

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE OLD MINING COLLEGE CENTRE, QUEEN STREET, CHASETOWN
ON THURSDAY 17 JANUARY 2019 COMMENCING AT 6.01 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Pullen [in the Chair]
Councillors Mrs Evans, Mrs Fisher, Mrs Tranter and Mrs Woodward

In attendance

J G Brown, Interim Town Clerk
Ms J Minor, Senior Administration Officer
Ms A James, Finance Officer
Councillor Ennis
One member of the public

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Mrs Bacon and Stokes.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Mrs Fisher declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in the Agenda Item referring to Town Strategy Expenditure in particular community funded school crossing patrols as she is the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport [Staffordshire County Council].

Councillor Mrs Woodward declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in the Agenda Item referring to Town Strategy Expenditure in particular community funded school crossing patrols as she is the Opposition Leader [Staffordshire County Council].

39. MINUTES

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 28 - Minutes, Page 15 and stated that not-for-project community group should read not-for-profit community group.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 19 November 2018 [Minute Nos. 26-36] be approved as a correct record.

40. REVIEW OF TRAINING ROOM

Members were reminded that at a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10 September 2018 it was agreed to recommend to Council that the Training Room be leased to Costcutters until 31 March 2019. This was to enable the company to expand their business within the Old Mining College Centre. Councillor Pullen advised that a decision needed to be made on whether or not to lease the room to Costcutters after 31 March 2019. Members were

informed that all of the rental units were now fully occupied. Councillor Pullen explained that the intention of the Old Mining College Centre was to be a community hub and by renting out all of the units including the Training Room could potentially enable the Town Council to reduce the current charging regime for the Ron Bradbury Room to encourage more community groups to hire the room.

Councillor Mrs Fisher felt that it was not just about making money however Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that by reducing the current hire costs for current hirers could mean that the current level of income could reduce. Mr Brown stated that he was not aware of any groups who had contacted the Town Council Offices who felt that the current hiring charges were too high.

Councillor Mrs Woodward raised concerns regarding the “starter” units and stated that the Town Council still had not bottomed out what the future of the Old Mining College Centre is for.

Councillor Mrs Evans stated that no business plan had been prepared for the Old Mining College Centre and questioned whether the unit users should be actively looking for alternative accommodation after an initial period of time.

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that she would like to see the Old Mining College Centre being the go to place for community groups.

Councillor Mrs Tranter explained that there were lots of venues within the vicinity [i.e. Redwood Park Community Centre, Beacon Church etc].

Members discussed the possibly of holding an open day for community groups to have a look around. It was suggested that this could be mentioned at the forthcoming Grant Aid Presentation Evening [25 January 2019]. Mr Brown advised Members to be mindful regarding the forthcoming elections [purdah period].

Mr Brown indicated that the lease would be for a period of five years from 01 April 2019 however the lease would contain a break clause in favour of both the Town Council and Costcutters so that after the first year of the lease one party can give the other three months’ notice.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL**

- a. That no changes be made to the fees and charges as approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 19 November 2018.
- b. That a marketing event inviting community groups be held in the Spring 2019 so that any information obtained can be used by the new Council in making decisions.
- c. That Costcutters be offered a new lease of the Suite and the Training Room on the following terms:
 - The lease to be for a period of five years from 1st April 2019.
 - The lease to contain a break clause in favour of both the Town Council and Costcutters so that after the first year of the lease one party can give the other three months’ notice.

- The rent to be £9,778.62.
- The service charge to be 3,467.39 (plus VAT).
- The rent and service charge to be reviewed on the third anniversary of the commencement of the lease.
- The lease would be contracted out of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (this is no different to the current arrangement).
- All other terms to be as in the current leasing arrangements.
- Both parties to be responsible for their own costs in renewing the lease.

41. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to the invoices received from G E Collis and Sons Limited and asked if one invoice could be issued by G E Collis and Sons Limited every month. Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that it was good to see that the Town Council was supporting local businesses.

RESOLVED That the schedule of payments made between 30 November 2018 and 08 February 2019 totalling £70,371.82 be received and noted.

42. POTENTIAL REFURBISHMENT OF TRAFFIC ISLANDS

Councillor Pullen explained that costings had been obtained for the refurbishment of the seven traffic islands from Lichfield District Council however it had been established that this would involve high capital cost [approximately £101,500.00].

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that no further action be taken.

43. PHOTOCOPIER

Members were informed that the Town Council currently have a Ricoh photocopier which they purchased some nine years ago. The parts are now becoming obsolete.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL**

- a. That the Town Council enter into a lease rental agreement with Ricoh [subject to first checking the contract implications] which would mean that there would be no capital outlay.
- b. That an email be sent to all organisations who have applied for grant aid regarding disposal of the existing photocopier [to help people in the community - free of charge].

44. OLD MINING COLLEGE CENTRE - RATE REBATE

It was noted by Members that Lichfield District Council have advised that no precepting authority is allowed to seek any relief and therefore a rate rebate is not available.

45. TOWN STRATEGY EXPENDITURE

45a Earmark Reserves Update

It was noted by Members that there was £24,000 in earmark reserves as at end of 2017/18 financial year with a further £15,000 earmarked for the financial year 2018/19 with nothing yet spent.

45b Community Funded School Crossing Patrols

Members were advised that Staffordshire County Council had advised that if Burntwood Town Council were to fund some of the patrols in the area they would be able to choose which ones they wished to support. The school crossing patrol service would be happy to arrange for logos to be printed on the uniform to reflect any financial support received from the Town Council.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that this be deferred until the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 28 March 2019.

46. EARMARKED ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE 2018/19

Members were reminded that at the Town Council Meeting held on 09 January 2019 it was decided to earmark £50,000 from the 2018/2019 budget. Members were asked to consider the three options which were discussed at the Town Council Meeting and invited to put forward any other projects for consideration [see also Minutes Nod. 48 and 49].

46a Play Equipment in Burntwood Parks

Councillor Pullen explained that £30,000 could be transferred to Lichfield District Council for their use in providing new play equipment to be in addition to or replacement of Play Equipment currently in the Burntwood Parks. This is subject to Burntwood Town Council approving the play equipment to be installed and the location of that equipment. In addition, it will be made clear to Lichfield District Council that all monies allocated must be spent on the new play equipment and that they must fund any associated expenditure (i.e. staff costs, costs of removal etc) themselves.

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that she wished to make the same comments as at the Town Council Meeting and made reference to the forthcoming meeting organised by the Friends of Chase Terrace Park [Wednesday 06 February 2019]. Councillor Mrs Woodward explained that the Friends of Chase Terrace Park were hopeful of submitting funding applications.

Councillor Mrs Woodward explained that she had called for a review of capital spending at Lichfield District Council following the demise of the Friarsgate redevelopment in Lichfield leaving taxpayers with a £7.9 million bill for the failed scheme. She stated that she had now written to the Leader of Lichfield District Council, Councillor Wilcox, about the issue and he had replied to say that he would be looking at the areas of concern.

Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that a couple of second hand play equipment had been installed in Elder Lane Park approximately four years ago.

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to Lichfield District Council's Health and Well Being Strategy.

Members felt that a review of what equipment was in each park and the conditions of the equipment was needed.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that this be deferred until the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 28 March 2019 so that it can be considered in light of information obtained at the Lichfield District Council presentation to Members on open spaces on 23 January 2019.

46b Summer House/Conservatory

Councillor Pullen explained that £10,000 could be allocated for the provision of a summer house/conservatory to be installed within the garden of the Old Mining College Centre, Queen Street, Chasetown. This structure would be intended to be in place for at least ten years and it would provide an additional source of income and is likely therefore to pay for itself over the lifetime of the next Council. This would be installed subject to the approval of Staffordshire County Council (as owner) and to any necessary building regulation or planning permissions being obtained.

Councillor Mrs Evans referred to a business plan for the Old Mining College Centre and on-costs for the proposed summer house [heating etc]. Councillor Mrs Evans felt that £10,000 was not enough to achieve a good sized summer house.

Councillor Mrs Woodward felt that a substantial summer house was needed to accommodate up to 20 people and stated that some of the costs by renting it out could be recouped.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that this be deferred until the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 28 March 2019 to order to obtain costings and other implications.

46c Provision of Items for those deemed to be in need in the Parish of Council

Councillor Pullen explained that £10,000 could be allocated to provide for those in need in the Parish of Burntwood with applications being supported by appropriate support groups.

Councillor Mrs Woodward explained that Burntwood Lions operates a similar scheme.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that this be deferred until the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 28 March 2019 so that discussions take place with the Lions, CAB, Pathway, Housing Associations etc in order to ascertain if they operate a hardship fund.

46d Speed Indicator Devices

Councillor Mrs Woodward felt that it would have been helpful if the six locations of the proposed Speed Indicator Devices could have been included in the report and queried whether the proposed locations were the priority areas of Staffordshire County Council or the priority areas of Burntwood Town Councillors.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that it was agreed in principle to fund subject to an email being sent to all Members of the Policy and Resources Committee in order that Members can agree the locations of the six Speed Indicator Devices.

47. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960 (Section 2) (and as expended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Ennis could remain in the meeting.

48. PLAY EQUIPMENT IN BURNTWOOD PARKS

Councillor Mrs Woodward advised Members that she together with Councillor Mrs Evans had had a positive meeting with Councillor Wilcox, Leader of Lichfield District Council and Councillor Pritchard, Deputy Leader of Lichfield District Council regarding capital spend in Burntwood.

49. BURNTWOOD TOWN STRATEGY

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Action Area 2 of the Burntwood Town Strategy [Communication and the Image of Burntwood] and stated that Burntwood does not have a newspaper dedicated to Burntwood. Councillor Mrs Woodward gave details of talks that she had held with a view to residents of the Parish of Burntwood being given information about activities in the area in the future.

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Mrs Woodward would email the Interim Town Clerk with the contact details so that he could follow that up.

It was **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that this be deferred until the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 28 March 2019 in order to obtain further information.

[The Meeting closed at 7:23 pm]

Signed

Date