

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 15 June 2015

At 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Present:

Councillor: J S King (Chairman)

Councillors:	Mrs B J Churchill	Mrs C Reynolds
	C Holliday	C K Woodward
	T J Morris	
Officers:	Town Clerk	RFO
	DSO	Facilities Manager

P246. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for his absence was received from Councillor Alan Beames

P247. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor T Morris declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a Member of Round Table. Councillors Mrs B Churchill and C K Woodward also declared a non-pecuniary interest as they were the Town Council's nominated Trustees on the Witney Corn Exchange Shadow Board.

P248 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: that Councillor T Morris be appointed Vice Chairman of this Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

P249 **MINUTES**

a) **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Policy and Finance meeting held on 23 March 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

b) There were no matters arising from this meeting

P250 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present

P251 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, VISION & OBJECTIVES FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk as circulated with the agenda.

A Member asked about the timescales of the objectives suggested by the Town Clerk – particularly the electronic banking. The Town Clerk gave the background behind the legislation and advised that the financial regulations would require amending before the implementation of electronic banking but she envisaged this being within this financial year.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Committee Terms of Reference be agreed;
3. that the Committee’s Objectives for the forthcoming municipal year, be as follows
 - a. full review of the Council’s Corporate Governance, Policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations with the implementation of electronic banking.
 - b. the grounds maintenance contract
 - c. a review of the staffing structure
 - d. a report of the Council’s property portfolio with all the land and building registered with Land Registry
 - e. the updating of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

P252 **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL’S MISSION STATEMENT AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Council’s Mission Statement be amended to say *“To seek continuous improvement in the quality of services provided by Witney Town Council, in order to improve the quality of life for the people of Witney.”*
3. that the Council’s Corporate Objectives remain the same

P253 **PAYMENTS OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO, along with the payment schedules, and bank statements, as circulated with the agenda.

In response to a members question the RFO confirmed that the contract with Vodafone had now finished.

RECOMMENDED:

1. the report be noted
2. that subject to confirmation from Barclays Bank on the technicality of being joint account holders, Councillors Mrs B Churchill and Mrs C Reynolds be appointed as authorising officers in respect of any amendments to the Council’s bank accounts.
3. that the bank reconciliations and statements be noted
4. that the following schedule of accounts be approved:

Cheques 29701 to 29739 and DD in the sum of £67343.25	Imprest a/c
Cheques 100992 – 100997 DD and Standing orders in the sum of £185362.56	General a/c
Cheques 29628 to 29700 and DD in the sum of £83429.54	Imprest a/c
Cheques 100989 to 100994 and DD/Standing orders in the sum of £340746.87	General a/c

P254 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO, which included the Annual Return and Financial Statements to 31 March 2015, as circulated with the agenda. She explained that the Annual Return and Financial Statements would be presented to full Council for adoption on 24 June, and highlighted the requirement for the Internal Audit to provide a statement and also the Council to confirm its Governance.

The RFO ran through the decisions from the standing Committees arising from this cycle of meetings which had financial implications.

With regard to the replacement bus shelter the Chairman had suggested at the recent Traffic Advisory meeting that the bus shelter located outside Marriott's shopping centre seemed pointless - it was only a getting off point -so subject to establishing ownership, he said it could be move to Burwell. The only cost incurred would be of moving it and making good via the internal maintenance team.

RECOMMENDED:

1. the report be noted;
2. that the recommendations arising from the Amenities Committee as detailed in the RFO's report be agreed;
3. that the recommendations arising from the Community Services Committee as detailed in the RFO's report be agreed, subject to establishing the ownership of the Marriott's Shopping Centre bus shelter, and seeing if it could be relocated upto Burwell.

P255 **NOTICE OF ANNUAL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2015**

The Committee received and considered the correspondence from Council's External Auditors BDO, informing the Council of the date of audit.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

P256 **GRANTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO along with the grant applications, as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the following grants be awarded:

Organisation	Amount
Lunchtime Recitals	£250
Oxfordshire play Association	£275
Adventure +	£275
Enrych Oxfordshire	£100

3. that the award of the above grants be made under the following powers:
 - a) **Local Government Act 1972. s145** – Provision of Entertainments
 - b) **Local Government Act 1972. S137-** Power of Local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised
4. that recipients are asked to acknowledge the Town Council’s support on their literature;
5. that a press release be issued advising of grant support given by the Town Council.

P257 **ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO and the Annual Investment Strategy as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted
2. that the current investment in secure banks be approved and that the RFO continues to monitor interest rates to ensure that the Council received the most advantageous interest rates, and cashflow permitting, looks to invest further funds with the CCLA.
3. that the Annual Investment Strategy 2015/16 as circulated be formally approved by the Committee.

P258 **TOWN HALL MAINTENANCE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Facilities Manager and the correspondence from the Witney Town Hall Chairty as circulated with the agenda.

A Member thanked the Facilities Manager for her report; he also thanked the Town Hall Charity for its donation towards the works. He asked the Facilities Manager if the works to be carried out could have one set of scaffolding in order to get the external painting done at the same time as the roof.

The Facilities Manager advised that this work required two types of scaffolding to be erected for both the roofers and external painting. The suggestion was that the roof is done first in the autumn to safeguard against the bad weather and then the external outside painting in the spring.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;

2. that a letter of thanks is sent to the Witney Town Hall Charity for its financial contribution to the works;
3. that the remainder of the works is funded from the rolling capital fund;
4. that the roof repairs are to be carried out in the Autumn, followed by the external painting in the Spring.

P259 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the commercial and confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

P260 **CORN EXCHANGE**

The Committee received and considered the Town Clerk's confidential report and the draft Heads of Terms drawn up by the Council's agent, Alder King, for a lease to the Witney Corn Exchange Trust, as circulated with the agenda. The Town Clerk explained that the Amenities Committee had raised some questions which she had sought clarification from the Agent. She read out his e-mail response. Members debated the level of rent, and considered that without sight of the Trusts Business Plan they were not in a position to determine the rent at this stage.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the confidential report of Town Clerk and the Draft Heads of Terms be noted;
2. that the Town Clerk requests a copy of the Trust's Business Plan;
3. that the draft refinement of the raft heads of terms and negotiations with the Trust be delegated to the Chairman, Councillors Mrs Reynolds, T Morris and the Town Clerk

The Committee adjourned for the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee at 7pm. The Facilities Manager and Democratic Services Officer left the meeting. Minute ref S261-S266 refers.

P267 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received a verbal report from the meeting held earlier.

RECOMMENDED: that the verbal report be noted and recommendations contained therein agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.35pm
