

Wellington Town Council

Town Mayor
Cllr Denis Allen



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 in the new meeting room on **Tuesday, 6th March 2018** commencing at **7.00pm**.

Cllr. S. deLauney– Chairman	Cllr F. Burns	Cllr. L. Carter
Cllr. J. Gorse	Cllr. P. Morris-Jones MBE	Cllr. M. Hosken

In attendance – Cllr. C. Mason-Morris ex officio, 2 members of the public and Karen Roper - Town Clerk.

136/17 Welcome – Cllr deLauney welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Cllrs Carter and Morris-Jones for attending the Market Company meeting at 5.00pm.

137/17 Apologies for Absence – Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Lowe due to work commitments.

138/17 Declarations of Interest –There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

139/17 Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6th February 2018 – Were proposed by Cllr Hosken, seconded by Councillor Carter and RESOLVED by members as a true and accurate record.

140/17 Matters arising from those minutes–

- **Office Move** – The Clerk reported works are now completed and the legal paperwork should be completed in the near future. Members would need to decide on the placement of artefacts.
- **Wellington Health Centre** – The Clerk said the CCG representatives would be attending the March meeting of Full Council.
- **Traffic Flow and Parking** – The Clerk said the minutes of the working group meeting held on 7th February had been circulated and the Borough had been asked to consider options for Market Street.
- **Station Upgrade** – The Clerk said a response to the joint letter had been received, and passed to Cllr McClements to arrange a meeting with T&W Officers and the Town Council.
- **Pub Watch** – The Clerk reported that the administration had been taken over by the Pub-Watch group itself. The Disc programme would be established borough wide and be operated by the Police. Tom Robinson would be asked to demonstrate the software to full council when it was up and running.

141/17 Finance – Reports were presented for January / February 2018.

Cllr Hosken proposed the accounts referenced a,b,c,d,e on the agenda for acceptance, this was seconded by Cllr Gorse and agreed by members subject to members receiving the

breakdown of the vehicle costs as they were shown in the budget as being overspent. The Clerk would give members an analysis of the figures.

- **Wellington United Charities** – The Clerk reported that a meeting date for the Trustees would be set shortly.
- **Banking Update** – The Clerk said the NatWest Bank account had not closed and the Councils' balances had not been transferred causing a severe cash flow problem. Bank signatories and the Deputy Clerk have been trying their best to settle this issue but to date things had not been resolved. In the meantime officers had acted proactively and had secured a loan from the Borough to cover the payments due for January/ February and may have to do the same for March. Members of P&R felt they should have been informed of this issue and asked the Clerk to keep them informed in the future. The Clerk was instructed to instigate legal proceedings against NatWest Bank.
- **Loan Application** – The Clerk said that the application could go forward for this financial year. Cllr Gorse asked when the funds could be drawn down. The Chairman said this would be when the Council was ready to do so as he did not think there were any timeframe restrictions and any spend would be subject to a feasibility study and robust business case.
- **Additional Christmas lighting** – this matter was referred to P&L committee and Cllr Gorse asked for clarification that the budget allocated to Arleston would be unaffected. The Chairman confirmed that this had been agreed at full council and was separate to the matter referred to P&L.

142/17 **Bowring Working Group –**

Cllr deLauney proposed suspension of the Bowring working group subject to a meeting to be held with Dave Hanley to discuss future street cleansing standards and service delivery. This was 2nd by Cllr Hosken and agreed by members.

The Clerk reported that the current leaseholder of the Bowring Café no longer wished to continue with his lease and this fact had reached 3 interested parties by word of mouth who had approached the office. One applicant wished to open the Café, operate a delivery service and offer upmarket delicatessen goods. The applicant currently runs a successful business elsewhere incorporating a restaurant, bar, shop and is looking for a way to branch out into Wellington. They agreed to run the toilets and loan out sports equipment. They were very keen to take advantage of the key trading period of Easter Bank holiday and seemed professional in their approach. Taking into account the details of the offers made, the Chairman of Policy and Resources and the Clerk thought it was appropriate to offer a six month contract.

The interim decision had been taken because of the time constraints and in the belief it was in the best interests of the Council to make the best use of its assets rather than see the Café remain closed over a key trading period. To go out to tender would take around 8 weeks at least one Bank Holiday trading period would be lost.

The lease agreement offer states it will be for a 6 month trial period with termination on either side on notification of one calendar month. As yet the lease remains undated and the keys have not been handed over. The lease has a value of £1,000 representing payments for a 6 month period of toilet cleaning and opening. There is no impact on the Council's budget.

Cllr Morris-Jones MBE said this is precisely what he wanted to do last month and applauded the initiative, the café needed to be opened as soon as possible to provide the Public with a service and be less susceptible to vandalism.

Cllr Mason Morris said her first concern was the protection of the Council's Assets, the Clerk said there was an inventory list that had been checked and would be agreed with the new tenant when the keys are handed over. Cllr Mason-Morris then expressed great concern over

the process stating the action not transparent and directly opposed the view of the Bowring Working Group and the heated comments made at the last P&R Committee. Cllr Mason Morris said decisions should be taken by a team and everyone should be kept informed by at least an email. She suggested the WEST team could deal with the toilets but the Chairman said they are open 7 days a week, the team work 5 days a week and finish early because they start early so this would not be an option. Cllr Mason Morris challenged the Clerk to point out within Financial Standing Orders 2014 (accessed on line) under what authority had the decision been taken? The Clerk said the Standing Orders had been updated in 2016 and she would ensure they were also updated on the website as soon as possible. From memory she said that financial decisions up to £5,000 could be taken by the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman of Committees depending on the circumstances.

Cllr Hosken said he agreed that members should be kept informed but felt it is the right decision not reached in the appropriate way. His view was echoed by Cllr Carter. Cllr Burns said things may have been confused by the Chairman of the Bowring Working Group resigning and then matter then referred to back the P&R group as he was expecting a debate.

A vote was taken to uphold the decision and the Clerk was asked by Cllr Gorse to email details of the 3 approaches made to the office.

143/17 Wellington Business Meeting - Cllr Carter reported on a positive meeting with around 40 traders attending. He felt it was a useful forum offering the opportunity to express views. Some traders thought that free WiFi was felt to be of little benefit within the town. In response work was on-going to look at alternative grant provision to help local business with issues such as digitisation for payments. The Market company had been in attendance and responded to some robust questioning. They agreed to hold a traders meeting that took place at 5.00pm today.

Cllr Carter said the Partnership between the Borough and the Town council was looking to provide long term investment into the Town Centre. The Clifton project would be a key part of this and a meeting was being set up to discuss a way forward through Telford @ 50 funding. It was proposed by Cllr Carter 2nd by Cllr Morris-Jones and agreed by members to support the Clifton Group application.

144/17 Town Council Newsletter –The Clerk had issued an initial document that was currently at the printers for reconfiguration.

145/17 Signage – Cllr Burns reported he had worked with Caroline and a form had been distributed to members to survey their Ward. Cllr Morris-Jones said requests had been received to install directional signs to the Market. Cllr Carter reported that Caroline was working with the Borough concerning installation of digital signage.

146/17 Visioning and Governance – The Clerk had distributed the draft action plan, members complimented the Clerk on the document and asked that a progress column be added.

147/17 Lost Property Protocol - The Clerk presented an updated draft policy, it was proposed by Cllr Hosken 2nd Cllr Gorse and agreed by members to recommend adoption at Full Council.

148/17 Matters for Information Only

The Clerk was asked to contact Dave Hanley to explore the possibility of floodlighting the Church

149/17 The date and time of next meeting – was agreed as Tuesday 3rd April 2018 at 7.00pm.

Grant Consideration Panel meeting date – was agreed as Tuesday 3rd April 2018 at 2.00pm

Personnel Committee meeting agreed as Tuesday 3rd April 2018 at a time to suit either following the Grants Consideration Panel meeting or prior to P&R.

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