

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, St Richards House on Monday 10 October 2022 2022 at 6.43pm

PRESENT: Councillor WT Moy (Chairman)
Councillor G Beale
Councillor EJ Bowden
Councillor GR Brookes
Councillor Mrs J Chaudry
Councillor Mrs K Fellows
Councillor RP Hopkins
Councillor G Duffy (Ex officio)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors, Mrs C Bowden, J Grady, AH Laird & CM Murray & AM Sinton.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors A Humphries & RJ Morris.

153. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were none.

154. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 JULY 2022.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 25 July 2022 at the Council Chamber , St Richards House, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

155. RESOURCES COMMITTEE GRANTS 2022/2023

To note the attached acknowledgement correspondence provided with the Agenda for Grants paid in July 2022 to Citizens Advice (South Worcestershire, The Saltway Team for the Church of England in Droitwich Spa & Salwarpe - Hindlip – Martin Hussingtree and the Droitwich Spa & Rural Council for Voluntary Service *[for information]*].

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

156. STAFFING AND RECRUITMENT UPDATE PROGRAMME (PEEP).

As referenced at the Community & Amenities Committee meeting on 26 September 2022 candidates have now been interviewed for the Deputy Town Clerk (Community & Amenities) vacancy on 28 September. The successful applicant is Miss Katy Prew and the initial job offer has been accepted. Work is now proceeding for the formal referencing, contract and induction arrangements. The anticipated notice period is 4 weeks with an indicative start date into November *[for information]*].

The Town Clerk updated further that the referencing for Katy had all now been satisfactorily completed and a start date agreed for 31st October 2022. Councillor RP Hopkins asked for a brief overview of Katy's employment background which was duly provided for him.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

157. REVIEW OF TOWN COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.

Pursuant to minute reference 150 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 11 October 2021 the Town Council has adopted and reviewed the following version - . NALC recommended Model Standing Orders for England 2018 (revised 2020) & Financial Regulations (2019). This is now subject to the annual review [*Standing Orders and Financial Regulations attached*].

To note the following Agenda extract (Agenda Item 10 of the Full Meeting of Council held on 26 September 2022 and Draft Minute 115 refers).

The annual review of Town Council Standing Orders & Financial Regulations is scheduled as part of the Resources Committee Meeting on 10 October 2022. This will include a recommendation to include the additional clause for all lists of individual authorised remittance cheques and the regular review of all automated standing order and direct debit payment lists to be attached to the website under a separate tab, following approval of the relevant Council Meeting minutes. Going forwards this will then be effective following acceptance of the next scheduled meeting of Full Council minutes from 12 December 2022.

To consider that to accord with the External Auditors guidance received in July 2022, a separate tab should be put in place on the Town Council web page to upload all remittance cheque listings and details of all of the regular payments (direct debits & standing orders). To note that this will be effective following acceptance of the draft minutes of Full Council (26 September 2022) and all Committees at the next scheduled Full Council on 12 December 2022.

Councillor AM Sinton mentioned that the adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations referred to the Chairman and not the Mayor although it was accepted that this was the same. Councillor GR Brookes suggested adding a brief explanatory clause to determine this within the document for future reference. There were no further questions arising. The Town Clerk asked that the referenced External Auditors Guidance from 7th July 2022 in relation to the creation of an additional website tab for detailing regular automated payments be considered for resolution - as outlined.

RESOLVED – (1).That the adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations have been subject to the requisite annual review with no matters arising.

(2) That to accord with the External Auditors guidance received in July 2022, a separate tab should be put in place on the Town Council web page to upload all remittance cheque listings and details of all of the regular payments (direct debits & standing orders). To note that this will be effective following acceptance of the draft minutes of Full Council (26 September 2022) and all Committees at the next scheduled Full Council on 12 December 2022. This is with regard to challenge correspondence received directly by the External Auditor (Minute reference 115 of the Meeting of Full Council on 26 September 2022 refers).

158. INTERNAL AUDITORS FEES

To be advised that the Internal Auditor has notified a review of their fees and charges in consideration of the economic position. Correspondence dated 17 August 2022 attached [*for information*].

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

159. ANNUAL REVIEW OF RISK 2022/2023

Following the guidance of the Internal Auditor the Town Council is required to review all Risk prior to the end of each Municipal Year. The last review was undertaken at Resources Committee on 6th December 2021 (Minute Reference 184). This now requires formal review for the current period. Important updates have been added for Covid 19 measures (page28) as well as general additions throughout the document (including arboreal, valuations and insurance cover aspects). *[Full Risk Assessment for all Town Council matters and business operations enclosed with Agenda documents for review & consideration]*. There were no questions arising

RESOLVED – That the information and the Risk Summary reviewed for 2022/23 be noted.

160. OPTIONS TO OPT-OUT OF SAAA CENTRAL EXTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT ARRANGEMENTS

To note the attached general circulation correspondence received from the existing External Auditors. The details are self- explanatory and coincide with their procurement and renewal arrangements for the next five year appointing period which covers the timeframe 2022/23 until 2026/27. The Town Council have always maintained the approach to adhere to the recommended guidance and practices from Calc, Internal and External Auditors for these matters. The recommendation is to follow and maintain all current arrangements *[for information]*.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted and no changes to existing arrangements.

161. DECARBONSIATION ADVICE & REVIEW REPORTS AS PART OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME (PEEP)

To receive the information provided following completion of a second buildings survey for both of the Town Council owned premises. The original surveys carried out by the Service Provider (Pro Enviro) as at 19 May 2022 (received 22 June 2022) were presented to the Resources Committee on 25th July 2022. A second report was requested through Worcestershire County Council due to the inaccuracies and missing information reported in July. A further and more comprehensive survey took place on 5th September 2022 (received 28 September) and the analysis with full reports are attached covering both buildings. Due to elapsed timescales to reach this position the Service Provider has notified the following – that “the programme is aimed at supporting organisations/businesses across Worcestershire to reduce their greenhouse emissions and help to move towards the net zero carbon target through free specialist advice and assessments. It is a pilot scheme funded by the UK Community Renewal Fund which will end on 30 October 2022”.

An approach will be made to Worcestershire County Council to ascertain whether there is any flexibility with the application process and remaining timescales for PEEP Support Grant funding *[for information]*.

The Town Clerk updated on two additional connected points,

- (a) That an approach will be made to WCC to ascertain whether any extension can be considered for possible funding options given the elapsed timescales and delays attributed to the Service Providers for the PEEP Surveys and reports . This is with regard to the notification that the PEEP initiative finishes at the end of the month and practically more time is needed to disseminate the information from the reports properly and look at the suggested options on an informed basis, including any funding opportunities.
- (b) To acknowledge the request from Councillor RP Hopkins to approach the Service Provider and request that the calculation data within the reports is recalibrated with the revised energy tariff rates for electricity and gas for both building. This is in the context that the second survey was completed on 5th September 2022 and the reported data

accords with the applicable energy tariff rates from that time. Further revisions to utilities charging effective during in October 2022 and January 2023 will influence the lead in and cost benefit period predictions outlined in the reports – especially for Solar Energy options.

The information was noted. In general discussion the benefits of solar energy and the option to sell surplus electricity back to the National Grid/ Service Provider were highlighted. Other factors were mentioned including the diminishing levels of revenue seen in some cases from selling electricity back and additional costs provision such as replacement invertors for the solar panels. The consensus was reached to continue to look at options and in particular solar feasibility. The details under the aforementioned points (a) & (b) were considered important to help support the scoping process, as well as additional parameters including planning controls and conservation boundary matters.

RESOLVED That the information be noted and a further update will be provided when more scoping information is available.

162. INTERIM REVIEW OF BUDGET 2022/2023

The reports attached with the Agenda provide the net position by cost centre for the Municipal Year to date (period of analysis 1ST April 2022 to 13th September 2022) [*lists circulated with the Agenda for information*].

Councillor RP Hopkins asked whether the actual receipts position of £ 2730.14 for cost centre code 17 (Heritage Centre souvenir sales) was due to staffing issues or Covid?

The Town Clerk replied that the cost centre performance was lower than anticipated by this stage of the year for various factors, including emergence from the pandemic, the economy as a whole, other projects through Heritage in 2022 to date and some staffing upheaval. Positively it was added that the Community Hall revenue for room hire was currently very strong and is expected to exceed the budgeted target by year end (Quoted as £9148 actual receipts against £12K Target for cost centre 6). This will enable some cost centres to be reviewed further and consideration for offsetting the final out turn position by the end of March 2023.

There were no further questions arising.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

163. MEETING “OWL” TECHNOLOGY

To consider the attached specification, estimate and scoping notes provided by Councillor GR Brookes. This provides details of technology to consider for purchase which will enable recording and live streaming of Council Meetings in the St Richards House - Council Chamber location.

Councillor GR Brookes explained the scoping paper and benefits of the technology.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted. To authorise purchase of the Meeting Owl Technology as outlined within the accompanying scoping paper and technical specification Estimated cost provision outlined as £1049.00.

164. CORBETT MEDICAL PRACTICE – CPAD CORRESPONDENCE

To note attached correspondence with the Agenda received from Mr Peter Richards representing Droitwich AED. Minute extract reference 315 of the Meeting of the Community & Amenities Committee held on 11th April 2022 refers to the current resolved position for CPAD support by the Town Council (see below) [*for information*]

Community Public Access Defibrillators (CPAD's) – To advise that a request has been received through email dated 17 February 2022 by the Town Council from Mr Peter Richards. The enquiry requests consideration in principle towards whether the Town Council will adopt the current provision of approximately 50 operational CPAD's throughout Droitwich Spa. Pursuant to minute reference 271 of the Community & Amenities Committee meeting held on 28 February 2022 further information has been provided through the Town Councils insurer and Mr Richards.

The annual cost of maintaining 5 prime Town Centre location CPAD's is estimated to be approximately £300 to cover replacement consumables (pads and batteries) , servicing and maintaining a rescue ready status. Insurance cover is for general asset acquisition purposes and estimated at approximately £30 to £50 per unit per annum. There is no liability risk attached to the equipment for the reason that emergency use only arises when a casualty is already deceased. A working AED provides the chance that life can be restored without any guarantee of this because time is very much of the essence. A commitment in principle has been relayed to Mr Richards to proceed with the adoption of 5 key location CPAD's for the future. The indicative timescales are within 2 years, to align with the period after which Mr Richards and his Group will begin to step back from supporting all Town Centre CPAD's themselves. Details for the 5 suggested locations for equipment to be adopted by the Town Council can be considered in due course. There were no questions arising.

There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

165. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Creditor accounts in the sum of £2,598.40 were considered for payment. Total expenditure presented £ 2,598.40 [lists attached with Agenda].

There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED-. That the statement of accounts appended be received and the expenditure totalling £2,598.40 be authorised and duly passed for payment. Total expenditure authorised = 2,598.40

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Chairman of Committee

5 December 2022

Chairman of Council

12 December 2022