

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held at St Richard's House, Victoria Square, Droitwich Spa on Monday 14 October 2019 at 6.33pm

PRESENT: Councillor AM Sinton (Vice Chairman)
Councillor RG Beale
Councillor E Bowden
Councillor GR Brookes
Councillor Mrs JM Chaudry
Councillor DM Craigie

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Mrs C Bowden, G Duffy, J Grady and CM Murray.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Mrs K Fellows, RP Hopkins, A Humphries, AH Laird, DJ Morris, RJ Morris and WT Moy (Ex officio)

155. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were none declared.

156 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 JULY 2019

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 29 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

157 SPECIAL GRANTS

To note letters and emails of appreciation received for the following 3 Special Grants approved at the last meeting of the Resources Committee which took place on 29 July 2019.

1. Grounds Maintenance – St Marys Churchyard, Droitwich Spa. The Church of England Saltway Team.
2. South Worcestershire -Citizens Advice. Marie Henry, Chief Executive Officer.
3. Council for Voluntary Services, Droitwich Spa. Tonia Enderbury, Chief Officer.

[The information was noted]

158 WORCESTERSHIRE CALC (County Association of Local Councils)

Worcestershire CALC (County Association of Local Councils). Following an approach and introductory meeting to the Town Clerk which took place on 17 September 2019 , to receive a brief presentation from Mr Christopher Wayman- Executive Officer. Historically the Town Council have not been a signed up member of Worcestershire CALC which covers elements for the County Association (CALC) & National Association (NALC). The presentation will outline the benefits of membership for the Town Council including Elected Members and Officers.

The Vice Chairman welcomed Mr Wayman to the meeting. Mr Wayman provided an introduction and brief presentation which explained many of the benefits of membership for Councils affiliated with Worcestershire CALC. Details covered that Worcestershire CALC currently has active membership from 94 % of Parish & Town Councils in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, including 12 larger Town Councils. Over the past 20 years Droitwich Spa and Evesham Town Councils have not participated with membership and CALC are keen to invite the larger Town Councils to join. Benefits for Elected Members and Officers include networking, shared information, training and reference information. Worcestershire CALC collaborates with NALC (the National Association of Councils). Larger Town Councils have the option of a representative to be nominated on the Worcestershire CALC Association Board. The discounted introductory membership was explained to be £ 433.96 +VAT for the remainder of the current Municipal Year and £2083.02+ VAT thereafter per annum.

The Town Clerk updated that the newly appointed Internal Auditor this year had recommended a review of the established Droitwich Spa Town Council financial regulations & standing orders conducive towards consideration to adopt the more streamlined NALC approved versions. As previously outlined within the Internal Audit report and recommendations from April 2019 this work is ongoing and in course, although the task is significant given the size of the existing standing orders and financial regulations which necessitate review. The Town Clerk explained that membership of CALC would enable support and guidance to undertake and complete such tasks more efficiently with the ability to draw on the CALC recommended protocol, professional advice and published materials. Extensive support would also be available on other topical subjects including Neighbourhood and Town plans.

Councillor GR Brookes asked what the difference was between CALC/ NALC and the Local Government Association. Mr Wayman clarified that the LGA was more pertinent to District and County Councils whereas CALC principally supported Parish & Town Councils. The Vice Chairman thanked Mr Wayman for his time and informative report.

RESOLVED That the Town Council proceeds with membership of Worcestershire CALC for the remainder of the Municipal Year at the discounted introductory rate of £433.96 + VAT and renewable annually thereafter at £2083.02 + VAT.

159 FIRE ALARM REMEDIAL WORKS AND REPLACEMENT PANEL

Pursuant to Minute reference 105 of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 29 July 2019 two estimates have been provided by Bryland Fire Protection to accord with the recommended works for St Richards House & the Community Hall. [*Estimates circulated with agenda for consideration and approval*].

The Town Clerk updated that the estimate for the recommended St Richards House works (£840.18 +VAT) had already been instructed as this was below the Office authorisation threshold of £1000.00. The Community Hall site recommendations for £1403.67 +VAT does require authorisation by Committee prior to instruction to proceed with the proposed improvements.

RESOLVED That the estimate received for £1403.67 +VAT for recommended improvements to the Community Hall fire detection system from Bryland Fire Protection be accepted and instructed to proceed.

160 REGULAR AUTOMATED PAYMENTS LIST- INTERIM REPORT

Regular Automated payments list –interim report. Following recommendations by the Internal Auditor to be advised of a summary for all regular automated payments including salaries. Pursuant to minute reference number 43 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 June 2019, the internal audit report recommended that the report is presented at least six monthly oppose to being reviewed annually. List last reviewed on 29 July at Resources Committee. *[list circulated with agenda for information purposes]*

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

161 REVIEW OF RISK

Review of Risk. Following recommendations by the newly appointed Internal Auditor this year a complete review of risk has been undertaken for all Town Council assets, business and operations. Pursuant to minute reference number 43 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 June 2019, the internal audit report recommended that the report is presented at least annually for Members review *[Full Risk Assessment Report circulated with agenda for information]*.

RESOLVED That the information was noted

162 TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2019

Town Council Accounts for Year End 31 March 2019. Pursuant to minute reference number 39 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 June 2019 and minute reference number 55 of the Full Council meeting held on 17 June 2019, to note completion of the limited assurance review by the external auditor – PKF Littlejohn LLP. The statutory notices are confirmed as being updated on the Town Council website with effect from 10 September 2019. The “other matters” referenced as arising from the new Internal Auditors recommendations in March 2019 have been taken forward and further reported pursuant to minute reference number 43 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 June 2019. *[External Auditor report & Certificate –Section 3 and Notice of Conclusion of Audit for year ended 31 March 2019 circulated with agenda for information]*

RESOLVED That the information was noted

163 ASSET REGISTER

Asset Register - Following recommendations by the newly appointed Internal Auditor this year a complete review of assets has been completed and updated. Pursuant to minute reference number 43 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 June 2019, the internal audit report recommended that the report is presented at least annually for Members review. The updated schedule of all assets held is presented and measures are in course to progress verification of the current insurable values for annotation and full completion. *[Full Asset List circulated with agenda for information]*.

RESOLVED That the information was noted

Japanese Knotweed Westwood Lodge Allotments – Pursuant to minute reference number 77 of the Community & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 1 July 2019 to report that options were considered further at a Meeting of the Emergency Committee held on 11 July 2019 and Full Council on 23 September 2019. To update the current position and progress.

The Vice Chairman updated the following proposals following receipt of a second letter from Wychavon District Council dated 7 October 2019 via the Town Council Solicitors which further reaffirmed the no liability stance for the current Japanese knotweed contamination of landholdings at Westwood (DSTC Allotment land and Wychavon owned Westwood Public Open Space).

1. To place an order with an appropriate firm to start work on the knotweed ASAP stipulating the 10 year treatment option. The preferred contractor is to be at Officers discretion but indicatively based on the quotation of £1900.00 + VAT provided by JKL via WDC in dated August 2019.
2. For DSTC to have its own separate contract and management plan with the Contractor.
3. To enter into dialogue with relevant stakeholders in a meaningful way on the way forward.
4. Following the response of Wychavon to the correspondence and confirmation of their position, to end the involvement of Parkinson Wright in the dispute.

The Town Clerk updated the following additional information that,

- Referencing point 1, that WDC had notified on 8 October 2019 that their Contractor JKL anticipates the first stage of eradication treatment for the Japanese knotweed on the WDC land scheduled for 17 October 2019.
- Referencing point 2, no ratification of contract is required as any arrangements will be between the Contractor and DSTC. The previous stipulation to ensure duplicity of contracts with WDC is no longer applicable whereby both Authorities state “no liability”.
- Referencing Point 3, a commitment has already been made by the Allotments Association to support DSTC in managing any potential impact for affected tenants. A site meeting is hoped for between DSTC, the contractor and Association Representative at an early opportunity this week – subject to the proposals being agreed.
- Referencing point 4, a request for final settlement and to note the file in order to disengage the services of Parkinson Wright Solicitors acting on behalf of DSTC can be made following acceptance of the proposals.

RESOLVED That,

- To place an order with an appropriate firm to start work on the knotweed ASAP stipulating the 10 year treatment option. The preferred contractor is to be at Officers discretion but indicatively based on the quotation of £1900.00 + VAT provided by JKL via WDC in dated August 2019.
- For DSTC to have its own separate contract and management plan with the Contractor.

- To enter into dialogue with relevant stakeholders in a meaningful way on the way forward.
- Following the response of Wychavon to the correspondence and confirmation of their position, to end the involvement of Parkinson Wright in the dispute

165. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Creditor accounts in the sum of £3,301.41 were considered for payment *[lists attached]*

RESOLVED That the statement of accounts appended be received and the expenditure totalling £3301.41 be approved and duly passed for payment.

The meeting closed at 7.22 pm.

Chairman of Committee

9 December 2019

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Chairman of Council

16 December 2019

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