

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
HELD AT THE OLD MINING COLLEGE CENTRE, QUEEN STREET, CHASETOWN  
ON MONDAY 15 JULY 2019 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Woodward [in the Chair]

Councillors N Bacon, Birch, D Ennis, Evans, Flanagan, Place, Westwood and Willis-Croft

**In attendance**

G Hunt, Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Senior Administration Officer

Councillor Greensill

Councillor Loughbrough Heron

One member of the public

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Banevicius.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

Councillor Westwood declared a non-pecuniary interest in items relating to Haywoods Contracts Limited, Lichfield District Council and William Collis and Son.

Councillor D Ennis declared a pecuniary interest in items relating to Haywoods Contracts Limited.

**3. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Town Clerk made reference to the governance section of the Terms of Reference and highlighted that:

- a. The Committee will make decisions by majority vote. In the event of a tie the Chair will have a casting vote. The quorum for the meeting is one third of the voting members [3].
- b. The Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be elected at the Annual Town Council meeting in May annually.
- c. The Committee should meet at least four times per year. [This does not mean that the Committee cannot meet more if required to do so].
- d. Deliberations of the Committee reports to the Full Council.

- e. The Committee is authorised to incur expenditure on behalf of the Town Council [where provision has already been provided within the revenue budget] on matters connected to its role and responsibilities.
- f. The Town Clerk is authorised to take the appropriate action[s] to implement the decision[s] made by the Committee.

**RESOLVED** That the Terms of Reference as circulated be approved and adopted.

#### 4. INDUCTION

The Town Clerk explained that as the start of his employment had coincided with the election there had not been enough time to put into place a formal induction. However, the intention was over the coming weeks the information he was going to provide during the meeting would be put on a councillor dedicated web page [intra-net]. This would be done as part of a proposed modernisation of the Council's IT systems. In addition, each councillor and staff member would have a dedicated email addresses [good practice, GDPR, looking more professional].

The Town Clerk explained the new committee structure and stated that 10 Members were on each committee [Policy and Resources, Planning and Development and Community and Partnerships] and that each committee reports into Full Council. A new Scrutiny Committee was to be set up and that no member of the committee would sit on any other committee. The Town Clerk explained the Team Structure and briefly the roles of each staff member.

The Town Clerk explained the role of a Councillor and confirmed that Councillors cannot make individual decisions, it is a collective responsibility [worked through the Committees].

The Town Clerk advised Councillors not to make any undertakings when dealing with members of the public but take their concerns to the Council.

The Town Clerk explained that the aim was to ensure that councillors would be, wherever possible, fully briefed to enable them to take information back into their respective communities. The Town Clerk explained the three-tier authority system and stated that an outline of the role of each authority would be uploaded to the website.

The Town Clerk explained that Councillors must be aware of their limitation when dealing with Social Services [children and adults] as this is a statutory process and Councillors cannot influence the process.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council had a Code of Conduct, a copy of which would be circulated with the minutes. However, it would need to be reviewed in the light of the new GDPR's.

The Town Clerk explained the risks that need to be recognised when using social media. There needed to be a clear division between councillors were doing on behalf of the Town Council and their business and political activities and members of the public. He particularly stressed the potential risk of engaging in political debate and comment.

The Town Clerk explained that the Town Council would be looking at the training needs of both councillors and staff. But these will become once the Town Council has developed its strategies.

The Town Clerk confirmed that performance management was not in place for the team or Councillors.

Councillor Woodward made reference to social media and in particular sharing racist posts and confirmed that Councillors must adhere to the Code of Conduct. Councillor Woodward made reference to performance management for Councillors in that Councillors were elected for four years however it was not just their attendance at meeting that counted but their contribution to debate as well.

Councillor Evans thanked the Town Clerk for his very good presentation and Councillor Willis-Croft stated that councillors needed to uphold the highest standards.

The Town Clerk stated that an open day/open evening prior to the next elections for potential candidates would be held.

Councillor Woodward thanked the Town Clerk for the induction.

## 5. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Councillor N Bacon queried the payments made to the energy companies and South Staffs Water. Councillor D Ennis explained that the payments made to Npower for example would include all of the business units as well.

Councillor Birch asked if the Town Council had an energy efficiency policy and Councillor Woodward explained that this would be incorporated into the business plan for the Old Mining College Centre.

Councillor Woodward made reference to the payment made to Chase Engraving and it was confirmed that this was for memorial plaque [Burntwood Cemetery].

Councillor Price made reference to the payment made to Lion FPG Limited and explained that there may be a cheaper cost available. Councillor Woodward explained that the Chronicle deals with the Cannock area more and the Mercury deals with the Lichfield area more and that Burntwood falls in between.

Councillor Westwood made reference to the payment made to G E Collis and Sons and it was **AGREED** that the Senior Administration Officer would provide the invoice with full details of expenditure.

Councillor Birch queried the payment made to Staffordshire County Council and the Senior Administrative Officer confirmed that this was for room hire at the Library for the Town Council's AGM.

**RESOLVED** That the schedule of payments made between 29 March 2019 and 28 June 2019 totalling £114,630.41 be received and noted.

## 6. UPDATING OF TOWN COUNCIL IT CAPABILITY

The Town Clerk explained that the purpose of the report was to seek the approval of the committee for the proposed replacement of the existing computers used by staff, the upgrading of the operating system from Windows 7 to Windows 10 and the creation of individual town council email addresses for councillors and staff.

By way of background, the Town Clerk explained that the existing computers used by staff are now over 5 years old and are becoming less efficient. The current operating system, Windows 7, is now also outdated and in need of replacement. At present councillors are using their own email addresses for Town Council business. The recent introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations [GDPR] places greater responsibility on councils to manage and protect the data that they hold. It is not good practice for individual addresses to be used in this way as it undermines a consistent approach to data protection and prevents overview and scrutiny. Public bodies now face significant fines if they are found to be in breach of the GDPR.

The Town Clerk explained that advice had been sought from the Council's IT providers, TechCare Limited, concerning the options available for upgrading the current system. TechCare Limited recommended that the existing PCs are replaced with a middle of the range computer [with an i5 processor and 8 GB RAM memory] which will have more than enough capacity for the functions that staff undertake. In addition, it was also proposed to provide a tablet for the caretaker which can be used onsite avoiding the need to return to the office to report on incidents or obtain additional information. The tablet, which can also be used as a phone, will also contribute to improved health and safety in respect of a lone worker. An estimate of cost for the replacement computers is between £4,000 to £4,500. The provision of standardised email addresses managed through the Town Council will provide greater control and protection for the Council. It also offers a more professional look for the Council. The cost estimated of between £1,100 to £1,200 to set up the email accounts which will be hosted on the Office 365 Cloud includes engineer support time to support the set up and enhanced security. There will be an ongoing monthly hosting charge per email address of £8 [current charge].

The Town Clerk explained that although the need to replace the computers and upgrade the operating system to Windows 10 had been recognised no provision had been made in the budget. This proposal therefore represents new expenditure. There is a sum of £25,000 currently unallocated in the budget which could be used for this purpose.

The Town Clerk stated that the current IT provision is outdated and impacting on staff efficiency. The system also lacks the latest security measures which is further compounded by the use of individual email addresses. The proposed upgrade would also enable the Council to present a more professional image online.

Councillor Woodward stated that the Town Council needed to come into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, needed to be fit for purpose and needed to be more professional.

Councillor Place made reference to costings and felt that it was a little on the high side however the Town Clerk explained that the costings included 5 new computers, software, tablet etc. Councillor Woodward stated that the Town Council needed to over budget and hopefully under spend. Councillor D Ennis explained that that costings referred to set up costs, sinking into our server etc.

Councillor Willis-Croft asked if the computers could be leased instead of purchased.

Councillor Place asked if the tablet could be purchased from a mobile phone company.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the email addresses would all end in @burntwood-tc.gov.uk.

Councillor N Bacon asked if the quotations received would come before this Committee and Councillor Woodward confirmed that proper processes would be followed.

Councillor Westwood asked if there would be a monitoring programme on the tablet and Councillor Woodward stated that adequate policies were in place.

Councillor Place asked if Burntwood companies would be included in the quotations process and Councillor Woodward confirmed that where possible local companies were used.

Councillor Willis-Croft asked if malware was going to be installed onto the computers.

The Town Clerk confirmed that he would be producing a brief so that quotations received would be like for like.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Policy and Resources Committee agree for expenditure up to a maximum of £5,700 for the proposed new IT system as outlined above and authorise the Town Clerk to seek written quotations from at least 3 companies [including the current service provider].

## 7. PROTECTIVE MARKING POLICY

The Town Clerk explained that the purpose of the report was to outline a proposed protective marking scheme [PMS] for correspondence and reports for use by the Town Council.

By way of background the Town Clerk explained that the General Data Protection Regulations place very clear responsibilities on organisations for the data that they hold and use. If the Town Council were to suffer a serious data control breach it could lose its reputation with clients, residents and partners. Under the new Data Protection Regulations, the Information Commissioner can fine organisations up to a maximum of £2 million for data security breaches. The use of a protective marking scheme is one measure that can be used to help ensure the security of the information that the Council holds.

Protective marking is a way of assigning information to a security level which is based on a range of pre-defined controls designed to ensure the information is handled properly. The primary aim of using a PMS is to protect against data loss by proactively indicating the limits of circulation and access. All staff and councillors should use the PMS to securely mark their documents. Marking for emails should appear in the subject field and for letters at the top immediately below the Burntwood Town Council logo. [The security levels are set out below]:

<b>Public</b>	No need to mark public documents
<b>BTC use</b>	Not for release to the public
<b>Restricted</b>	Not for release to all staff or councillors
<b>Confidential</b>	Would cause serious damage if released

The Town Clerk explained that the introduction of a PMS would have no financial implications for the Town Council.

The Town Clerk stated that the lack of a consistent and robust system to control the circulation of and access to the data, which is held and used by the Town Council, exposes the organisation to an increase risk of data security breaches. The financial penalties faced by organisations in respect of data security breaches are now significant. These fines are in addition to reputational and relationship break caused by data security breaches. The PMS outlined provides a proactive management process to minimise this risk. It will require no additional expenditure.

Councillor Woodward stated that the Town Council needed to tighten up on their procedures and Councillor Birch asked if Councillors [and staff] would have the appropriate training as it was not easy to determine the levels.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Policy and Resources Committee approves the Protective Marking Scheme and consideration would be given to training needs.

## 8. LAUNCH OF THE GRANT AID SCHEME

Councillor Woodward explained that the purpose of the report was to inform the Committee of the arrangements this year for the launch and administration of the Council's grant scheme.

By way of background, in the longer term the Town Council plans to review the scheme, however, this year the Council intended to run with the scheme as with previous years. A review would take place after this year's scheme and recipients invited to take part.

The keys dates for the grant scheme this year were:

- 15 July - Proposed arrangements approved by the Policy and Resources Committee
- 16 July - Press Release announcing launch of the scheme
- 22 July - Scheme open
- 7 October - Deadline for applications
- 5 November - Draft report for Leaders
- 19 November - Recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee
- 28 November - Ratification by Full Council
- January 2020 Presentation Evening [venue to be confirmed]

**RECOMMENDED** that the Policy and Resources Committee approve the grant administration arrangements.

## 9. VENUES FOR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Town Clerk explained that the report sets out suggested arrangements for venues of future Full Council meetings.

By way of background the Town Clerk explained that generally the Full Council meetings are held in the Ron Bradbury Room at the Old Mining College Centre. The room can accommodate the councillors but it struggles to deal with members of the public. Even then it is a tight fit and consequently not very welcoming for the public. The Annual General Meeting was however held in Burntwood Library where there is more room to accommodate the public.

The Town Clerk explained that the new administration have indicated that it wants to be an outward looking council. One way of more effectively engaging with local residents is to make the proceedings of the council more accessible and inviting. At the moment public attendance at full council meetings is very low. One of the possible ways to increase attendance would be to hold the meeting in the various locations that make up Burntwood [so the meeting could be rotated between venues in Chasetown, Chase Terrace, Burntwood and Boney Hay].

The Town Clerk stated that there are several venues in the parish which could be used to host the Full Council. The Library had already been used successfully. Other possibilities are:

- Chasetown - Chasetown Football Club
- Chase Terrace - St John's Community Church, Scout HQ, Chase Terrace Technology College, Emmanuel Church and Beacon Church
- Boney Hay - Working Men's Club and Boney Hay Primary School
- Burntwood - Burntwood Memorial Hall, St Matthews Sports and Social Club, Burntwood Methodist Church, Highfield School and Fulfen School

The Town Clerk explained that as the majority of Full Council meetings have been held at the Old Mining College no provision had been made in the budget for room hire. It is estimated that the room hire charges that the Town Council could incur for the current year could be up to £500. This amount of new expenditure could be met from the £25,000 currently unallocated in the budget.

The Town Clerk stated that holding key meetings in the communities that the Town Council serves potentially offers a fairly simple way of increasing engagement. It will certainly raise the profile of the Council in the relevant communities. It is also an idea that can easily be tested. It is suggested that such a trial would be best carried out over a 12 month period and then evaluated.

Councillor Evans stated that offering alternative venues would give more members of the public the opportunity to attend the Full Council meetings.

Councillor Birch stated that more engagement with the local community he felt was good however he highlighted the fact that some of the premises were licenced and adequate parking needed to be considered.

Councillor Willis-Croft stated that the whole idea of moving to the Old Mining College Centre was that the Town Council would not pay for room hire elsewhere.

Councillor Place explained that in principle he was not against other venues however confusion over where the meetings were being held could arise.

Councillor Birch asked if the Town Council had a communications strategy and stated that the meeting venues would need to be well advertised to avoid confusion.

Councillor Westwood asked if the full Council meetings could be available on Facebook via a live stream. The Town Clerk advised that Government were encouraging filming at meetings however Members [and staff] would need training. Councillor Woodward stated that this needed to be step and step and may be considered in the future.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Policy and Resources Committee authorise the Town Clerk to organise venues, other than the Old Mining College Centre in the communities of Boney Hay, Burntwood, Chasetown and Chase Terrace for meetings of the Full Council for the year 2019-20 and agree that the sum of £500 be allocated from the budget for room hire.

It was noted that Councillor N Bacon voted against the recommendation.

**10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED** That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960 (Section 2) (and as expanded 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.

**11. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

See Confidential Minute.

**12. OPERATION BRIDGE**

See Confidential Minute.

**13. REPLACEMENT OF BOILERS AT THE OLD MINING COLLEGE CENTRE**

See Confidential Minute.

[The Meeting closed at 8:26 pm]

Signed .....

Date .....