anything for this meeting and requested that this item be deferred until the next meeting.

11/15 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2011/12

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

11/16 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (final update) 2010/11

R1 – The Clerk advised that most of the accounts held by the Council were 30 day account and as such most did not offer any fast payment reductions. Only one contract currently offered a 5% reduction and the council already took advantage of this.

R2 – 4 these actions had been successfully completed.

The Committee
RESOLVED

To accept the Auditors report and to congratulate the staff on a very successful audit.

11/17 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The Clerk reported that since the agenda had been published an electrical test had been carried out on the office building. The problem with the lights in the council chamber had been resolved and new lights would be fitted in the near future which were more suitable for office accommodation.

All other aspects of the inspection had been satisfactory and the report would be forwarded when received.

11/18 WEBSITE AND EMAILS

The Clerk advised that there had been a virus attack on the Senior Admin Officers computer which had so far resulted in 3 ½ days without a computer, which had seriously effected the work load. The problem was 80 % resolved. The good news was that the firewalls had stood up to the virus and therefore the rest of the network remained unaffected.

11/19 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

The committee agreed that Standing Orders should be reviewed. The Clerk advised that she had a paper and electronic copy of NALC's model which had last been updated in April 2011.

The Committee
RESOLVED

That Councillors Eve and Green undertake the review of standing orders.

11/20 LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Cllr Mrs Worrall apologised for the late report. She advised that it was for information only. She stated that Chorleywood missed out on funding for projects as national statistics suggested that Chorleywood was an affluent area and did not fit into the criteria set out for the LSP.

When looking at, for example the Hollybush Project, as part of our five year plan, to realize funding from the LSP the Council would have to welcome school children from the under privileged areas such as Maple Cross, South Oxhey and Abbots Langley. There was debate on what the role of the Parish Council would have in these circumstances, was it here to serve just the parishioners or the community as a whole. However as the report was for information only

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

11/21 COUNCIL OFFICE SPACE

Cllr Kipps said that he had studied all options. The problem had been discussed since 2001. He felt that there was only one way forward and that would be to extend. However there would have to be provisos. He felt that the present lease was not long enough to be able to recoup the money invested in an extension. Therefore the Council should look at the option to purchase the property or to extend the lease, both would be subject to getting planning permission.

Cllr Worrall advised that she felt option 3 should be considered to put the council chamber into the War Memorial Hall because this may also alleviate the disabled access issues but professional help would be required. This option was discussed and it was felt that the issues relating to the disabled access whilst important for the hall should not be part of this project.

Using the Bullsland Hall was discussed and with it was considered that it would be possible to hold council meetings at the Bullsland Hall. Some Councillors were against spending money on extending or purchasing the building, and felt it was an unnecessary expense.

Cllr Mrs Sutherland advised that the problem in the future could be that the Council has no security of tenure, therefore whilst the council had a seven year lease on a peppercorn rent there was nothing in writing to guarantee that this would continue in the future. The Clerk confirmed that TRDC had initially wanted to charge rental for the building, but she had negotiated the continuation of the peppercorn rent for this lease only.

The Councillors discussed the possibility of officers working morning and afternoons. The Clerk advised that first and foremost the officers had contracts of employment which would have to be renegotiated, and whilst the idea was good in theory it would not be any more efficient in practice. Cllr Watkins felt that this suggestion would not solve the space issue, and may bring up more issues relating to lone working, and cover for absences.

Suggestion was also made to reduce the public access to one hour per day to allow officers to work interrupted.

Cllr Mrs Worrall stated that in view of the opinions round the table she felt the best way forward at present was to carry out the H&S and fire inspection and report the finding back to the next meeting.

The Committee
RESOLVED
That the H&S assessment and fire safety inspection be carried out
That the Clerk discuss the possibility of extending the lease with TRDC.

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

11/22 COUNCILLOR TRAINING

The Committee generally felt that this was a good idea but felt it may be more cost efficient to ask HAPTC to provide a training session specifically for this Council.

The Committee
RESOLVED
That the Clerk investigate the possibility of having a training session for Chorleywood Councillors and if this was possible to find out the cost
If it was not possible to find out who wanted to attend and make the necessary arrangements.

11/23 CLOSURE

The meeting having started at 8.10pm, finished at 9.26 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