

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held at St Richard's House, Victoria Square, Droitwich Spa on Monday 7 March 2016 at 6.27pm.

PRESENT: Councillor G R Brookes (Chairman)
Councillor R G Beale (Ex-officio)
Councillor A Humphries (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor L Evans
Councillor A H Laird
Councillor R E Murphy
Councillor T J Noyes

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors S Best, Ms J Bolton, Mrs C Bowden, Mrs S Harris, Mrs A Hawkins, A Roberts and Mrs K Tomalin.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillors Mrs M A Lawley and A M Sinton, committee members and Councillors R J Morris.

247 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

248 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 FEBRUARY 2016

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held 8 February 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

249 NEW HOMES BONUS (NHB)

Under Minute No 174, Resources Committee meeting on 7 December 2015 the Committee had approved applications for New Homes Bonus monies as set out overleaf, and also set a time limit of three years for a review of the projects and evidence of expenditure.

In accordance with the NHB Protocol, these were reviewed by Wychavon District Council's Localism and Community Funding Advisory Panel at its meeting on 8 February 2016 who had returned the applications to the Town Council with a covering letter from Ms Cherrie Mansfield, Strategy and Performance Manager which stated, inter alia, that:

“The Panel was surprised that the Town Council had only allocated a total of £17,000 to the four projects, leaving a considerable gap between the amounts requested and the proposed allocations. This raised questions about the potential viability of the four projects and the Town Council's intentions for the remaining £52,706 of its currently available New Homes Bonus. The Panel is sending the proposals back to you and asks that the Town Council:

1. *Reconsiders the amount of New Homes Bonus allocated to each proposal, taking into account the consultation results, the financial viability and deliverability of each project.*
2. *Reconsiders Droitwich Rugby Football Club's proposal for pitch and ground drainage improvement works.*
3. *Undertakes further consultation on use of any remaining New Homes Bonus monies."*

It was advised that as from 1 April 2016 the amount of New Homes Bonus monies available would increase from £69,706 by a further £48,086 giving £117,792. Subsequently it is understood that the additional sum available as from 1 April 2016 would be £55,789 giving a total of £125,495 to draw upon.

Projects and previously suggested allocation were:

	PROJECT	PROJECT COST	TOTAL REQUESTED	TOTAL APPROVED
1.	Fortis Living – Westlands Play Area Project	£33,553.36	£33,553.36	£5,000
2.	King George V Sports CIC – Salwarpe Pavilion Refurbishment	£200,000	As much as possible	£5,000
3.	Droitwich Council for Voluntary Services – Community Garden	£4,950	£4,650	£2,000
4.	Droitwich (St Peters Fields Sports Association – Community Pavilion	£145,000	£50,000	£5,000
5.	Droitwich Rugby Football Club (now Multi-Sports Club) – Pitch & Drainage Improvement Works (No 1 Priority).	£41,001	£37,201	£0
6.	Droitwich Rugby Football Club (now Multi-Sports Club) – Upgrading the Training Pitch Floodlighting (No 2 Priority)	£51,403	£47,303	£0
7.	Droitwich Rugby Football Club (now Multi-Sports Club) – New Floodlighting (No 3 Priority)	£51,403	£47,303	£0

In the meantime it was reported there had been two further suggestions for the use of New Homes Bonus monies, namely:

- County Councillor Mrs P E Davey had advised upon the recent decision of Worcestershire County Council to allocate £500,000 for highways and drainage improvement works to High Street and had suggested that the Town Council might wish to identify funding to enable additional enhancement works to be

completed to complement the County Council's scheme, for incorporation at the design stage.

- Councillor G R Brookes had referred to his paper submitted to Wychavon District Council on 24 February 2016 in his role as District Councillor which was entitled "*Should Wychavon make use of the rich brine heritage of Droitwich to provide district-wide benefits?*" This proposed that Wychavon District Council should employ and underwrite the provision of a dedicated "Heritage Entrepreneur" for one year to properly realise the possibilities for Wychavon, and to focus solely on this project, and work with individuals, groups, and businesses in Wychavon, to develop the possibilities and seek funding in a co-ordinated way. Councillor Brookes suggested that the monies be put towards this use.

Councillor T J Noyes proposed that a working party be set up to look in depth at the projects and organisations to enable a thorough review to take place. He acknowledged that the public consultation exercise had perhaps been premature but had been done with the best of intentions as had the Town Council's allocation of NHB. This way forward was supported by individual members to enable the viability and deliverability of the projects to be scrutinised and the possibility of matched funding explored. The Town Clerk advised upon aspects of the NHB scheme including the Protocol and the need for applications to be determined one way or the other to give clarity as to the way forward for individual projects. Additionally, it was possible that other applications would be submitted until the monies were expended. She also suggested that a briefing on the NHB Scheme be given by Ms Mansfield and in the meantime the terms of reference of the working party and its remit be drawn up for consideration at the next meeting, prior to establishment of the working party.

RESOLVED

1. That a New Homes Bonus Working Party be set up to look in depth at the projects and organisations who had applied for New Homes Bonus monies to enable a thorough review to take place and to further consider other matters pertinent to the use of these monies.
2. That the terms of reference of the working party and its remit be drawn up for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee and thereafter the working party be established.
3. That the Town Clerk be requested to arrange for Wychavon District Council Officer(s) to brief Councillors upon the NHB Scheme.

250 ANNUAL REVIEW OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AND INTERNAL AUDIT

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006 (which amended the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003) the Resources Committee was obliged to carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls and to report thereon to Council. It was also required to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal audit and report formally, accordingly.

The Town Clerk had recommended that no amendments were needed to the Financial Regulations or to the Policy on Internal Controls at this time. It was noted that the

Town Council reviewed its Standing Orders annually, the last time being in October 2015 (Minute 14, Resources Committee 12 October 2015 refers) and the Policy on Internal Controls (Minute 139, Resources Committee 12 October 2015 refers).

With regard to the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, the Council had appointed a qualified local government accountant to act as its independent internal auditor. The Committee noted the Auditor's role and considered the level of internal audit currently required. It was noted that the internal auditor produced a written report for the Council after both stages of the internal audit.

The Committee noted that the Town Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, agreed with these arrangements, and was satisfied with the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal audit.

The Committee noted for information that Mr Fraser CPFA was to visit the office on 16 March 2016 for the interim inspection for the financial year 2015/2016.

RESOLVED

1. That no changes be made to the Financial Regulations but that they be reviewed at this meeting each year.
2. That no changes be made to the Policy on Internal Controls at the present time.
3. That the comments of the Responsible Financial Officer be noted and the Council, having reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, approves the current arrangements.
4. That the services of Mr Ian Fraser CPFA be retained for 2016/17.

251 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Creditor accounts in the sum of £757.06 were considered together with supplementary creditor accounts in the sum of £2,691.46.

RESOLVED

That the statement of accounts appended be received and the expenditure totalling £3,448.52 (£757.06 + £2,691.46) be approved and duly passed for payment.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm.

Chairman of Committee
11 April 2016

Chairman of Council
25 April 2016

RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 7 MARCH 2016 – MINUTE NO 251 REFERS

Cheques signed 7 March 2016

10775	Droitwich Waterways (Pamela May) Trust Limited TIC Purchases	£25.00
10776	The Green Board Game Co Limited TIC Purchases	£205.12
10777	PR Support Services Handyman duties - February 2016	£414.94
10778	CommuniCorp Clerks & Councils Direct - Subscription renewal	£12.00
10779	Royal British Legion Worcestershire County Group Three Donation towards Event 17 April 2016 - Queen's 90th Birthday	£100.00
	TOTAL	£757.06

Supplementary cheques signed 7 March 2016

10780	Top Cut Mowing Services Limited Cut back brambles & over hanging shrubs at rear of Tesco	£114.00
10781	Mint Electrical Services Emergency light testing December 2015 & January 2016 PAT Testing organs in Community Hall - £20.00 Supply & replace faulty fluorescent light - St Richard's House	£292.20
10782	Regional Digital Marketing 10,000 Visit Droitwich Spa Guides	£2,000.00
10783	Deva Designs Limited TIC Purchases	£96.77
10784	ADT Fire and Security plc Maintenance of Access Control System 29.03.2016 to 28.06.2016	£136.36
10785	Merlin Office Supplies Limited Stationery & washroom facilities for Community Hall	£26.20
10786	David Whyman Map Sales TIC Purchases	£25.93
	TOTAL	£2,691.46
	GRAND TOTAL	£3,448.52