

Wellington Town Council

Town Mayor
Cllr Phil Morris-Jones MBE



Town Clerk
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POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at the Wellington Civic Offices on Tuesday 5th January 2016 commencing at **7.09pm**.

Present:

Cllr S de Launey -Chairman	Cllr P Morris-Jones ex Officio
Cllr J Gorse	Cllr S Hall
Cllr F Burns ex Officio	Cllr C Mason-Morris
Cllr A Lowe	Cllr M Hosken

In attendance: Karen Roper, Town Clerk.

132/15 Welcome & Introductory Remarks - The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and wished everyone a Very Happy New Year. He then apologised for the previous meetings running over causing a late start for this meeting.

133/15 Apologies for Absence - Were accepted from Cllr R Perkins.

134/15 Declarations of Interest – None received

135/15 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1st December 2015.

It was proposed by Cllr Gorse, seconded by Cllr Hosken and resolved unanimously that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

136/15 Matters arising from the minutes

- **Visioning/Planning Event** – The Clerk reported that she was waiting for a response from Professor Colin Copus of deMontford University.
- **Sound Proofing** – The Clerk confirmed that the Centre Manager was still waiting for quotations from specialist acoustic companies and was currently not in favour of installing a sound cut off device. It was agreed that the Town Council disagreed with his view and further discussions should take place.
- **Wi-Fi** – The Clerk said that the installation was complete and Cllr Hosken proposed that all members are registered with the library to receive a code to enable use, this was seconded by Cllr deLauney and agreed by members.
- **Office Accommodation** – Members at the previous budget meeting had cut the £10,000 budget to £2,000 suggesting that Lesley's Room should be utilised for filing cabinets etc. The office should be reorganised to make better use of space, scanning and archiving important papers to create more space.
- **Web Site** - The Clerk confirmed the new site had gone live before Christmas but some of the links were not working and a lot of information still needed to be loaded onto the site. Members asked that significant progress is made before the next Full Council meeting. Cllr Burns commented that community groups have asked for the opportunity

to advertise what they do on the website and the 6 monthly Community Meeting Date is coming up.

- **Leisure Centre Management Committee** – Cllr Burns gave a report on the meeting held before Christmas outlining the benefits (quoted as £30,000) being offered by Telford and Wrekin including the continued provision of internal maintenance, heating, lighting, insurance and staffing costs and indicated that the Town Council may be liable for any losses the building may incur should the proposal not be accepted. Members of P&R felt that there was no benefit to the Town Council to accept this agreement and that some of the figures presented by T&W were unclear and needed further investigation, it was agreed that;
 - **The real costs are not clearly identified**
 - **The number of people using the facilities is unclear**
 - **We do not know whether the building is running at capacity**

It was commented that the Town Council already pays for the upkeep of the outside of the premises and needs to have a debate about what services it should be delivering, as well as ensuring the Leisure Centre remains a community and civic facility.

It was proposed that the Council employs a financial specialist to advise on the best way forward, Cllr Hosken moved the proposal which was seconded by Cllr deLauney, all were in favour.

- **Car Parking** – The Clerk said there was no further news on this issue.
- **Parish Environmental Team (PET) Negotiations** – A meeting had been held with the Borough just before Christmas to explore the terms in relation to taking on a PET team for Wellington. Discussions were inconclusive and further talks would need to be held. Cllr Burns commented that standards of cleanliness should be at least maintained if not improved. Cllr Hosken said that the duty to keep the town clean lies with the Borough Council and this is therefore double taxation. The Chairman said this issue was about standards and this Council spends £56,000 per year improving what the Borough Council does. The PET team would provide the additional benefits of a vehicle, an Apprentice and a more flexible approach to delivering the service.

137/15 Councillor Mason Morris left the meeting at this point having agreed a meeting time and date for the ICT working group as per agenda item 11, this was agreed as Tuesday 12th January at 12.00 noon.

138/15 Bowring – The Chairman reported that T&W had not yet confirmed they had completed the final work on the Bowring. The Café lease will expire shortly so the council can consider future letting arrangements. Members asked that the following be included in the tender;

- Specify the opening hours
- Services to be provided
- Include looking after the toilets

It was proposed by Cllr deLauney to go out to tender including the above issues within the specification, this was seconded by Cllr Lowe and agreed by members.

139/15 Personnel/Staffing – The Chairman reported that as the Committee had not had enough time to consider the business they were unable to report back to this meeting, a further meeting date would be arranged.

140/15 Budget Proposals for 2016/17 – The Chairman explained the budget figures that had been discussed by group leaders at the earlier meeting. He said that £5,000 had been cut from Communications and £8,000 from the Improvements budget making a total saving of £13,000. The Council Tax Support Grant was in the budget as income amounting to £15,450 and the latest advice is that this may not be paid by the Borough and should therefore be removed from the budget. This year's precept is proposed as £331,500, the

effect on a band D property is a rise from £50.25 for 2015/16, to £51.90 or £1.65 per band D property amounting to a 3.28% increase. Cllr Burns complimented the Chairman and staff on presenting this budget and asked about funding to improve the accommodation. The Chairman responded saying that essentially it had been cut from the budget although £2,000 remains which could be used to update office furniture.

Conversation was held around general costs and projects such as Market Street, the benefits of having a Town Manager and the current arrangement with T&W and the project Board. Cllr Morris-Jones suggested that the Council should look at ways of generating income. Cllr Gorse said that the Visioning Day may be an opportunity to bring ideas forward. Cllr Hosken said that a previous event run by Mary Lewis had been very successful, he asked that it be recorded that he does not agree with spending the public purse on appointing another Town Manager.

141/15 Complaints Procedure – The Clerk had issued a draft document and Cllr Mason Morris had responded with suggestions for improvements that had been researched by the Clerk and forwarded to members. It was agreed that the proposed amendments be made and the final document be circulated to Full Council.

142/15 Finance - To receive written reports from Deputy Clerk –

1. To agree receipts for November 2015
2. To agree payments for November 2015
3. To agree payments for December 2015
4. To receive details of Petty Cash payments for November 2015
5. To receive details of Receipts/Payments compared with budget for November 2015.

It was proposed by Cllr Hosken and 2nd by Cllr Gorse and resolved by members to accept and agree items 1-5 above.

143/15 ICT Working Group – It was agreed that the Clerk circulates the date for this group to meet as Tuesday 12th January 2016 at 12.00 noon.

144/15 The date and time of next meeting was agreed as Tuesday 2nd February 2016 at 7.00pm.

Chairman..... Dated 2nd February 2016