

Wellington Town Council

Town Mayor
Cllr Anthony Lowe
B.A (HONS)



Town Clerk
KAREN ROPER
B.A (HONS) DMS
Civic Offices, Larkin Way
Tan Bank, Wellington
Telford TF1 1LX
Tel: 01952 567697
Email: wellingtontowncouncil@telford.gov.uk
www.wellington-shropshire.gov.uk

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at the Wellington Civic Offices on Tuesday 3rd September 2019 commencing at 6.55pm.

Cllr S. de Launey (SDL) - Chairman	Cllr. L. Carter (LC)	Cllr J. Gorse (JG)	Cllr S. Hall (SH)
Cllr. P. Morris-Jones (PMJ)	Cllr. M. Hosken (MH)	Cllr. F. Burns (FB)	

In attendance – Cllr A. Lowe (AL) (ex Officio), Representative from the Traders in Wellington, Cllr Roberts and Karen Roper- Town Clerk (KR).

41/19 Chairman - Cllr de Launey welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited the trader to raise his concerns about homelessness with the Council.

At 7.30pm, the Chairman closed the discussion and suggested he be invited to the next ICM meeting where the issues could be discussed further.

The Trader and Cllr Roberts left the meeting.

42/19 Apologies for Absence – There were no apologies for absence.

43/19 Declaration of Interest – None were declared at this point.

44/19 To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 6th August 2019 – The minutes were proposed by Cllr Hosken, seconded by Cllr Morris-Jones and RESOLVED by members as a true and accurate record.

45/19 Matters Arising

a. Asset Register Policy Document – The Clerk had circulated the document to members and had not received any comments so the policy would be forwarded to Full Council for confirmation on 10th September.

b. Bowring Park – The Chairman reported that further discussions had taken place and agreement reached on service charges and to ascertain a commercial rentable value. A lease would be offered for a 5 year period to include break clauses. The Town Council's Solicitor is updating the lease and as soon as the final documents are received, a further meeting with the tenants will be held to sign the document. FB thanked the Chairman for holding successful negotiations.

c. Metal Storage Unit for Tools at Bowring Park – The Clerk reported that the Environmental Team had requested a storage facility for tools and equipment at the Bowring Park. The Deputy Clerk had asked Borough Council members for a contribution from their Ward Fund to assist with the cost quoted at around £2,600.00. The Deputy Clerk had been advised by T&W that planning permission would not be required. Cllr Hosken had agreed to donate the whole of his ward fund amounting to £2,000.00 towards this

cost. Friends of Bowring Park and Bowring Café proprietors had also expressed interest in using the storage space. The Clerk therefore had asked for a further quotation for a unit configured with 2 separate areas and access points so the tools and equipment are stored separately. Members asked if other users were to be charged rent for the space.

- d. **Metal Unit for additional dining capacity at Bowring Park** – Members were made aware that the Café proprietors were considering installation of a further unit to provide additional seating for the winter months. On behalf of the Town Council the Deputy Clerk had made it clear that the Café proprietors would have to approach T&W for authorisation to erect a structure on their land and obtain planning permission. Members commented that care would be needed about where the unit is sited. LC said he would like to see the project managed report produced that detailed the proposed location etc.
- e. **Defibrillators** – Members requested the Clerk provide a full written report for next meeting including the current locations and usage of units.
- f. **Dothill Public Liability Insurance Costs** – The Clerk had sent the group a grant request form.
- g. **Signage** - The Clerk said she had contacted the T&W Officer dealing with signs and had received the following response ‘ *I apologise but we are currently in the design stage for our capital programme of schemes which is having to take priority over other areas of work.*’ The Clerk would continue to progress the project.
- h. **Finalisation of the New Council Offices Documentation** - The Clerk reported that on 22nd August the Town Council were informed that the documents have been sealed on behalf of the Borough and they would be completed and dated once the instructing officer returns from leave. The documents would then be sent to the Town Councils’ Solicitor, Michael Payne, who will register them with the Land Registry within 14 days because the lease is for more than 7 years. Failure to do so means the lease is invalid.
- i. **Website** – The Clerk reported that staff feel the arrangements are working well, finding the service quick, responsive and helpful. There have been some setting up costs to reconfigure the layout, transfer hosting rights and renew licences for both the Town Council and the Arts Festival websites.

46/19 Finance

Agenda items, 6a to d were proposed for acceptance by Cllr Hosken, seconded by Cllr de Launey and approved by members.

The following comments were made.

- The hanging baskets were expensive but look fantastic this year
- There was a formatting error identified on the spreadsheet relating to the telephone account showing a cost of £571.00 which needs amending
- For P&L, Personnel and WEST team headings, members would like to see costs split into 1:12ths or month by month

47/19 Internal Auditors Report for year ending 2018/19

Members were furnished with hard copies of the report. Cllr Morris –Jones said it was an excellent report and he proposed it for acceptance. Cllr Hosken agreed the report was exceptional and seconded the proposal. Members voted and all agreed to accept the Internal Auditors report for 2018-19

48/19 External Auditor Challenge Report – The Clerk circulated a redacted copy of the letter that had been sent to the challenger in relation to the Town Councils’ accounts 2017-18 from the External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn.

The outcome of the challenge would require the Town council to:-

- Resolve to approve and publish an asset valuation policy and carry out an appropriate valuation of all assets held
- Commit to review our Fixed Asset Register (FAR) and the valuation of assets annuallyand
- Maintaining the FAR in Excel to provide an additional numerical check

The complainant has no right of appeal to the External Auditor against their decision not to issue a public interest report. Should the complainant wish to appeal, application would have to be made to the High Court within 21 days beginning with the day after they receive the External Auditors' letter dated 20th August 2019.

- 49/19 End of Year Accounts** – Members received details of the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019 and the Annual Return 2018/19. It was proposed by Cllr Burns, seconded by Cllr Hosken and agreed unanimously to recommend acceptance and signature at Full Council on 10th September 2019. Members requested that the balance sheet and papers were resent by email.
- 50/19 Grant Funding** – Date for consideration of applications was proposed as prior to the P&R meeting on 1st October 2019. Presentations were anticipated as prior to Full Council on 12th November 2019. The application from the alcohol help group was referred back to the ICM group for Police guidance.
- 51/19 ICT Working Party** – Members agreed that due to time constraints this item will be deferred to the October meeting.
- 52/19 Councillors Allowances** - Members agreed that due to time constraints this item will be deferred to the October meeting
- 53/19 External Charities** – The Deputy Clerk had set a Meeting date for 6th September 2019 to administer these.
- 54/19 Personnel Committee Report** – The Chairman updated members from the previous meeting held at 6.00pm making the following comments:
- Members had received a synopsis of the appraisals carried out in August 2019 and the Clerk had been instructed to rectify the routine deficiencies identified e.g. purchase of tools / uniforms / signs for the toilets etc.
 - A verbal report was given on the continuing ill health of one member of staff and there appears at this point to be no indication of a return to work date
 - The pressure / workload on remaining staff members was reported as intense and discussion around the following short term solutions to deal with the problem included:
 - Reducing the duration of the Festival
 - Taking on a temporary member of staff (advertised already on Facebook)
 - Identifying rate of pay and hours needed and budget to support the temporary post
 - The Clerk was instructed to take advice from Telford and Wrekin and request a pay evaluation for the Job
- 55/19 Regeneration Board Report** – Members had received a written report and the following comments were made.

- The Chairman reported that because of the extension of Sally Themans' contract, to 31st March 2020, the contract for Jocelyne Fildes, who writes the press releases and handles much of PR would also need to be extended to 31st March 2020.
- The Great British High Street judges were visiting Wellington on 5th September, preparations were well underway.
- Cllr Burns asked what comes next, how can we help the market and its traders and we need to take stock of where we are now with the Vision 2020 report and develop a new plan possibly extending to 2030.
- Public Works Loan Board. The Chairman said a new business case was being developed based on a smaller unit and that could be ready to go really quickly. A new proposal is required because the original business case was reliant on help from the Borough and without that written assurance the case was not viable. The intention would be to get the chosen building surveyed before purchase.

56/19 To receive a report from the Wellington Environmental Service Team- A written report was circulated to members who made comments about Idverde's responsibilities for footpaths etc. Members agreed that this issue sits with the working party to resolve. It was noted that the team had done a great job in Sutherland Avenue.

57/19 To agree date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 1st October 2019 at 7.00pm

Chairman.....1st October 2019