

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 11th November 2015 commencing at 7.45pm.

Present

Chairman – Councillor N Jorgensen

Councillors A Bradley, Mrs J Clark, Mrs M de Jong, R A Houlbrooke, Mrs P Jorgensen, Ms J Rance, B Wedge and P Willis

In attendance Councillor Mrs L Chambers

An apology for absence was received from Councillor T Holton (WBC Meeting).

33. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 30th September 2015 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

34. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Committee noted details of the financial transactions for the period ending 30th September 2015, a copy of which is appended to these Minutes. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council had not yet received an invoice for the May elections.

35. ESTIMATES

35.1 Financial Year 2016/17

Consideration was given as to whether there were any major projects that this Committee would wish to undertake in the 2016/17 financial year, so that the Town Clerk could ensure adequate provision was made in the estimates for that period. Further to consider projects for the following financial year as part of the three year financial planning.

RESOLVED that

1. provision be made in the 2016/17 Draft Capital budget for the following items:

Council Offices	-	Replacement Council Chamber Furniture
Council Offices	-	Replacement Computer

2. Members be invited to submit ideas for the replacement Council Chamber furniture, the details of which to be discussed at a later meeting.

35.2 Budget Working Party

The Town Clerk advised that, as had been the recent practice, a Budget Working Party, to meet in January, before the next meeting of this Committee and the full Council meeting in February, had been constituted. The agreed membership in the past was members of this Committee, together with other Members of the Town Council who might wish to attend. Because it was a Working Party, any conclusions reached at the meeting would be in the form of recommendations.

He advised that, if Members were so disposed to form the Working Party again, it was suggested the meeting be held on 18th January 2016 at 7.30 pm.

Consideration was, therefore, given to the re-formation of the Working Party and, if approved, to convene a meeting on Monday 18th January at 7.30pm.

RESOLVED that the Budget Working Party be re-formed and a meeting of that Working Party be convened on Monday 18th January 2016 at 7.30pm.

36. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

36.1 Grant Applications

Consideration was given to a schedule of grant applications, as previously circulated to Members, which detailed the level of funding awarded in previous years and the amounts requested by the various organisations for 2016/17.

The Town Clerk drew attention with regard to two letters received, one of which was from Earley Day Centre advising that a grant was not required for 2016/17 and the other was from Readibus which had applied for a much smaller grant than it had done in the past.

It was noted that both the Reading & the Wokingham branches of the Citizen's Advice Bureaus had requested larger donations than in previous years and, also, the Me2 Club, Wokingham Job Support Centre, Thames Valley Air Ambulance and Cruse Bereavement Care had increased the amount they required. With regard to the application from the Thames Valley Air Ambulance, although Members were of the opinion that it was a good cause, it was felt that the Town Council did not have the resources to be able to donate to that particular organisation. However, Members noted that the proceeds of some of the Town Council's Charity fishing matches had been donated to them in the past and, additionally, there was a collection box in the Council Office Reception. In consideration of the application from Sue Ryder – Duchess of Kent Hospice it was noted that the application arrived late and there was no financial information available. With regard to the application from Revitalise, Members noted that less than 1% of Earley residents benefited from the service.

RECOMMENDED that, subject to budget approval, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 137, as amended by the Local Government Housing Act 1989, Section 36, contributions be made to the various applicants as set out below:-

	£
ARC	1,500.00
Me2 Club	250.00
Readibus	1,500.00
Earleybus	650.00
Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau	250.00
Citizens Advice Bureau (Reading)	720.00
Citizens Advice Bureau (Wokingham)	1,080.00
Relate	250.00
Homestart Wokingham District	350.00
Wokingham Job Support Centre	300.00
Berkshire Blind Society	690.00
MS Therapy Centre Berkshire	300.00
The Link Visiting Scheme	250.00
Cruse Bereavement Care	500.00
Wokingham Borough Sports Council	1,000.00

RESOLVED that, subject to approval of the above recommendation

1. no grants be made to Thames Valley Air Ambulance, Sue Ryder or Revitalise
2. the Thames Valley Air Ambulance be informed that the Town Council did not have the resources to be able to donate to that cause
3. Sue Ryder be informed that the Town Council was unable to give consideration to its application because no financial information had been provided
4. Revitalise be informed that the Town Council could not make a grant because less than 1% of Earley residents benefited from its services.

37. SUB-COMMITTEES & WORKING PARTIES

37.1 Community & Youth Sub-Committee

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

In presenting the Minutes, Councillor Wedge advised that the format worked well. He added that there was a change of the MERA Secretary because Brian Hackett had resigned from the post. Unfortunately, attendance at the meetings by representatives from outside organisations had dropped off and perhaps it was time to review the format and terms of reference of the Sun-Committee.

38. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

The Committee noted details of Orders for Payment paid since the last meeting of the Town Council (Vouchers 383 - 434) and Imprest (Vouchers 081 – 097) a copy of which, is attached to these Minutes.

The Town Clerk drew attention to Voucher 399 and advised that a defibrillator had now been purchased and would be located into the entrance of Maiden Place Community Centre.

With regard to voucher 409, he advised that, as a condition of the Lease, the Town Council had to pay the Earley Community Association if it let the hall out to other users on one evening per week.

In response to a question from a Member in respect of Voucher 421, the Town Clerk advised that he would find out more details and advise accordingly.

In response to a question from a Member with regard to Voucher 397, the Town Clerk advised that the double glazing was part of the soundproofing for the Music studio in the Silverdale Community & Youth Centre.

39. PUBLICATIONS

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

Neighbourhood Action Group	Agenda for NAG Meeting held on 2 nd November 2015
Me2 Club	November Newsletter 2015

40. PRESS RELEASES

Consideration was given as to whether any of the foregoing items should be the subject of a special press release.

RESOLVED that there be no press releases issued.

41. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9.29pm.