

Malmesbury Town Council

Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Malmesbury on Tuesday 7th August 2007 at 7pm.

Present: The Deputy Mayor, Councillor A C R Woodcock
Councillors: J A Bowen, Mrs A L Davis, Mrs C C Doody, R F Sanderson,
M H Snell, and C M Vernon

Apologies: His Worship the Mayor, Councillor J R Lawton, and Councillor P J Goldstone

Attendance Councillor W G Blake

Public Question Time

No questions were submitted

Declarations of Interest

Councillors C M Vernon and Mrs C C Doody declared Personal Interests in agenda item 15.

7. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on the 5th June 2007, as circulated, be received and adopted.

8. Impact of VAT on hirers of the Town Hall

Councillors had received a report previously circulated with the agenda for the meeting as Report No.2, outlining the need to commence charging VAT at the standard rate on all hiring after 1st September 2007. Members were conscious of the impact this may have on non-profit making clubs and societies and it was resolved that fees for this sector of current users would be reduced by 7.5% (seven and one half percentage points) to mitigate the impact of Value Added Tax. The reduction to be in place until 1st September 2008.

9. Citizens Advice Bureau

Members of the committee had received a report previously circulated with the agenda for the meeting as Report No.3, advising that as a consequence of the refurbishment of the Town Hall the Citizens Advice Bureau would be vacating the premises by the end of August 2007. The Committee agreed that any future request to locate an interactive information screen within the Town Hall would be given due consideration.

10. Funding of the Town Hall Project

A report had been circulated as Report No.4 advising members on the anticipated delay in receiving a financial contribution from a developer under a section 106 agreement. The Town Clerk advised that borrowing consent for the same amount had been received from the Department of Communities and Local Government. It was resolved that a full report would be presented to the Town Council recommending that, if necessary, an additional loan be sought from the Public Works Loan Board to support any short-term deficit.

11. Formation of Assets Working Group 2007

Members considered the recommendation contained in the Town Clerk's report circulated as Report No.5 and it was resolved that a Working Group be convened to consider the future of assets held by the Town Council. Membership of the Assets Working Group was agreed as being Councillors J A Bowen, Mrs C C Doody, M H Snell and C M Vernon. The first meeting to take place on 14th August 2007.

12. Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Committee resolved to appoint Paul Hallam as Internal Auditor for Malmesbury Town Council for the period 2007/8 and 2008/9.

13. Section 137 grants

The committee considered a report previously circulated as Report No.6 and resolved that the award of £300 to the Malmesbury and District Twinning Association for the year 2005/6 would be paid from the funding allocated for small grants. The Town Clerk reported that two requests for funding had been received from local organisations. It was resolved that £100 (one hundred pounds) would be awarded to the Tuesday Club for the purchase of board games and the same amount to the Jackdaw to assist with the cost of publication.

Any other applications would be considered by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, supported by Councillor M H Snell.

14. Malmesbury Credit Union

The committee considered a request for funding received from Community First to enable a Credit Union to be established in Malmesbury. A report from the Town Clerk circulated as Report No.7 outlined the situation and it was resolved that an award of £400 be made from the funding allocated for small grants, recognising that the circumstances were such that a grant in excess of £100 would be appropriate.

15. Final Accounts 2006/7

The final accounts for the period ending 31st March 2007 had been circulated as Report No.8 and were approved by the Committee for signature by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk.

16. Current Expenditure for Financial year 2007/8

Members of the Committee received a report circulated as Report No.9 providing information on the current level of expenditure against the agreed budget for the year 2007/8. The thanks of the committee were extended to the Town Clerk and his team for the clear presentation and explanation of the Town Council's financial position.

17. Electricity Supply at the Market Cross

A request had been received from the organiser of the Farmers Market that an electricity supply be installed in the Market Cross area for use by market traders. The cost of the installation was included in the Town Clerk's report circulated as Report No.10. It was resolved that no further action be taken at this time as no budget provision was available but that consideration would be given during budget preparation for next year.

18. Lease to Friends of Athelstan Museum

The Committee considered a detailed report from the Town Clerk, circulated as Report No.11 and agreed to the inclusion of a nominal rental of £2,500 (two thousand five hundred pounds) per annum being charged to the Friends of Athelstan Museum for the occupation of museum space within the Town Hall. The rent level would be increased annually in line with the Retail Price Index. Councillors Vernon and Mrs Doody, having both declared personal interests in this item remained in the chamber during the discussion.

19. Christmas Lights

The Town Clerk presented a report circulated as Report No.12 confirming that the estimated cost of replacing the existing Christmas lights with a new LED low voltage system would be in the region of £3,000. It was resolved that the Christmas Lights Working Group would actively seek funding support from other organisations and if necessary report direct to Town Council with a view to securing the new lights before the festive season.

20. Internal Audit Report

The report of the Internal Auditor had previously been circulated together with a report from the Town Clerk. It was resolved that the recommendations of the Auditor identified by the Town Clerk be agreed.

The meeting closed at 21.25 hrs.