
REPORT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 22nd NOVEMBER 2011

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * Mrs A Hayward

Councillors: * T Edwards
* Mrs M Jarrett
* R Kipps
* Mrs L Sutherland
* S Watkins
Mrs J White
* Mrs J Worrall

*Denotes members present

Also in attendance Cllrs Mrs Boatman, Eve and Green

There were no members of the public present

RECOMMENDATIONS

MINUTES

11/38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs White.

11/39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

11/40 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Committee
RESOLVED

That subject to the changes made at Full Council the minutes of the meeting dated 20th September be approved as a true and correct record.

11/41 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

11/42 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2011/12

The Committee
RESOLVED

That the report be noted

11/43 REVISED BUDGET FOR 2011/12

The Clerk advised that a new contract had been negotiated to replace the photocopier, the new machine printed twice as fast and could also scan colour copies, the cost per copy was also less than the current contract. There was likely to be about £150.00 saving per year. Members studied the budget papers and agreed that the revised budget was achievable.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To agree the revised budget

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jarrett, and unanimously approved.

11/44 BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13

It was agreed that whilst it was necessary not to increase the budget, some budget heads would increase, such as fuel, utilities and superannuation. It would be down to committees to seek external funding, and be more creative in trying to increase income or cut services to keep within the strategy guidelines.

It was noted that there may be demands on the capital budget over the next twelve months which had not been budgeted for in the past, such as the possibility of at least one public enquiry in respect of the conservation grazing and office accommodation issues. There was a word of warning that the precept had been frozen for three years and that the Council would still be expected to respond to the unexpected or unforeseen circumstances.

The members discussed the income and agreed that the base line figure should be increased by at least 5%. Committee should review their fees and charges to ensure they were competitive, but also realistic and covered costs.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the overall budget for each committee remains the same at 2010/11

That fees and charges be increased by at least 5% and that they should reflect the actual cost to the Council.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jarrett and unanimously approved.

11/45 WEBSITE AND EMAILS

It was calculated that there was sufficient funds within the current budget to allow the proposed changes to the website, but members asked that the Webmaster be advised what the total budget was so that it was not exceeded.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To approve the rate for the Webmaster to £14.00 per hour

To agree to the proposed changes to the website suggested by Councillors and for the Webmaster be advised of the budget restrictions and to prioritise if necessary.

11/46 MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

Members agreed with the principal of a media policy. The Clerk explained the difference in the regulations for District Councillors who were allowed to talk to the press and Parish Councillors who were not. The Clerk as 'Proper Officer' was covered by insurance, however Parish Councillors were not. It was agreed that the draft policy could be précised, but was necessary to work in relation to the new model standing orders currently being worked on by Cllrs Eve and Green.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That Cllrs Eve and Green review the media policy and bring a draft to the next meeting.

This was proposed by the Chairman, and unanimously agreed.

11/47 VILLAGE DAY AND LATE NIGHT SHOPPING UPDATE

Village Day

The Committee first wished to acknowledge that Village Day had been a great success. Members considered the suggestion from the Twinning Association to hold a French market on the common in conjunction with Village Day in 2012.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That combining a French Market with Village Day was inappropriate and therefore it was suggested that the French Market be held in the Village shopping area on another date.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Jarrett, seconded by Cllrs Mrs Sutherland and unanimously approved.

The suggestion of working with Herts 2012 Three Rivers Volunteer Coordinator who is promoting Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners was declined.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To Decline the offer to work with 'Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners', combining an Olympic theme for Village Day 2012.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Mrs Sutherland and carried, with five in favour and one against.

Late Night Shopping

It was noted that the Late Night Shopping Evening had changed its name to the Chorleywood Christmas Festival, and would start two hours earlier at 4 pm. The Clerk advised that the event was licensed until 9 pm, and the music would need to cease at this time.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report.

11/48 PROPOSED RENEWAL OF THE TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Members looked at the two quotations and felt that it would be best to award any contract to Company A as it would be better going forward with a two year contract rather than a five year one. There was however concerns if the office had to be reorganised the costs may change. It was therefore agreed to defer any decision until the next meeting.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That Company A was the preferred contractor; however a decision to go ahead would be deferred until the next meeting when more consideration had been given to the office accommodation.

That the Clerk go back to Company A asking them if they would hold their prices until February 2012.

11/49 EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report and to complement the fact that there were no significant criticisms within the audit.

This was proposed from the Chair, and unanimously approved.

11/50 INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report and action the points suggested

This was proposed from the Chair, and unanimously approved.

11/51 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

Cllr Mrs Worrall apologised for not having produced a written report. She showed a copy of an old plan of the office which showed the building footprint, although the layout was incorrect. She stated that each individual should have a minimum space 11 cubic meters. It had been difficult to assess the space due to the unusual shape of the office space but currently with all the essential furniture and office equipment the available work space was under the health and safety minimum. There were a lot of things that could be done in the short term, like weeding of filing, and removal of all the paper in the loft space. Trailing wires were also highlighted as a health and safety risk.

Two areas had been identified which did require urgent action. Firstly that the door leading to the kitchen was a fire door and should be kept closed at all times, however if someone was in the kitchen and the door opened it was likely to cause injury to that individual. The loft hatch was also poorly fitted and was not fire retardant. These two issues would need to be dealt with as a priority.

Alternative accommodation was discussed with the possible amalgamation of the Chorleywood Branch of the Royal British with the Rickmansworth Branch. If this was to occur then the Parish Council would take over the RBL hall and could utilise the space for a Council Chamber and use the Council Chamber for office space. However the final decision was yet to be made.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To authorise the Clerk to obtain quotations to have a glass panel fire door in the kitchen and to have the loft hatch fire proofed.

To continue the assessment of the office space.

To quantify the amount of paper being stored on site with a view to sourcing storing off site.

To check the trailing wires ensuring safety and investigate if the office should become wireless.

11/52 CLOSURE

The meeting having started at 8.00pm, finished at 10.43pm

These minutes have been checked by the Chairman.

Signature

Date.....

These minutes were agreed as a true and correct record at the Policy & Resources meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Signature

Date