



## **POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee, held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 which commenced at 7pm.

### **Present**

Chair – Councillor D Hare

Councillors: J Eastwell, T Holton, N Jorgensen, A Long, T Maher, S Matthews, S Newton and C Smith.

In attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk) and E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk)

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### **95. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors A Basset, M De Jong and G Littler.

### **96. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **97. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

### **98. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Councillor Newton requested an amendment to Minute 85.2 that he be recorded as the Councillor who proposed the motion recommending a 0% increase to the 2024/2025 precept. Members agreed to the amendment.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024, as amended, were confirmed as a true record and **RESOLVED** for signature by the Chair. (Minutes 80 – 94).

*Councillor Maher entered the meeting.*

### **99. BANK RECONCILIATIONS**

Councillors noted that the Bank Reconciliations for December 2023 and January 2024 had been made available to the Chair of Policy & Resources Committee for information.

### **100. FINANCE**

#### **100.1 Finance Update**

Members thanked the Town Clerk for her Finance Update report and the accompanying income & expenditure report which they found very helpful. Councillor Holton requested that future reports contain more figures as well as commentary.

## 100.2 Internal Audit

Members received the interim report from the Town Council's Internal Auditor and noted that there were no significant matters or concerns. Members thanked those officers involved in managing the Council finances and considered the report to be a reflection of their good work.

## 101. TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS

### 101.1 Grants Awarded

Councillors noted that thanks had been received for grants awarded to: -

- Earley Day Centre
- Link Visiting Scheme
- Me2 Club
- Wokingham Job Support Centre

### 101.2 New Applications

Councillors considered five grant applications received following the Town Council's promotion that 2023/24 grant monies were still available. It was:

101.2.1 **RESOLVED** that ACER/FoBOS would receive £130 for the purchase of a permissive path sign indicating a path to Bulmershe Park/Town Lane.

101.2.2 **RESOLVED** that First Days Children's Charity would be asked for more information about how the grant they have applied for would be used within the Earley area. The request will be reconsidered at the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 if appropriate information is provided in time.

101.2.3 **RESOLVED** that Loddon Valley Ramblers would receive £165 for the purchase of two public rights of way signs to be installed at Earley Gate and Elm Road.

101.2.4 **RESOLVED** that Together: One Step at a Time would receive £248.63 towards the purchase of equipment for its communication group for autistic children.

101.2.5 **RESOLVED** that Reading Male Voice Choir would receive £140 towards costs incurred to stage and organise an event at Trinity Church.

## 102. SIBLY TODDLERS' PLAY AREA

Members received an update from the Town Clerk on the progress of the project to replace the toddlers' play area in Collins Drive. Four submissions had been received from contractors, a final decision on a preferred supplier will be made next week. The Town Clerk reported that the submissions had been compared to the design brief and public consultation responses. Residents from Collins Drive will be contacted and invited to view the plans and meet the appointed contractor prior to the commencement of the build. It was agreed that a report on the project and the processes followed will be provided to councillors.

## 103. CCB MEMBERSHIP

Councillors considered membership of Connecting Communities in Berkshire, which costs £35 per annum. The CCB is a local charity that provide advice and information on funding opportunities, along with training opportunities and courses. It was: -

**RESOLVED** that ETC become a member of CCB and the £35 fee be paid.

**104. IT SUPPORT**

Members noted that as of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024, ITQED had been appointed as ETC's new IT support provider, they are a local company and experienced in IT provision for town/parish councils. There will be a one month crossover period until the contract with Air IT, the current providers, ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, to minimise any issues that may be experienced during this time.

**105. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT**

Councillors received details of Orders for Payment since the last meeting of the Town Council (Vouchers 6552 - 6570, 6571 – 6597, 6598 – 6608, 6609 – 6611, 6612 – 6641 and Imprest Account (Vouchers 920 – 932).

**106. PUBLICATIONS**

It was noted that the following communications had been received and were available for perusal from the Council Offices:

CCB (Connecting Communities in Berkshire)	E-newsletter February 2024
TVP	Police & Crime e-bulletin February 2024
ACER	E-newsletter Spring 2024
Me2 Club	E-newsletter January 2024

**107. PRESS RELEASES, WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA**

No press releases were requested.

**108. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

There were no members of the public or press present. It was agreed that the remaining items on the agenda be taken under Part II.

**PART II**

**109. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**110. BUILDINGS MAINTENANCE**

**111. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 7.52pm.