

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, St Richards House on Monday 3rd June 2024 at 7.03 pm

PRESENT: Councillor M Brook (Vice Chairman)
Councillor SJ Brazier
Councillor Mrs J Chaudry
Councillor GA Duffy
Councillor RP Hopkins
Councillor AL Key
Councillor AM Sinton (Ex- officio)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Mrs C Bowden, EJ Bowden, P Clements, DI Davidson, Mrs K Fellows, N Franks & V Humphries.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors GR Brookes, J Grady, RJ Morris & R Deller.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

41. MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 APRIL 2024.

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 8th April 2024 in the Council Chamber, St Richards House [*circulated previously*].

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Resources Committee held on 8th April 2024 at the Council Chamber , St Richards House, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

42. To note the Membership and Chairmanship of the Committee, as determined at the Annual Council meeting on 13 May 2024 (details at end of Agenda).

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

43. To note that the Emergency Committee membership, as laid down in the Internal Control Policy, comprises the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Resources Committee, the Mayor or Deputy Mayor , the Leader of the Majority Party and the relevant Committee Chairmen (Planning & Community & Amenities. The Town Clerk also being a member of this Committee [*for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

44. Renewable Energy – Solar Power & Carbon Reduction Initiative. – To consider the attached motion put forward by Councillor RP Hopkins towards resurrecting a review of suitable solar panel options for the St Richards House premises.

Additional reference information is provided through the attached Wychavon Carbon Reduction Assessment which was completed on 24th May 2024 as a component (CLG Detailed Impact Assessment) of the Community Legacy Bid Submission for the Heritage Centre project.

Officer's recommendation is to consider delegation of the options through a Resources Committee Working Group. In addition to consider the following,

- (a) An approach to WDC Planning Department for early professional advice for any considerations and impact for the proposals due to the proximity and alignment of the Conservation Area boundary line with the Building.
- (b) To arrange DSTC representation at the forthcoming Worcestershire County Council hosted Net Zero & Sustainability Conference on 13th June 2024. This will provide an opportunity for sector advice and guidance on available funding opportunities.
- (c) To ensure full coordination with the existing two emerging DSTC strategic projects for the building – namely the Heritage Centre improvements and the proposed conversion of the second floor in to additional lettable office space.

Councillor RP Hopkins read aloud his proposed motion and rationale. He commented that he did not consider it was necessary for him to withdraw the motion for the reasons of the pre – election period. The advantages and benefits of the solar energy proposals were discussed in a general debate.

For clarification the Town Clerk recommended consideration for the following approach

- To amend the proposed motion at this time to set up the delegation of the Working Group to take forward consideration of suitable solar options for the Town Council. This delegation can be cross Committee and need not be restricted to Members of the Resources Committee alone.
- The rationale was explained that the original proposal included references to resurrecting tendering processes. Procurement arrangements do include financial provision and the posting of an opportunity through “.gov contracts finder” inviting commercial interest would be a statement of intent by the Town Council. The Clerk advised that this aspect could be interpreted as a significant change and as such would be better placed as a deferment for further informed consideration – after the pre- election period has finished.
- The Town Clerk explained that the suggested solar proposals had been well received by Elected Members for consideration in principle following the early evaluations during 2021/2022. Measured consideration at this meeting to include both the precaution for sensitivity during the pre – election period and the need to coordinate further information was intended to achieve a workable compromise. It was added that a scenario arising where the originally proposed motion was put forward and not accepted would be a less than positive outcome for the Town Council – for the reason that in that eventuality the motion would be precluded for any further consideration for a period of six months.
- The advice was to delegate the Working Group as part of this meeting , then arrange a suitable meeting for the resolved forum to interpret various feasibility factors including points a, b and c listed above. In addition the requirement to consider a professional structural survey of the building roof was recommended at an early stage for the reason that the premises dated from 1935. The indicative timescales for progression of the initiative through the Working Group meeting was suggested towards mid- July and/or to align with the next scheduled Resources Committee meeting on 22nd July 2024.

The consensus was to support the recommended approach explained by the Town Clerk. The proposed motion was changed to simply form a Working Group Delegation of Elected Members (with Officers support) towards resurrecting a review of suitable solar panel options for the St Richards House premises. Councillor Hopkins confirmed that he would

help coordinate suggested dates and times for the Working Group to consider for the first meeting – indicatively towards mid- July

RESOLVED To form a Working Group Delegation of Elected Members (with Officers support) towards resurrecting a review of suitable solar panel options for the St Richards House premises. Elected Members putting themselves forward to comprise the Working Group were noted as Councillors S Brazier, M Brook, GA Duffy, N Franks, RP Hopkins & AL Key.

45. To consider the exclusion of the Public and 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.

The Town Clerk explained that this was for the reason that the next two agenda items covered matters of commercial sensitivity through Contractual Arrangements.

RESOLVED 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.

46. Cloud and Wireless Broadband – Pursuant to draft minute reference 369 /2023-2024 of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 26 February 2024, to confirm that the installation has been completed for the main part on Wednesday 22nd May 2024. This accords with the resolution to confirm arrangements for the transition of the existing Office phones and Broadband systems to the new provider and digitalised format after 1st April 2024. Some aspects remain outstanding and will be addressed by the new Service Provider during the next few weeks. There has been some business impact due to the interruption to computers. The full transition of the new phone system requires final handover of listed numbers between the old and new providers. There were no questions arising [*for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

47. Asset Media Signage – Since last reported in February 2024 there has been no further responses from the Service Provider. Minute Reference 219/2023-2024 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 4th December 2023 refers.

From the Resources Committee meeting held on 8th April 2024 to confirm the attached actions taken. The Town Clerk verbally updated the current position referring to the private and confidential report which had been provided with the Agenda. There were no questions arising [*for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted

48. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Creditor accounts in the sum of £were considered for payment. Total expenditure presented **£21,655.26** [*full list attached with Agenda*].

Total expenditure authorised = £21,655.26

RESOLVED-. That the statement of accounts appended be received and the expenditure totalling £21,655.26 be authorised and duly passed for payment. Total expenditure authorised =£21,655.26

The meeting closed at 8.12pm.

Chairman of Committee

22 July 2024

Chairman of Council

17 June 2024