

Malmesbury Town Council

Minutes of the **Policy & Resources Committee** held on **Wednesday 2nd December 2020**
commencing at 7.00pm via zoom

Present: Councillors P Exton, L G Grant (Vice-Chair), W R Jones (Chair), K Power,
M Ritchie, P Smith, F Vandelli

Others Present: Gill Davie (Minutes), Richard Spencer Williams (Town Clerk)

- 1. Declarations of Interest:** None
- 2. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr S D'Arcy
- 3. Public Question Time:** There were no public questions
- 4. To receive and adopt the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 4th November 2020**

Cllr Vandelli apologised for not following up on the Safeguarding Policy due to other priorities. She will now progress this. Cllr Jones reported that after the meeting at the Lodge it was agreed to do further exterior remedial work to deflect water from the building and correct a potential damp problem.

Resolved that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 4th November 2020 be received and adopted as a true and accurate record of the meeting

Proposed Cllr Jones

Seconded Cllr Grant

- 5. To consider and agree for recommendation to Full Council the Budget and precept for 2021/22 (Report No 1, Town Clerk)**

The Town Clerk explained the figures on the spreadsheet, confirming there were no surprises in the projections as these had been agreed in the committees. Projections had been made taking into account the on-going uncertainty of Covid and the arrival of a vaccination. Detailed discussions took place with general agreement that the precept should cover the central operations, the work of the committees should be covered by income achieved by the committee and capital projects should be covered from the reserves, any CiL funding or possible borrowing.

Cllr Power raised the question of economic regeneration for the High Street. After some discussion over where grants and awards should appear in the budget, it was agreed to set up a P&R section within the budgets lines to increase clarity in this area.

After significant discussion and reviews of cost centres, it was agreed that a 2% increase to the precept was the appropriate decision given the impact of Covid this year and the personal and commercial challenges faced within the town. This

increase would still give a £19k deficit against the maintenance allocation, but cost savings would continue to be sought to reduce the operating costs.

Resolved: To recommend to Full Council at the next meeting that there is a 2% increase on the precept for the 2021/22 financial year.

Proposed: Cllr Jones

Seconded: Cllr Grant

Action: In the discussions the NNDR for the Cross Hayes toilets cost was challenged and the Town Clerk was asked to follow this up

6. To consider and agree a specification and budget allocation from the reserves for the purchase of a replacement vehicle for the Ground Maintenance staff. (Report No 2, Town Clerk)

The Town Clerk explained the background to the report, the state of the current van and its impact on the staff along with the challenges of finding a suitable replacement. A question was raised over the replacement and whether it should be an electric vehicle but likely costs, usage and the current requirements would probably rule that out at this stage. Both new vehicles and those up to 2 years old would be considered.

Resolved: to delegate to Cllr Jones and the Town Clerk to work within the parameters discussed to find a solution within a budget capped at £30k. Cllr Smith also volunteered to be involved

Proposed: Cllr Power

Seconded: Cllr Grant

7. To exclude the press and public for items 8,9 and 10 on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and confidentiality

Resolved: To exclude the press and public for items 8,9 and 10 on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and confidentiality

Proposed: Cllr Jones

Seconded: Cllr P Exton

8. To receive an update on the CCTV and agree subsequent actions for progressing the tendering process if required (Report No 3 Town Clerk)

The Town Clerk provided a progress report. He had received 2 quotes and was awaiting a third from the current IT supplier. Ideally these quotes should include potential footfall counting. Once the quotes were received it was proposed to hold presentations before this committee in the New Year. A question was raised over consultation with the public and it was stressed that community engagement was important. Given the current state of Wiltshire Council's finances it was suggested that this project was taken to the next Area Board meeting in February 2021, seeking a grant of £12k, ideally demonstrating match funding from bodies in the town. St Paul Without should also be contacted to seek a contribution.

Action: Cllr Grant will contact John Thompson; the Town Clerk will contact Ollie Phipps and Cllr Ritchie will speak to St Paul Without.

Resolved: to seek a third quote, to schedule short presentations from the suppliers to this committee as part of the tendering process and to explore the possibility of funding from the Area Board with Cllr Grant contacting John Thompson and Cllr Ritchie contacting St Paul Without.

Proposed: Cllr Jones

Seconded: Cllr Grant

9. To receive a report from the Personnel Committee on the review of the Ground Maintenance positions (Report No 4 Town Clerk)

The Town Clerk explained the work that had been undertaken to prepare a job description that reflects the current responsibilities of the Head Grounds person. It involved regrading the role, making it a TOIL position, and bringing it into line with the other officer roles in the Town Council team. The Town Clerk then explained the impact on the Grounds person's role and that by accepting these proposals the staff would then have clear job descriptions, contracts of employment, an appropriate remuneration package and recognition for their contribution

Resolved: to reposition both roles, accepting the proposed regrading and to produce and agree contracts of employment for both positions

Proposed: Cllr Jones

Seconded: Cllr Power

10. To receive a report from the Cloister Gardens Working Group and consider proposal for remedial works (Report No 5 Cllr Smith)

Cllr Smith gave a brief description of the state of the arbour, the ivy, and the paving stones. The proposal is to remove the ivy, clear the area, check the state of the wall and assuming everything is OK repair as is. The tendering process has been completed and a contractor identified.

A budget requirement of £17k from reserves would be necessary. These remedial actions are necessary to make the site safe and suitable for people to visit. Long term aspirations for the gardens will be explored and reported at a later date.

Resolved: to release money from reserves for this remedial work to go ahead

Proposed: Cllr Smith

Seconded: Cllr Grant

The meeting ended at 22.19pm

Signed:

Date: