

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING** OF THE **POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 25th OCTOBER 2023** AT 7.00 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

PRESENT: Councillor M Joyce (Chairperson) Presiding
P Bullivant (Vice Chairperson)

Councillors B Bailey A Hall
L Cooke C Parker
D Corney-Walker M Ryan
C Davieson L Wood

In attendance: Phil Rowe – Town Clerk
Sam Scott – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO
Sally Henley – Town Development Manager
Linda McGuirk – Principal Administrator
Nigel Canham - Communications Advisor

249. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Valid reasons for absence were received on behalf of Councillor S Walker.

250. INTERESTS

Cllr P Bullivant declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 14 - Bradley Community Centre as he is a trustee of the Bradley Community Centre Association.

251. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 6th September 2023 were received and signed as a correct record.

252. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

253. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce invited members that are representatives on outside bodies to report on meetings they had attended.

- Cllr A Hall had attended a meeting of the Courtenay Centre Association, and reported they are having ongoing issues regarding their lease with the District Council.
- Cllr C Parker had attended a meeting of Newton Abbot Community Trust, and reported on projects the Trust are progressing with, which may have a financial impact on the Council. The projects include the refurbishment of Golden Lion Square and a public art project. The Trust also discussed Newton's Place phase 2.

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- Cllr M Ryan had also attended a meeting of Newton Abbot Community Trust.
- Cllr P Bullivant had attended a meeting of Stover Park Advisory Board and reported the group are progressing well with the park regeneration project, utilising National Lottery funding.
- Cllr L Cooke reported that she had attended an event to celebrate the volunteer work of Lynn McElheron BEM.

254. **POLICIES**

The Chairperson introduced the policy documents, previously circulated:

- a) Lone Working Policy
Members were advised that the Lone Working Policy contained several suggested amendments and the addition of a Lone Working Risk Assessment.
- b) Health & Safety Umbrella
Included an amendment to the addendum on government guidance for COVID-19 and respiratory infections.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the policies in relation to the:

- Lone Working
- Health & Safety Umbrella

be hereby, approved and adopted.

255. **LEGAL SUPPORT**

The Town Clerk advised that the Council currently operates without legal support in regard to health & safety, legal advice and human resources. While the Council has managed to date, the Clerk asked the Council to consider engaging with a provider specialising in legal support for Councils. Members were informed that many Councils pay a retainer for legal support. The provider would look at the Councils risk assessments, policies and procedures and offer a more professional approach.

A Councillor asked whether it is possible to access shared services with other local town and parish Councils.

Members discussed the proposal and suggested the Clerk investigates options as a matter of urgency and reports back at the Full Council meeting in November. Arising from discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that in principle, the Council supports engaging legal support on a retainer basis, pending a report to include the outcome of research to consider suitable options.

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256. **BUDGET**

The Town Clerk invited members to report any issues or areas of growth to be considered by the Strategic Planning Forum.

Members discussed the District Council's financial situation and the impact this could have on the Town Council's future budget. The Town Clerk confirmed that he and the Deputy Town Clerk are meeting senior officers from the District Council in November to discuss assets and devolution of non-statutory services. Members recognised the importance of sufficient lead in time prior to any agreed devolvement of services and the requirement to ensure positive public perception regarding the precept.

Members raised the following growth ideas for consideration by the Strategic Planning Forum:

- Additional equipment to enable the Facilities Maintenance Team to meet current and future demand.
- Recruitment of the 4th Facilities Maintenance Officer.
- Supporting the Community Trust's Public Art project
- Refurbishment of the Signal Gantry
- Penn Inn subway – to support the CIC extension of the Tunnels of Love project.

257. **ACCOUNTS INCOME & EXPENDITURE**

The Committee received and noted the overview of Income and Expenditure statements for the Policy and Resources Committee for the Period 1st April to 30th September 2023. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Income and Expenditure Statements for the Policy and Resources Committee for the Period 1st April – 30th September 2023 be hereby approved.

258. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

259. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 14th February 2024.

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

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was hereby:

RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following

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item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr A Hall abstained from voting.

261. ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT

Members considered the report as circulated prior to the meeting. Arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the Council proceeds with the recommendations as set out in the report:

- (a) that the Committee is recommended to agree to the request of the Newton Abbot & District Cooperative Allotments Association to terminate the Agreement dated 30th September 2019 between it and the Council letting the five allotment fields to NADCAA;
- (b) that the Council enters into a Service Level Agreement with NADCAA with a view to it providing allotment services to the Council including, but not limited to – the day to day management of the fields; maintenance of the waiting list; operating the Decoy shop; first stage disputes with plot holders; appointing and managing Field Wardens.;
- (c) that from 1st January 2024 the Council will be responsible for the tenancy agreements directly with the plot holders based on the database held on the Colony Allotments System, together with the responsibility for all formal disputes with plot holders.

262. BRADLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

A visual presentation was displayed to support the Town Clerk's verbal report. Members considered whether the Bradley Community Centre Association is compliant with the requirements of minute 23/06(88):

- (a) the Council's officers to work with the remaining/new Trustees of the Bradley Community Association to:
 - i. Review the Association's Articles/Memorandum of Association with a view to adopting a model that is fit for the 21st Century and to limit the liability of its Trustees;
 - ii. Agree a strategy with the Association to carry out repairs and maintenance of the Centre to ensure it is fit for purpose;
 - iii. Adopt policies and procedures to ensure the safe and risk assessed operation of the Centre as required by legislation and the Centre's insurance liabilities.
- (b) that should for any reason the Bradley Community Association fail to work with the Council in relation to (a) above, legal proceedings be instigated for the forfeiture of the Underlease by reason of the Association being in breach of its obligations under the Underlease.

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Members were satisfied that the requirements have been met in part and requested a report from the Council's representative, Councillor L Cooke, following the Association's meeting in December. It was agreed that Councillors will be invited to attend a site meeting and report back.

263. **COURTENAY PARK BANDSTAND**

Further to minute 23/06(88) the Town Clerk advised that a meeting has been scheduled in November with senior officers of Teignbridge District Council to discuss assets. A report will be given at the next meeting.

Meeting closed at 20:12

Chairperson.....Date.....

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