

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 24 July 2017

At 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Present:

Councillor: TJ Morris (Chairman)

Councillors: S E Bartington A D Harvey
A K Beames C Holliday
P J Dorward C E Reynolds

Non-Committee Members: B J Churchill (sub for C K Woodward)

Officers: Town Clerk RFO
Democratic Services Officer

F359 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for his absence was received from Cllr C K Woodward.

F360 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

F361 MINUTES

a) **RESOLVED:** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2017 to be signed by the Chairman with the following amendment: Minute F280 "bus stop" is replaced by "Play area".

b) **MATTERS ARISING:**

Minute F280: a member asked how much S106 funding there was for the Woodstock Road bus stop. The Clerk replied that she had been informed that the money was definitely there but she had not been told how much.

F362 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members received and considered the payment schedules, bank reconciliations and statements as circulated with the agenda. In reply to a member's question the RFO confirmed that the CCTV system had been installed in the Corn Exchange.

A member noted that the £1,000 deposit had been returned to the Witney Music Festival. He felt that the Council needed to be careful setting a precedent with this as other events in the past had not had their whole deposit returned due to the condition the ground had been left in afterwards.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the bank reconciliations and statements be noted;
3. that the following schedule of accounts be approved:

Cheque No.s	In the sum of:	Account
Cheques 30989 to 31034 & DD	£84, 575.92	Imprest
DD, Cheques 101054 to 101055 & SOs	£759, 107.36	General
Cheques 31035 to 31090 and DD	£75, 412.36	Imprest
Cheque 101056 DDs & SOs	£38, 146.46	General

F363 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO as circulated with the agenda. She highlighted the spending committees' recent decisions. A member asked if the Merchant Navy Day flag would cost £100. Another member replied that she would be purchasing it on behalf of the Council.

A member was interested in the proposal from BT to move to a Cloud system. She asked why it was needed. The RFO replied that BT had approached the Council as it was a system they were trying to roll out. The current contract did not run out until 2019 and normally she would be looking at options in summer 2018. Members were not keen to be pushed into something that was not required and felt that the RFO should review the requirement of the Council next summer as planned and not accept the cloud system at present.

A member asked if the £10,000 allocated for the bandstand in the World War 1 Working Party would cover the cost for a bandstand. Another member replied that it would be nowhere near enough and so it had requested the money be reallocated to the memorial project.

A member noted the S106 money for West Witney Sports and Social Club and asked if the Club had completed their works. The Town Clerk advised that the Operations and Estates Officer and she had met with the Club recently and they had agreed to submit all evidence by the end of August.

A member commented that for the Skate park funding she thought that the skate park should be under Sports and Recreation and the changing rooms under Estates Management. The RFO replied that this could be swapped around. The member added that she had an up to date list if S106 money from OCC so would circulate this to Committee Chairmen. Another member asked how S106 money was released. The RFO said that it depended on the restrictions upon it In terms of timing.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;

2. that the recommendations from the Community Services Committee – with the exception of the purchase of the Merchant Navy Flag – be agreed;
3. that the proposal from BT for the Cloud service is not accepted at this time and that the RFO reviews the situation in summer 2018.

F364 **BUDGET PARAMETERS 2018/19**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO as circulated with the agenda. The Chairman reminded members that in 2015/16 the Council had not increased the precept but last year it had had a target to cap it at 2% increase. However with the costs of additional projects factored in the figure had been 3.46%. He asked members if they wanted to do the same for the forthcoming year. There were projects that would need money to be spent.

A member referred to the NJCs pay claim as detailed in the report. He understood that any rise would be on top of staff increments. He asked to know how many staff were at the top of their scale. The Town Clerk replied that pay negotiations were not something that Council would be involved in directly but something taken up at a national level. The question for members was whether to budget for 1% increase as previous or to be prudent and budget for a higher percentage in case.

The Chairman thought this could be dealt with by the Budget Working Party so he would recommend leaving it at 1% at present.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the budget for 2018/19 is based on a precept increase of 2%, including a 1% pay increase to staff and that projects were costed in to give the final percentage figure;
3. that a meeting of the Budget Working Party be arranged to meet in September.

F365 **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Democratic Services Officer as circulated with the agenda. There was one application for subsidised letting from the Witney branch of the NCT. They had requested two sessions per week for an entire year at a total cost of £1,104. Members felt that whilst it was a worthy group, this was a large portion of the budget to grant at this point in the year. Other users had been granted three fully subsidised sessions and agreed that the NCT should be granted 1 session per month for three months.

The Town Clerk circulated a letter from Witney Radio, who had previously been turned down for a grant. They had written to offer the Town Council coverage for three events in return for a grant. They had also offered to promote the Christmas Lights. Members felt that the radio station should be covering such events as a matter of course. The Committee wanted a fuller proposal with exactly how much money Witney Radio wanted and what they wanted it for, plus what they could offer the Town Council in return.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the NCT be granted one free session per month for the next three months, and that they fully acknowledge the support of the Town Council in their literature;
3. that the grant be awarded using the General Power of Competence;
4. that a Witney Radio is asked to put a full proposal together.

F366 **I.T DATA AND SECURITY**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk on a proposal to increase the level of security on the Council's computers. Members were very much in favour of this and the cost at £300 was reasonable.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted and the level of security is upgraded to Panda Adaptive Defense 360.

F367 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND 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 confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

F368 **LANGDALE HALL**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk as circulated prior to the meeting.

She updated members on her discussions with the prospective tenant which included the adaptations required to the building to make it accessible as well as the rent negotiations.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the confidential report be noted;
2. that the recommendations as contained in the confidential appendix be agreed.

The Committee adjourned for a meeting of the Personnel Sub Committee at 7.10pm and reconvened at 7.58pm.

Cllr David Harvey left the meeting at 7.40pm.

F377 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered a verbal report of the meeting held earlier that evening.

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

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Chairman