

**REPORT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2017**

**MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE**

- Chair:** \* Jane White
- Councillors:** \* Tony Edwards  
\* Rodney Kipps  
\* Raj Khiroya  
\* Carol Kristian  
\* Alison Preedy  
\* Steve Watkins  
\* Jackie Worrall

\*Denotes members present

**Officers Present:** Yvonne Merritt – Clerk  
Claire James – Deputy Clerk

There were two members of the public present

**RECOMMENDATION 1**

**17/37 DRAFT BUDGET 2018/19**

The Committee

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

That a working group be set up to review options and come up with a plan for the way forward for the building asset being acquired.

This was proposed by Cllr Steve Watkins, seconded by Cllr Tony Edwards and carried unanimously.

**17/32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**17/33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION**

There were no Declarations of Interest or Dispensations.

**17/34 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting dated 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 be approved as a true and correct record.

**17/35 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

In response to a question from the Chair, Members were advised that the revised IT back up arrangements were now in place. It was agreed that a test of the back up would take place in due course.

## **17/36 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2017/18**

The Committee

### **RESOLVED**

To note the report

## **17/37 DRAFT BUDGET 2018/19**

Members were advised that there was no further news on the possible rent increase for the Parish Office. The Clerk also advised that she had received notice that morning from the Boundary Commission that the ward boundary changes were coming into effect in 2019 and therefore a second election would need to take place in that year. This would mean that Councillors elected in 2018 would theoretically only stand for one year before going out for election again. Given the cost to the Council of an election the Clerk had challenged the information and offered a number of solutions for consideration.

There was also the acquisition of the building asset currently progressing where an estimate of the repair costs were required. The Surveyor had suggested a figure of £5K but there was concern that this might be insufficient once the asset was acquired and the full extent of the repairs required became more evident.

### **See Recommendation 1**

It was emphasised that the figures under discussion were estimates for budget cover for contingency should the money need to be spent. It was agreed that there were therefore a number of items for which budgets could not be estimated at this stage and further consideration of the capital budget should be deferred to the next meeting when further information may be available.

Before the revenue budget was agreed the Chair asked the Committee to consider Agenda Item 10 – Grants and Subsidies to allow a figure to be agreed for including in the revenue budget (See Minute17/42). With this figure agreed further discussion took place on the revenue budget items.

The Committee

### **RESOLVED**

To Accept the Revenue budget with the amended Community engagement item and associated budget of £5K and to defer consideration of the capital budget to the next Policy and Resources meeting in January 2018.

This was proposed from the Chair by Cllr Jane White and carried unanimously.

The Chair then sought agreement to bring forward Agenda Item 11 Community First Responders.

**The meeting was suspended at 8.10pm** to allow Keverne Bailey and his colleague present to address the Committee on their application for grant funding for the initial costs of equipment for a group of volunteers who give up their time to help the Ambulance service respond to emergency calls in the local area (specifically Chorleywood) known as Community First Responders.

**The meeting was reconvened at 8.25pm**

## **17/38 COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDERS – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The Clerk was asked for an update on the Council reserves as it was likely that the funding would have to come out of this. The Clerk advised that it was likely that the amount in question could be covered under the revenue budget this year as there were a number of budget lines that were underspent which would mean that the money would not have to come out of reserves. One Member asked if it was possible to fund two sets of equipment but it was agreed that under the new grant funding criteria the group could come back next year to ask for a second amount of funding. It was noted that once purchased, the equipment was then maintained by the NHS. The work of the Community First Responders and the role they played was acknowledged, noting they volunteered their own time and were not paid. It was however noted that funding by the Parish Council was effectively double taxation as Parishioners paid taxes to Central Government to fund the NHS and this was asking parishioners to pay for equipment that should be funded by the NHS. Whilst there was general agreement of this fact, it was felt that this was a bigger issue that needed to be taken up elsewhere. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had both the power and authority to give the funding and it was for a service that will be paid back into the community. Members asked if the First Responders would fill in the new form that had been drawn up for future applications as a test of the forms appropriateness and to feedback any issues which they agreed to do. It was also noted that publicity of the Parish Council sponsorship would also assist the scheme.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To grant fund the Community First Responders for Chorleywood the amount of £2k for the equipment required.

This was proposed by Cllr Steve Watkins, seconded by Cllr Raj Khiroya and carried unanimously.

The two members of the public left the meeting on completion of this agenda item

## **17/39 PARISH MAGAZINE**

Cllr Carol Kristian circulated copies of a number of Parish Council items that had appeared in the Chorleywood Magazine. The report was then considered. In response to a question from the Chair, the Clerk advised that if the Council went with the Chorleywood Magazine option, if the May edition of the Chorleywood magazine was not published for any reason it would affect the Council's statutory requirement to publish the annual report. In response to another Member's question, the Clerk advised that the Magazine went to a wider circulation than the Parish publication but it did not cover some of the Parish. However it was noted that the Editor of the Chorleywood Magazine had agreed to increase the circulation to include all of the Parish if the Council wished to be part of the magazine. Discussion centred on the control of the Council pages if part of the magazine and possible conflict with other articles in the magazine that the Editor would want to include which could lead to confusion. It was suggested that there would be the opportunity for the Editor to include expanded articles on particular subjects which could benefit the community. It was suggested that Chorleywood Matters could also be extended to include such articles as necessary. Concern was expressed over the loss of identity and possible conflict and of previous occasions where reporting of an item had given a misleading impression of a decision taken by the Council.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

Not to pursue negotiations to merge Chorleywood Matters with the Chorleywood magazine

This was proposed from the Chair and carried with six votes against pursuing negotiations, one in favour of pursuing negotiations and one abstention.

The Chair thanked Cllr Carol Kristian for bringing the idea forward for discussion by the Committee.

**17/40 INTERNAL AUDIT FIRST INTERIM**

Thanks were expressed to the Officers for another splendid internal audit with no issues raised.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To note the report.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously

**17/41 HR COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Terms of Reference (TORs) for the HR Committee were reviewed and it was noted that the Clerk has a regular monthly meeting with HR. If she felt that the contract was not being fulfilled she would raise the issue with the HR Committee. It was agreed that the grievance process needed to be updated to reflect the TORs which would be undertaken by the Clerk.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To adopt the HR Committee Terms of Reference as written with the grievance policy to be updated to reflect them.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

**17/42 GRANTS AND SUBSIDIES**

It was noted that it was not the intention to change the grant funding that was in place but to add an additional category that would support ongoing funding eg the Citizens Advice Bureau. It was explained that the proposed budget of £5k was partly acknowledging the grant funding and subscriptions already made, the application considered at this meeting and to facilitate more than one application in a given year. It was noted that any budget not used did not roll over into the following year but went back into reserves. It was suggested that the proposal outlined in the report was good business practice, the Parish Council is there to serve all the Community and this proposal did just that. Separate budget lines of Subscriptions, Donations, Grant Funding and Community support would be added to the Community Budget heading.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To agree the revised funding criteria and application form with a budget of £5K.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

**17/43 SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY**

The Clerk explained the policy and members discussed the document. It was noted that it mirrored Watford Borough Council policy rather than Three Rivers District Council policy.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To adopt the Sickness absence policy subject to the amendment of Line Manager to Clerk where appropriate.

This was proposed from the Chair by Cllr Jane White and carried unanimously.

**17/44 THE FOUR YEAR VISION**

The Chair suggested that the item be deferred to the next meeting, explaining that she was working with the Clerk on a Succession planning and Vision strategy that would tie in several of the items currently on the 4 year vision, items discussed earlier in the meeting together with the legacy of Councillors moving on into some sort of a plan. It was hoped that this would be available for the next Policy and Resource Committee in January.

**17/45 HEALTH & SAFETY**

Nothing to report

**17/46 ACCIDENTS AND COMPLAINTS RECEIVED**

The item detailed on the agenda was noted.

**17/47 CLOSURE**

The meeting having started at 7.30pm closed at 9.15 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 .....

## SUMMARY OF ACTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS REQUIRING ACTION

REFERENCE	RESOLUTION / ACTION	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM
PR 16/41	ACTION	A quote for the IT works required with the move was also requested and the quote to be brought back to the next meeting. <i>Ongoing</i>	Clerk
PR 16/41 & 45	ACTION	Cllr Raj Khiroya agreed to act as lead Cllr for the office Refurbishment project and assist with the insurance documentation aspects of the School issues. <i>Ongoing</i>	Cllr Raj Khiroya
16/70	Action	The suggestion for a transfer of money of £750 from the War Memorial Hall for the new website, to be put to the Halls Committee as many of the improvements are for the Halls. <i>Ongoing</i>	Clerk
16/75	Action	To convene a meeting of the Property Register working party. <i>Ongoing</i>	Clerk
17/11	Action	The Clerk to see key officers at TRDC to discuss the Parish Office lease renewal and the proposed refurbishment works. <i>Ongoing</i>	Clerk
17/23	Action	Changes to the website as specified in the minute.	Deputy Clerk
17/26	Action	Sergeant Neil Canning to be invited to the next Full Council Meeting to refresh the council on the roles and powers of the PCSOs. <i>Completed: Sergeant Neil Canning would be attending the Full Council meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017</i>	Clerk
17/28	Action	To update the South Lodge Refurbishment text to reflect the current state of play <i>Ongoing</i>	Clerk
17/28	Action	Add 'Acquisition of Asset' and 'Strategic Planning/Succession Planning' to the Four Year Vision. <i>Ongoing</i>	Clerk
17/29	Action	To invite a number of alarm companies to review existing system and advise on replacement options. <i>Ongoing</i>	Deputy Clerk
17/35	Action	To arrange a test of the new IT Back up arrangements in due course	Deputy Clerk
17/41	Action	To update the Grievance policy in line with the HR Terms of reference	Clerk
17/43		To amend the Sick Absence policy with the Clerk instead of Line Manager as appropriate	Clerk

**Note: Completed actions will be removed one meeting after completion has been recorded.**