

DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES and REPORT of the MEETING of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE of the Council held in the Methodist Church Rooms, Castle Street, Dursley at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 15th December 2015 for presentation to the Council on the 26th January 2016.

PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor R Blackwell-Whitehead

Councillors: Mayor Nemes, S Creswick, M Laybourne, P Hayes, J Burdge, N Grecia, L Patrick & F Firth (Item 7 onwards).

In Attendance: Town Clerk, J Kay.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors, B Marsh, M Nicholson (both personal) and A Stennett (business).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no representations from the public.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 27th October 2015 were approved and signed.

6. UPDATE ON THE DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2016/17.

The town council will be represented at a meeting on the 21st December, hosted by Stroud District Council for parish/town councils to attend regarding the decision not to award any LCTS grant in 2016/17, by the Mayor, Cllr Creswick and the Town Clerk. A meeting of the Mayor, Cllr Blackwell-Whitehead, Cllr Creswick and the Town Clerk was held on the 15th December to consider proposals for council to consider on the 26th January as a result of the reduced income expected next year.

Cllr Fiona Firth joined the meeting.

7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING DRAFT POLICIES

The Town Clerk produced three draft policies which had been used for his recent CILCA submission; the policies are all requirements of the Local Government Awards Scheme.

i.) Risk Management Policy

IT WAS RESOLVED to adopt the policy with a number of changes proposed:

Change document grammar to "past tense"

Change "reviewer" to "auditor" throughout the document.

Item 1B a) add "and updated as required"

Item 2A c) change "Heydour" to "Dursley"

Item 3A c) change “perimeters” to “parameters”

Item 3B a) remove “internal and external”

Item 3B g) remove “In the event of disaster, a flooding or major fire for example” and change to “The council has provided for backup”

ii) Training and Development Policy

IT WAS RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to confirm there was no previous draft of a Training Policy adopted by the Town Council. If this is indeed the case, then the Town Clerk was to add to the presented draft policy a section regarding the repayment of training fees on a sliding scale should a member of staff leave within one year of training being completed and present to the next meeting of the committee. Should an approved training policy be confirmed then this will be reviewed at the next meeting of the committee.

iii) Strategic Plan

IT WAS RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to add an introduction to the plan and the individual sections. The Plan is then to be re-presented to the committee at the next meeting.

8. TO CONSIDER THE REPORT ON LLOYDS BANK ACCOUNTS

A discussion was held regarding the current banking and investment policies and the issues with the daily “sweep” of the Lloyds accounts with financial management and regular banking activities.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the recommendation of the report is accepted and the Instant Account to be closed as soon as possible with the remaining Business Account to remain active for all “day to day” transactions. The Town Clerk was requested to produce a cash flow profile to allow “sensible” levels of reserve held in the business account to be invested in short term deposits and reported monthly to council. A review of the banking matters should be held quarterly with view of potential interest rate rises.

9. TO CONSIDER CHANGING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IN APRIL 2016

A discussion was held over the timescale for the council to change to an Income/Expenditure model of financial management.

IT WAS RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to investigate the options available, but to complete the year end accounts for 2015/16 before a change of system is introduced.

10. TO RECEIVE COMMENT ON THE ELECTRONIC AGENDA TRIAL

The response to the ongoing trial of electronic agenda's for the P&F committee was mixed and came down to personal preference of the individual. Many preferred a paper copy but others were happy to use laptops, tablets etc.

It was acknowledged that lack of internet connection at the meeting venue was a hindrance to the trial, but this is something which could be investigated. The planned new website in 2016 will improve the way in which electronic agenda, papers etc are made available to councillors; the Town Council would continue to meet the legal requirements on the issue of agenda to councillors.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:20 p.m.

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Chairman
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Date

15th December 2015

Policy and Finance