

MINUTES

At a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee on MS TEAMS on Tuesday 7th July 2020

Present: Councillors: Bates, Brice (Vice-Chair), Cavill, Drewett, Fuller, Hoar, Palmen (Chair), Piazza (Substitute for Halik), Oldrieve (Substitute for Bridges) & Whiffen.

In attendance: Cllr King, Cllr Kirk, Cllr Trigg.

Officers: Mr L Allan (Town Clerk/RFO), Miss H Bell (Head of Leisure & Information Services), Mrs A Quick (Minutes), Mrs J Weimar (Head of Resources & Venues).

Public: 2

Press: 1

3155 **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were given.

3156 **MINUTES**

a) **RESOLVED to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2020.**

b) **RESOLVED to approve as correct the Record of Decisions from the weekly briefing on 5th May 2020.**

c) *There were no questions.*

d) **RESOLVED to note the Minutes of the Civic Board meeting held on 26th May 2020.**

3157 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest not already included on the Register.

3158 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

Cllr Palmen had received an update from Wiltshire Council on the Future High Street Fund Application for Trowbridge. They have increased the amount to be bid for from £12million to £23million. They are considering a wider redevelopment of Castle Place/Multi Storey Car-Park with some interesting ideas. Cllr Palmen will send out to Councillors a brief. This is going to be considered at Cabinet next Tuesday. Cllr Palmen has some questions to ask but is pleased with this. Cllr Bryant asked if there was there any consultation? Cllr Palmen replied yes, there have been a lot of people involved in a series of Zoom meetings; public, groups and the chamber were involved with lots of feedback. The consultation didn't go to the level of detail which will be presented to Cabinet. Feedback from Councillors is welcome before next Tuesday. The Town Clerk stated there is some information in the cabinet papers which can be seen on the Wiltshire Council website.

3159 **OPEN FORUM**

a) To receive questions from the public.

Cllr Kirk stated he has questions to ask which he will put forward during the report. The Chair confirmed that he would allow non-members of the committee and members of the public to ask their questions immediately prior to consideration of the relevant items where appropriate.

3160 **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Cllr Palmen ran through points in the P&R Report.

1.6 Streaming meetings – Cllr Kirk stated that we need to learn lessons from previous meetings (i.e. data breaches) in adopting the new format and we need to be aware of the issues involved with streaming meetings.

Cllr Piazza asked if we know the cost involved of streaming meetings? The Town Clerk stated this is negligible as it is using free software and camera equipment which the council already has.

Initials.....dated.....

2.1.1 Grants – Cllr Oldrieve asked if we are going to be able to offer grants to community or charity groups if they need it? Cllr Palmen understands that we have the ability to help struggling groups when in a crisis with a one off payment. The Town Clerk confirmed that this is possible and the committee would make decisions on this as appropriate.

Cllr Fuller stated that there are opportunities available in other places in the town, such as the Town Trust and he asked if we made a grant to the Town Hall. The Town Clerk stated that it is unlikely we will allocate a grant to the Town Hall in this current year as they have already received a grant from the Arts Council. Cllr Cavill is involved in 3 grant giving trusts which are giving out minimal grants due to the current situation and would welcome advice on this. Cllr Kirk asked about the coffee shop outside the Town Hall, claiming that it is unfair competition. He has spoken to the Town Hall Trust Director who realises this could be a potential issue. Cllr Palmen stated that having more places open encourages people into the town. Cllr Kirk asked if we can ensure the Council are treating everyone on an equal footing. Cllr Kirk also asked about the A-Boards in the town. The Town Hall has 6 A- Boards which doesn't seem right and there should be some control over the number of them as they are on Wiltshire Council Highways. Wiltshire Council do not have a good track record of dealing with this.

2.1.3 Risk and Audit - Cllr Kirk noted that Risk & Audit minutes are not published on the website. The Town Clerk stated we only publish minutes of committees and full council. The Council has decided not to publish these as they are not required to be published by law, all recommendations resulting from Risk and Audit are brought to the Policy & resources Committee for decision.

Mr Jubbie stated R&A and Civic Board are not on the website. He would like access to the minutes of the toilet working group under the freedom of information act and wants to know what is their terms of reference. Wiltshire Council working groups provide notes and minutes so these should be transparent to the public. Cllr Palmen stated we are getting feedback from working groups during this meeting. P. Jubbie is concerned that people not attending meetings will not be aware of what is going on. Cllr Palmen stated it is important that working group comments can be made in confidence. R&A and Civic Board minutes potentially can be published if not commercially sensitive information included. Town Clerk stated that there will be formal reports from any working group if they have recommendations but they will potentially have a number of meeting before those are made and published. If minutes are required, all they would say is that the working group discussed the matter and there were no decisions made. It was explained that terms of reference were stated at the last Full Council meeting.

Cllr Piazza asked at what point does the working group start reaching out to the people who will need those toilets? Cllr Palmen explained this will be discussed at the relevant agenda item.

2.1.4 National Pay Review – Cllr Whiffen asked what the total pay increase will be in a normal year for the full council. Also, what is the current holiday entitlement for starters? The Town Clerk stated the current holiday is 21 days in a full holiday year, increasing to 25 years after 5 years with a grading increase.

2.1.6 Financial Implications of Coronavirus Emergency - Cllr Kirk explained that other businesses have asked furloughed staff to use their holiday during this time. The Town Clerk clarified we are now not paying 100% furlough. Juliet took advice from South West Councils stated we are reducing 1/12 of holiday entitlement per month for each employee on furlough. We are encouraging them to take holiday if previously booked but we need to be careful to treat everyone the same. We have advised staff who are working to use holiday wisely and to prevent a problem on return to work. Cllr Kirk have advised that many businesses have ensured that staff have used their holiday under during furlough. Juliet confirmed that we took advice from South West Councils and wrote to staff explaining they will have to take a proportion of their annual leave during furlough and we would have to pay 100% for these holiday days. We understand that it is not possible to insist that staff take all of their annual leave.

Initials.....dated.....

Cllr Kirk considers that the LGA guidance could be interpreted that use of the furlough scheme is not justified. Cllr Kirk's original question and the Town Clerk's response are detailed in the report to committee. Cllr Kirk posed the following supplementary questions;

- 1) Look at the proportion of staff we furloughed out of the entire staff at the town council.
- 2) Are we happy that as a council we are using double taxation as we are claiming for all our staff of Active Trowbridge, of which the income from precept is just under 40%. We are claiming for all the staff which does not seem to be in the essence of the scheme.

Cllr Palmen stated that this has been used in the same way by other councils.

3.3.2 Information Services - The Town Clerk stated the Information Centre will be opening on 3rd August 4 days per week; Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

4.2.2 Doric Park - Cllr Piazza asked if we have an amount that we have estimated that we are going to receive as income for Doric Park? The Town Clerk stated that the business plan indicates that we will receive over £200,000 in a full year which is sufficient to cover running costs and also refund the repayments and interest on the proposed loan finance. The Town Clerk confirmed that income would come from a number of local football clubs, Trowbridge Rugby Club and Bath Rugby as well as Trowbridge College for day-time use. There will also be opportunities for ad-hoc bookings. Cllr Palmen clarified that this documentation can be sent to Cllr Piazza. Cllr Whiffen asked if the users will be able to use the facilities of the Rugby Club. The Town Clerk said yes, they can subject to the terms of the Rugby Club. Cllr Kirk thanked Cllrs Bates & Hoar for the figures on the funding for Doric Park. He is concerned that we only have guarantees for 2 years in terms of what the take up will be. He is concerned that we will take this risk without the security. Cllr Palmen asked if Cllr Kirk is in favour of the project generally? Cllr Kirk answered if there is an income stream then yes but he has severe reservations about it due to the funding. Cllr Fuller stated that at a previous meeting it was mentioned we will re-evaluate the risk at future meetings before we sign off any borrowing application.

4.3 Park Storage Unit - Cllr Cavill asked about the post office wall. The Town Clerk explained the wall by the storage unit is a party wall which we have been asked to restructure resulting in some additional costs. Cllr Fuller asked if it is within the contingency sum? The Town Clerk stated it may be slightly more but this will be advised.

5.1 Calendar Of Meetings - Cllr Piazza asked if meetings will continue on MS Teams in September. The Town Clerk replied that government advice is to use online meetings where possible. Cllr Palmen stated it might be possible to use hybrid meetings when appropriate.

6.5 Neighbourhood Plans – The Town Clerk mentioned the lack of land supply has diminished the viability of a neighbourhood plan.

7.1 Transforming Trowbridge – The Town Clerk confirmed that Transforming Trowbridge has been dissolved and that the Town Council has received back its contribution of just over £1500. All other funders (apetito, Hitachi Capital and White Horse Business Park) have agreed to make a donation to the Town Hall Trust of their contributions, totalling £5,000.

Cllr Drewett asked for an update on Trowbridge In Bloom. The Town Clerk advised that TTC has taken some of their activities back around schools and other activities will be transferred to other groups in the town, including the environmental group.

8.1.6 Service Delegation and Asset Transfer - Cllr Oldrieve asked about the St Thomas' area as he couldn't see it included. The Town Clerk stated it is one of the areas being offered by Wiltshire Council.

Mr. Jubbie informed that Civil Enforcement fines can be handed out for blocking of dropped kerbs.

3161 **Community Governance Review (CGR) (Report Item 1.1)**

RESOLVED: That Trowbridge Town Council supports all of the transfers from North Bradley Civil Parish to Trowbridge Civil Parish contained in Recommendation 11 of the Wiltshire Council Community Governance Review including the warding arrangements and the number of councillors in each ward.

Initials.....dated.....

Cllr Fuller stated that this brings the town boundary in line with the WC Electoral Divisions and TTC Wards. Cllr Piazza stated residents of Drynam Lane are upset, is there anything we can do in terms of compensation for their council tax increase?

Cllr Oldrieve stated that when we took houses from Hilperton in Paxcroft Mead we gave a commitment that money was invested in the green space in that area. The Town Clerk stated we did this with all three areas which were transferred in 2017. The additional council tax over the 4-year period would be for services specifically for those areas. These are not yet all implemented as the land hasn't been transferred. The Council might make a similar commitment to spend some of the money on facilities in their areas although the number of residents is quite small in comparison, being approx. 12 households. The Town Clerk has drafted a piece to go on the website explaining issues around the boundary review and the council tax issue can be issued as a press release. Cllr Fuller pointed out that the number of houses is very small compared to how many will be there so it should be commitment to the current residents but not for all the new ones. Town Clerk confirmed that TTC cannot charge different council tax to different residents.

A recorded vote was taken, results are included in the appendices.

3162 **Environment Working Group (Report Item 1.2)**

The committee received a report from the Chair of the Working Group.

Cllr Hoar summarised that the first 2 meetings have been very well attended. Cross-party Councillors, Friends of Biss Meadow & some individuals have attended. Terms of reference are coming up with recommendations as to how TTC can improve their carbon footprint, improving environmental policy. At the second meeting we heard from Alison Morgan regarding the Future High Street Fund and the first recommendation to be put forward on ecology. The recommendation should be finalised by Thursday so will be put before the council at the next full council meeting. It has been a pleasure to be involved in this cross-party group. Cllr Oldrieve echoed Cllr Hoar's statement and looking at the wide scope of people attending he believed it will be a very effective group. Earlier this year we set ourselves the following tasks;

Staff Training – Covid has affected this. The Town Clerk stated K. Buckingham was undertaking this but he will find out progress & report back. H. Bell stated they spoke to different departments to find out who was interested in getting involved. Cllr Palmen stated the council staff are now more aware of this. Cllr Oldrieve stated the reflections are shown in reports and looks forward to staff coming forward with ideas.

Website & Social Media – Town Clerk stated there have been environmental posts on social media, such as providing links to Wiltshire Wildlife Trusts. We are happy to promote any further stories provided to us. Cllr Oldrieve asked if we could do something to highlight the Climate Emergency on the website.

Community Tree Planting – Cllr Oldrieve stated that the Environment Group did great things on this before Covid.

Procurement of renewable energy – Town Clerk stated all our electricity tariffs are renewable and we are looking at solar panels on any new buildings.

Biodiversity – There's a voice to promote the potential for this in areas taken up from Wiltshire Council in coming years. Cllr Palmen stated we are planting perennials etc.

Carbon Footprint – Town Clerk stated it was thought to be expensive but the most recent suggestion is that we get someone trained up to do audits ourselves. We need to identify someone within the team to do this ourselves. Cllr Oldrieve asked is this can be prioritised in advance of next year's budget.

Cllr Hoar thanked all Town Council staff as it is them that have to implement this and he is really appreciative of this. He suggested that we do some level of paid advertising, particularly on social media, to instil the benefits of what we are trying to achieve. The Town Clerk asked for this to be brought forward as a recommendation. Cllr Palmen stated he is impressed by how positive and constructive these groups are which is very encouraging.

Initials.....dated.....

3163 Town Centre CCTV (Report Item 1.3)

RESOLVED: That the Council negotiates a one-year extension to the monitoring service with the Shires to enable a decision to be made during 2021 with regards to the future of CCTV.

Cllr Palmen highlighted the importance of CCTV and we will look at the future of the service following the election and the election of the new Police & Crime Commissioner.

3164 Public Sector Equalities Duty, Reporting & Recording of Proposals (Report Item 1.4)

RESOLVED: That the town council works to implement the following list of considerations to be itemised against recommendations and motions considered by Council and committees, in line with the implementation of software to support the administration of meetings and councillor e-mail addresses, so that they are all implemented in time for the 2021 elections.

- Equalities
- Finance
- Climate
- Ecology
- Staff
- Legal
- Risk
- Benefit to Trowbridge

Mr. Jubbie believed that when Wiltshire Council stated 'none' against Equalities Impact it did not mean that they didn't undertake an assessment. Cllr Palmen explained that there will be a written trail of evidence going forward.

3165 Public Toilets Working Party (Report Item 1.4)

The committee received a report from the Chair of the working group.

Cllr Bryant stated that meetings have taken place and the remit was to look at possible options in terms of locations of what already exists or new buildings. We still need to look at costings. The HOS Leisure and Facilities is looking at possible grant funding. We have developed a Survey Monkey which is ready to go out. Cllr King confirmed that all Councillors are to receive this survey to promote to others. Cllr Brice asked if we can email out to Chairs/Chief Execs of specific groups. Cllr Drewett highlighted that one of the options is 'do nothing' to respect the last decision made. Cllr Piazza asked if we are going to make extra effort to involve people that feel excluded by not having toilets in the park. Cllr Bryant stated everyone has an equal say by doing the survey. Cllr Piazza highlighted that not everyone has access to the website. Cllr King stated that this will be available in hard copy form. Cllr Oldrieve asked if we are we going to be looking at running costs, Cllr Bryant answered yes.

3166 Capital Financing (Report Item 2.1.7)

RESOLVED: That the Council adopts an options appraisal for consideration of the financing of significant projects based upon the following: Option 1 - Funded in full over one year. Option 2 - Funded over four years. Option 3 - Funded with a loan, or alternative finance over a longer period, with justification for the period being considered. With the assessment demonstrating the impact on the Council Tax Charge of each option.

Cllr Fuller felt the wording was a bit restrictive as only giving 3 options may preclude alternative forms of funding. Cllr Palmen stated it wasn't intended to be prescriptive. Cllr King suggested stating 'eg' before the 3 options. The Town Clerk highlighted that the wording 'based upon' suggests flexibility. Cllr Hoar asked how you determine what is a significant project? Town Clerk said there's not a specific definition of 'significant' but it means where the committee is considering a project and needs to consider how it will be funded.

Initials.....dated.....

3167 Civic Dinner (Report Item 5.3)

The Committee considered the charging arrangement for all internal charges levied on the Civic Dinner, such as the hire of the Lansdown Hall.

The Town Clerk thought it best to consider this now rather than February next year when it might be too late. Cllr Fuller stated that it needs to be accepted that the income made by the Civic Centre should be considered. In part this event is a reward for Councillors and staff for their work over the year, particularly as Councillors are doing it for nothing. It is fair that we should be expected to pay for food but it must be remembered that we are working for Trowbridge. Cllr Oldrieve asked what was the cost of hire for the dinner. The Town Clerk suggested it could be approaching £1,000. Cllr Hoar asked if it brings any value into Trowbridge and how does that compare to the cost of the event. Cllr Cavill stated that the event is an acknowledgement of the work done for Trowbridge, such as for charitable organisations. During Cllr Cavill's Civic Dinner £2,000 was raised in the auction which was for charity and it is part of the cultural fabric and a celebration of the county town. Cllr Piazza asked if there is potential for a sponsored dinner. Cllr Brice proposed we leave the arrangements as they are at the moment. Cllr Bryant stated it is beneficial to the town and it is not a free dinner being £30 per ticket. It is for the benefit of Trowbridge, it builds relationships with our twinning towns and people go to say thank you. There is a substantial bar taking at the event. Cllr Palmen stated that it is the Mayor's responsibility for keeping costs on track. Cllr Brice's proposal was seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: To leave internal charges the same as previously, with all charges made as for an external event.

A recorded vote was taken, results included in the appendices.

3168 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED to approve the payments and receipts since the last meeting:

	<u>Payments</u>	<u>Receipts</u>
February	£548,787.56	£69,274.20
March	£569,623.54	£99,328.19
April	£397,235.18	£1,231,563.18
May	£227,638.87	£840,494.51

3169 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (Report Item 2.1.2)

RESOLVED to approved the Q4 accounts as per the report.

3170 POLICIES

Reviewed and Approved Data Breach Policies previously circulated.

3171 MEDIA RELEASES

To provide the residents with information on the boundary reviews, allocations of housing sites and the impact on council tax.

Availability of Survey Monkey regarding toilet provision.

3172 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 1st September 2020 on Microsoft MS TEAMS.

The Meeting closed at 21.05

Signature.....Dated.....

APPENDIX

Recorded Votes

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Community Governance Review</u>	<u>Civic Dinner</u>
Bates	For	For
Brice	For	For
Cavill	For	For
Drewett	For	For
Fuller	For	Abstain
Hoar	For	Abstain
Oldrieve(sub)	For	For
Palmen	For	For
Piazza	Against	Against
Whiffen	For	For

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 7th JULY 2020 ACTION LIST

RESOLVED: Approved as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 rd March 2020.	LA	To be signed by SP
RESOLVED: Approved as correct the Record of Decisions from the weekly briefing on 5 th May 2020.	LA	To be signed by SP
RESOLVED: To note the Minutes of the Civic Board Meeting held on 26 th May 2020.	LA	
RESOLVED: That Trowbridge Town Council supports all of the transfers from North Bradley Civil Parish to Trowbridge Civil Parish contained in Recommendation 11 of the Wiltshire Council Community Governance Review including the warding arrangements and the number of councillors in each ward (Agenda Item 7).	LA	WC advised. COMPLETE
RESOLVED: That the Council negotiates a one-year extension to the monitoring service with the Shires to enable a decision to be made during 2021 with regards to the future of CCTV (Agenda Item 9).	LA	Shires advised, acknowledgement received.
RESOLVED: That the town council works to implement the following list of considerations to be itemised against recommendations and motions considered by Council and committees, in line with the implementation of software to support the administration of meetings and councillor e-mail addresses, so that they are all implemented in time for the 2021 elections. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equalities • Finance • Climate • Ecology • Staff • Legal • Risk • Benefit to Trowbridge (Agenda Item 10)	LA	Reminder to managers and ensure included on agendas and reports for all significant projects.
RESOLVED: That the Council adopts an options appraisal for consideration of the financing of significant projects based upon the following: Option 1 - Funded in full over one year. Option 2 - Funded over four years. Option 3 - Funded with a loan, or alternative finance over a longer period, with justification for the period being considered. With the assessment demonstrating the impact on the Council Tax Charge of each option (Agenda Item 12).	LA	Reminder to managers and ensure included on agendas and reports for all significant projects.
RESOLVED: To leave internal charges the same as previously, with all charges made as for an external event (Agenda Item 13).	LA	Advise Aby and Paul re Civic Dinner.
RESOLVED: Approval of Payment of Accounts.	LA	
RESOLVED: Approval of Management Accounts.	LA	
REVIEWED & APPROVED: Data Breach Policies	LA	Aby advised.
MEDIA RELEASES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide residents with information on boundary reviews, allocations of housing sites and the impact on council tax. • Availability of Survey Monkey regarding toilet provision. 	LA/AC	Done. Done.