

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held by Virtual Zoom facility on Monday 1 March 2021 at 6.56 pm

PRESENT: Councillor A Humphries (Chairman)
Councillor AM Sinton (Vice Chairman)
Councillor RG Beale
Councillor E Bowden
Councillor GR Brookes
Councillors Mrs JM Chaudry
Councillor DM Craigie
Councillor RP Hopkins
Councillor WT Moy (Ex officio)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Mrs C Bowden, G Duffy, Mrs K Fellows, J Grady, NR Griffiths, DJ Morris, RJ Morris and CM Murray.

The Town Clerk confirmed at the start of the evenings proceedings to advise all participants that the Zoom Meetings were to be recorded for reference and monitoring purposes. It was also added that published Agendas now included a notification that Zoom Meetings were to be recorded.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor AH Laird.

261. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were none.

262. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 FEBRUARY 2021.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 8 February 2021 by Zoom facility be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

263. TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC & PRESS

To consider the exclusion of the Public & Press by passing the following motion: *That the press and public be now excluded from the meeting under the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by virtue of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves financial and Legal matters.*

RESOLVED- The information was noted & to exclude the public & press for the next 2 agenda items.

264. TOWN COUNCIL BANKING- LLOYDS BANK DIGITAL PLATFORM OFFERING.

Lloyds Bank Digital Platform Offerings to enable making online payments and reduce the reliance on cheque remittances. The Bank offer two separate online platforms for non

– personal banking, Online for Business (O4B) & Commercial Banking Online (CBO). The latter is chargeable at £50.00 per month because it provides greater scope and functionality. The O4B option is more restricted and has more basic services comprising BACS, Faster Payments and Bulk Payments up to £25K and Statement View. The current online option used by the Town Council is limited to statement view only for reconciliation purposes. The CBO option full tariff was attached with the agenda for further consideration.

In general discussion it was considered that the CBO Tariff was too comprehensive and expensive for the operational needs of the Town Council. The consensus reached was that the Business (O4B) option is more suitable. The O4B facility would enable digital payments in place of cheque remittances up to a threshold of £25K. It was considered that this would be suitable and the larger value remittances could continue to be made by cheque payments. Councillor GR Brookes updated that the Coventry Charity operated a similar process which was efficient and fit for purpose. Councillor AM Sinton asked the Town Clerk if the suggested course of action would be helpful and appropriate.

The Town Clerk responded that the introduction of digital payment facilities would be very useful because the processing of remittance cheques had and continued to be difficult throughout the pandemic restrictions, as well as providing efficiency benefits.

A further question was raised by Councillor E Bowden regarding the bank charges paid by the Town Council. The Clerk explained that the accounts were Relationship Managed through Lloyds Bank within the scope of Commercial Banking. This is derived from balances and turnover. The accounts are classified under small organisations & charities and as such benefit from free banking, although the digital functions are chargeable additions. The Clerk confirmed that he would confirm and make sure that the O4B digital function was available free of charge given the Commercial status and current overall free banking benefits. If this is confirmed a request will be taken forward with Lloyds to enable the O4B digital platform to be introduced, without jeopardising the free banking arrangements. If this is not possible and further charges are necessary an update will be provided to the Resources Committee.

RESOLVED There were no further questions arising. That the information was noted. That the Town Clerk approach Lloyds Bank and make the arrangements for digital payments on the O4B tariff provided no additional charges are applicable. If not possible a further update will be provided for the Committee to consider.

265. TENANCY AND RENTAL ARRANGEMENTS – ST RICHARDS HOUSE

Tenancy and Rental Income Arrangements at St Richards House. To receive and consider a private and confidential report including a request for financial assistance due to the impact of Covid 19 from RBK Drive Elements. [*Private & Confidential report issued with agenda*].

The report was explained by the Town Clerk and considered by the Committee in general discussion. The consensus reached was to continue to support the tenants during this difficult time and where business operations are affected by the ongoing Covid 19 Pandemic & connected restrictions.

RESOLVED That the Town Clerk contact the Tenant and propose the following Considerations.

- The Understanding that the Service Charge elements have been waived for the two quarterly invoices for May 2020 & January 2021.Total reduction = £2442.68.
- The Commitment to continue to review the quarterly invoices going forward whilst the pandemic restrictions still apply, with consideration towards further waiver for the service charge element.
- A respectful request to continue to apply for any available Covid 19 Relief Grants available through Central Government (via the Wychavon District Council process) and to let the Town Council know the outcome. There is anticipation that the Chancellor is due to launch further business support measures imminently which may have revised eligibility criteria and increased payment values.

266. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.

Creditor accounts in the sum of £67.45 together with supplementary payments of £6,695.50 were considered for payment.*[lists attached with Agenda]*

RESOLVED- There were no questions arising. That the statement of accounts appended be received and the expenditure totalling £6,762.95 be authorised and duly passed for payment. (£67.45 + £ 6,695.50= £6,762.95).

The meeting closed at 7.13 pm.

Chairman of Committee

1 March 2021

Chairman of Council

19 April 2021