

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Berkshire on Wednesday, 28th January 2015 commencing at 7.45 pm.

Present

Chairman – Councillor N Jorgensen

Councillors Mrs L Chambers, J Eastwell, T Holton, Mrs P Jorgensen, K Miall (to 8.55pm), A Thomas and B Wedge

In attendance: Councillors M Firmager and N Holloway

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D Hare.

43. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 12th November 2014 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

44. ESTIMATES OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE

44.1 MFG UK Presentation

Prior to consideration of the Draft Estimates for this Committee, Members were requested to receive a presentation from MFG UK with reference to the capital budget item for computer upgrades.

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of confidential matters relating to the presentation.

44.2 Draft Estimates of Income & Expenditure

Consideration was then given to the Draft Estimates of Income & Expenditure for this Committee for 2015/16 and the revised estimates for 2014/15. In connection therewith, the Committee noted and approved details of the financial transactions for the period ended 30th November 2014 included within the report.

Members further noted and examined the Estimates of Income & Expenditure for 2014/15 and the Revised Estimates for 2015/16 compiled by the Standing Committees, together with the approved Estimates of this Committee and the recommendations received from the Budget Working Party, a copy of which was circulated to Members under separate cover, in order to make recommendations to the Council accordingly.

With regard to the Budget Working Party, the Town Clerk advised that the lighting and heating figures shown for Maiden Place and Radstock Lane had been transposed in error. Some adjustments were made to the recommendations bearing in mind the target percentage increase for a Band D property being set at 1.6%.

RESOLVED that

1. the notes of the Budget Working Party, as amended, attached herewith, be approved

2. Recommendations 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 be approved subject to the following amendment:

Recommendation 4.4 to insert "and spiker" after "vehicle".

RECOMMENDED that

1. recommendations 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 in the notes of the Budget Working Party be approved subject to the following amendments:
2. recommendation 4.3 to read "Consideration be given to a possible alternative procurement of the hardware and licence upgrades to the computer network and server"
3. the revised Estimates for 2014/15 and the draft Estimates for 2015/16, as appended hereto, be approved.

44.3 **Precept Working Papers**

Consideration was given to the Town Clerk's Precept Working Papers, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Arising therefrom, the Committee was requested to assess the amount required as the Town Precept for 2015/6 and to recommend to the Town Council accordingly.

The level of Precept given within the Town Clerk's Working Paper would represent an increase in the Town Council's 'share' of the Council Tax from £63.03 to £70.45 for the year on a Band D property, assuming the confirmation of the revised provisional tax base of 11671.1 by Wokingham Borough Council. In the light of the recommendations of the Budget Working Party, the proposal was to reduce the increase to £64.04 and consequently it was

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council Precept for 2015/16 be set at £747,387.00, as per the attached Precept Working Paper.

44.4 **Loans & Investments**

The Committee noted a report on current loans and investments, a copy of which is appended to these Minutes.

The Town Clerk drew Members attention to the amount of interest received on the Public Sector Deposit Fund and, in particular, the higher amounts received in September and October.

44.5 **Council Tax leaflets**

The Town Clerk advised that it was his understanding that Wokingham Borough Council no longer intended to produce Council Tax leaflets because, due to Government legislation, there was no longer a statutory requirement to do so. Furthermore, this Town Council was the only Council within the Wokingham Borough not to suspend the leaflets. He further suggested that leaflets could be displayed on the Town Council & Borough Council websites rather than printed.

RESOLVED that

1. The Chairman make enquiries with the Leader of Wokingham Borough Council to confirm whether a Council Tax leaflet is to be produced

2. Subject to the findings from Resolution 1 of this Minute, the Town Clerk follow suit with Wokingham Borough Council and, if necessary, be given discretion to make further adjustments to the revised estimates between this meeting and the next meeting of Council.

45. SUB-COMMITTEES & WORKING PARTIES

45.1 Youth & Community Sub-Committee

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Youth & Community Sub-Committee held on 20th January 2015, a copy of which is appended to these Minutes.

With regard to Minute 4.1, Youth Café Provision, the Town Clerk advised that he, together with the Facilities Manager, had held a meeting with JAC. He was of the opinion that JAC might be able to manage a Youth Club type of activity which would lead to a Youth Café in the course of time.

It was suggested that the Centrepont Community & Youth Centre, which is currently underused, could be a good venue for a Youth Café Provision.

The Town Clerk advised that there was also a need for him to clarify Centrepont's use of the Loddon Valley Leisure Centre with Wokingham Borough Council.

With regard to the Earley Neighbourhood Action Group Minutes, a Member queried the remit of the Group as it was her understanding that it had been formed to deal with Police matters and it now appeared to be outside of the reasons that it was originally formed for.

RESOLVED that

1. the Minutes be received and approved
2. A Youth Café Provision Working Group be formed to include Councillors, JAC, Maiden Erlegh School, and possibly Trinity Church
3. The Town Clerk contacts Thames Valley Police to investigate the Terms of Reference for the Earley Neighbourhood Action Group and why it appears to be working outside its remit.

46. STAFFING MATTERS

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of two confidential reports relating to staffing matters.

47. DIFIBRILLATION EQUIPMENT

The Town Clerk reported that, thanks to generous donations and a collection tin in the Help Shop totalling £974.66, there were now sufficient funds with which to purchase a defibrillator. With regard to the location for the equipment, it was

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk investigate a suitable site, preferably outside of one of the buildings in the control of the Town Council.

48. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

The Committee noted details of Orders for Payment paid since the last meeting of the Town Council.

RESOLVED that the various accounts set out on the attached list (Vouchers 383 - 496) and Imprest Vouchers (130 -149 and 150 - 171) be paid in the sums as stated.

49. PUBLICATIONS

The Committee noted that the following items had been received and were available for viewing in the Council Chamber:

Maiden Erlegh Residents' Association:	Minutes of meeting held 11 th December 2014 Minutes of meeting held 8 th January 2015
---------------------------------------	--

50. PRESS RELEASES

RESOLVED that the item relating to the defibrillator should receive emphasis at the appropriate time.

51. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 10.26pm.