

Wellington Town Council

Town Mayor
Cllr Denis Allen



Town Clerk
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POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at the Wellington Civic Offices on **Tuesday, 5th September 2017** commencing at **7.00pm**.

Cllr S. deLauney – Chairman	Cllr J. Gorse	Cllr A. Lowe
Cllr M. Hosken	Cllr P. Morris-Jones	Cllr L. Carter
Cllr F. Burns	Cllr D. Allen	Cllr C. Mason-Morris

In attendance – Dave Hanley from T&W and Karen Roper Clerk, Town Clerk..

42/17 Welcome - Chairman – Cllr deLauney welcomed everyone and asked Dave Hanley to address the meeting in relation to proposed changes to current services provided by Telford and Wrekin Services.

43/17 TWS – Dave Hanley (DH) gave the following report.
The current 18 year contract with TWS runs out in April 2019 and the Borough is therefore considering the way forward to continue to provide the services and ensuring best value for money for the tax payer. Any new contract will be for 10 years with a break clause after 5 years. The Borough is looking for a clear, flexible approach for provision of services at a local level that delivers both continuous improvements and savings by use of digital technology and volunteers. The Bowring Park, cemetery and general cleansing are all opportunities to consider how things can be improved. The Borough is aiming to develop local partnership working particularly with Town / Parish Councils and their Parish Environmental Teams.

The timetable is as follows:

- Market Testing in January 2018
- Period of working with bidders July – December 2018
- New service providers in place by 1st April 2019

Members asked the following questions

- Cllr Hosken asked who decides what the standard might be. DH said they will be set by the Council based on local information
- Cllr Burns felt what he had heard was positive information and he thanked DH for opening the dialogue particularly around Bowring Park.
- Cllr deLauney asked if it might be better to have one service provider particularly around litter and the Public Realm as the Town Council already makes a significant contribution. DH said at this time it would not be appropriate but there is a break clause after the first five years when this option could be considered.

44/17 Gum Removal – DH was asked about the recent problem where the machine / operator had damaged surfaces on Larkin Way. He said the machine had been returned, another ordered and the operator would undergo training. Cllr deLauney said the Town Councils' intention was initially to purchase a machine to deep clean the whole town. DH felt it was not necessary for the Town Council to purchase a machine and that Wellington would be prioritised for a deep cleaning programme.

Members thanked Mr Hanley for his attendance and he left the meeting.

- 45/17 Apologies for Absence** – There were no apologies for absence as all members were present.
- 46/17 Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1st August 2017** - Were proposed by Cllr Hosken, 2nd by Councillor Lowe and RESOLVED by members as a true and accurate record.
- 47/17 Declarations of Interest** – None received at this time
- 48/17 Matters arising from those minutes–**
- **Visioning & Governance Event** - The Clerk reported that the date chosen at the last meeting, Saturday 7th October 2017 was convenient to Rob Francis. It was therefore proposed by Cllr deLauney and 2nd by Cllr Gorse to hold the Visioning and Governance Event on Saturday 7th October 2017, 10am – 3pm and a sandwich lunch provided for attendees.
 - **Defibrillator provision review** – Cllr Carter asked that this matter be deferred until further information could be obtained.
 - **Bowring** – The Clerk had received a report that the Oak tree behind the Café had a Preservation Order on so it could not be removed. Officers from T&W had suggested an alternative approach which would be considered at the Bowring Working Group on 18th September. Cllr Morris-Jones requested a letter of thanks is sent to Cllr Gorse for the donation of Bowls which made up a full set and is available for hire from the Cafe. Cllr Gorse said they had been donated by a third party and their details would be passed to the Clerk.
 - **Office Move** – The Chairman commented on the lease agreement process and the requested changes to include a break clause after 35 years and removal of the requirement in the current lease, that upon expiry, the Town Council would be required to bear the cost of demolition and removal of services. Progress was being made and he hoped work would be completed shortly.
 - **Office Alterations** - The Clerk had received a quotation for Office improvements amounting to £42,350.00. Members asked for a break down in the figure, Cllr Carter said he would follow this up with Officers.
 - **Flagpole** – The Clerk said she had been informed that planning permission would be required to install a flagpole, Cllr Carter said he would follow this issue up with Officers. Cllr Burns asked about the Councils' flag flying policy and it was agreed that this item be placed on the agenda for the meeting in October.
- 49/17 Finance** – Reports were presented for June/August 2017 and the following questions were asked.
- Un-presented Cheques were again questioned and staff were instructed to:
 - Cancel a cheque after 6 months and amend the accounts. A vote was then taken as to whether or not the recipient should be informed. It was resolved that letter should not be sent informing of a cheque cancellation policy after 6 months of issue.
 - It was resolved to include on the application form information that the cheque should be cashed as soon as possible upon receipt.
 - Cllr Mason Morris commented that a meeting was to be set up with Caroline to consider use of the £3,000 budget allocated for professional bid writing.
- Cllr Hosken proposed the accounts referenced a – e below for acceptance, this was 2nd Cllr Gorse and agreed by members.
- a. To agree receipts for July 2017
 - b. To agree payments for July 2017
 - c. To agree payments to date for August 2017
 - d. To receive details of Petty Cash payments for July 2017
 - e. To receive details of Receipts/Payments compared with budget as at 30th July 2017.

- **Banking arrangements** - Cllr Morris-Jones raised concerns with the origins and stability of Unity Bank which staff would investigate.
- **Charities** - The Clerk had received a complaint that the Charities are not being administered properly and this function had been included in her Job Description. Cllr Morris-Jones had previously raised the issue with the Clerk and a meeting of the Trustees had been organised for next week.
- **To Agree Budget Process for 2018-19** – Cllr deLauney suggested that the process be the same as in previous years:-
 - An initial budget proposal will be presented to the November meeting of P&R for discussion.
 - January P&R will finalise the budget for Full Council to approve at its meeting in January 2018.
 - Committee Chairmen would be contacted to inform them of the process
 All members were in agreement with the above process
- **External Auditor update** – No report had yet been received from the External Auditor

50/17 Project to bring Festival Venues up to disabled friendly standards – Councillor Fairclough has requested the Town Council applies for funding from the T&W 50 year legacy celebration fund to bring Festival venues up to disabled friendly standards. Cllr Mason Morris said that this year the Festival was using 19 different venues and this problem has been raised about use of the Live Lounge Arena and the Cricket Club. The Live Lounge Arena disabled access is not ideal as it involves a trip outside of the building to access facilities and the Cricket Club is problematic because of steep stairs. Members discussed this issue at length but were in agreement that it is not the role of the Town Council to support applications to access public money to be spent on private venues. Comments were made about making every effort to ensure that Festival venues are suitable for all, in the meantime the programme does inform people that there may be access problems at certain events. It was further commented that there is nothing stopping the individual organisations from making applications for funding.

51/17 Parking – The Chairman reported on the Working Group meeting held on 8th August where spread sheet evidence had been provided in relation to how the short stay parking had been received and the number of warning notices given during the settling in period. The actual enforcement period had started on 1st September and fines would now be issued. It had been agreed to install further machines on the long stay car parks to monitor activity before deciding the appropriate length of time for longer stay parking. The machines cost around £50K and the Town Council has been asked to make a contribution towards this. Cllr deLauney proposed a contribution of £10K this was seconded by Cllr Lowe and agreed by members. Cllr Allen said he had received complaints that ‘normal’ cars are parking in electric charging areas, the Clerk would report this. It was agreed that enforcement is required to assist with this problem. There was also brief discussion on future work needed to alleviate congestion on the Haygate and Holyhead Roads following completion of new housing development projects.

52/17 Review of Standing Orders and draft Community Engagement Strategy - The Clerk asked members to consider the documents and make comments by email which can be discussed at the next meeting. **The documents would be circulated to all council members for comment.**

53/17 Members to Consider Clerks Business Plan – The Clerk had circulated the plan and asked members for comment, the following points were raised:

- Cllr Morris-Jones said he had been assisting a business who was considering a move to Wellington but the rates and rents were prohibitive and a £1,000 per day would need to be taken to make a small profit. It was reported that the high rents were due to absentee landlords and this is unlikely to change going forward, the rates issue is being addressed

- with T&W and their various discount structures.
- The Chairman said that there was potential for the Town Council to buy property in the town centre to help with the empty shop problem in partnership with the Borough and subject to a feasibility study. It was reported that the HSBC Bank would shortly come back in use.
- A meeting is being held on Wednesday 6th September to discuss the future of the Market.
- Cllr Gorse asked about 'Team Wellington'. The following comments were made:-
 - Team Wellington is not functioning at the present time
 - Funding had been paid to Shropshire Enterprises from Pride in Your High Street programme as well as from the Town Council. Further information was requested in relation to value for money and match values.
 - Cllr Mason-Morris said transparency was needed and a breakdown of funds given so far was requested - the Clerk agreed to circulate this

54/17 To receive urgent matters for information only.

- **Personnel Committee update** - The Clerk reported that the Personnel Committee had agreed the following:-
 - To give High Street Vouchers to staff instead of a Christmas bonus to the same value
 - To provide training for all councillors in the Code of Conduct prior to a future Full Council meeting.
 - To provide access to all Councillors to Ollie, the online training programme from Telford and Wrekin
 - To provide further training session(s) for Councillors on the Office 365 Programme Both online and face to face.
- **Wellington Health Centre** – Cllr Burns said he is still receiving complaints about the poor service offered by the Wellington Health Centre. Doctors and Staff do not seem to stay there long and there seems to be a huge problem. It was proposed by Cllr Burns, seconded by Cllr Hosken and agreed by members that a resolution goes on the Full Council agenda to raise awareness of these issues.
- **Security** – Some Members expressed their disagreement with the decision to take all home addresses and telephone numbers off the website and requiring contact through the Office or through the Office 365 system. The reasons were explained by the Clerk and it was agreed to that all members should be treated in the same way and to monitor the situation.

55/17 To Agree Date and Time for Grants Consideration as Tuesday 3rd October starting at 5.30pm or 6.00pm depending on the final number of applications received.

56/17 To agree date and time of next meeting – Tuesday 3rd October at 7.00pm.

Chairman.....Date.....