



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF POLICY, FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD [As an electronically convened session] COMMENCING AT 6.00PM ON
WEDNESDAY 22nd APRIL 2020**

Present: Councillors W. Matthews, Chairman (Presiding), A. Mayling, C. Gibson
C. Jordan and K. Bembey

In Attendance: S. Bennett (Clerk)
M Kennedy (Outgoing Interim Clerk) and
M. Haley (Administration Officer) – Minutes taken by M Haley.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman opened the meeting in welcoming and introducing the new Clerk [in post w.e.f 20th April 2020] and explained the arrangements and format for the meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Covid C19 Bill & regulations.

84. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No Apologies were received.

85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared

86. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman explained the need for the meeting and public participation would be confined to the Agenda items shown below. Public participation would be by Zoom, and residents signed in would be welcome to place questions/comments at this time.

1 member of the public logged on to the meeting but no items were raised at this point

87. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of

1. Policy Finance and General Purpose Committee – Held 5th February and
2. Human Resources Committee – Held 26th February

be received, approved and adopted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

88. HR COMMITTEE

Noted and Agreed as detailed above.

89. PROGRESS REPORT

The Chairman presented to Council the Progress Report prepared by the Interim Clerk. The following points were raised for further discussion:

- **Banking and Investment** – Pending receipt of the Precept from the new Council - Buckinghamshire County, £40,000.00 has been transferred from the CCLA Account to Metro Bank.
- **IT Service & Administration of IT Account** – As a result of the COVID 19 remote working arrangements, the purchase of 3 new Lap Tops and reconfiguration of an existing unit amounting to approximately £5,000.00 had been brought forward and will need to be covered from the 2020/21 budget for provision for Tablets for Councillors.
- **Health and Safety Issues** – additional item.

Two recent events at the Recreation Ground were noted:

- Child on a pedal cycle had ridden into an elderly resident of Saxon Court over the Easter Weekend. Notices have been posted at the Recreation regarding

cycling in the park other than in designated area of the BMX track and the car park and access to the High Street.

- Four youths on the evening of 16th April lit a BBQ on the Tyre Swing in the youth area of the Recreation Ground. This unfortunately resulted in the swing catching fire. Whilst the incident was witnessed it was not captured on CCTV and they escaped via the Allotments. Both the Police and Fire attended and the incident was reported and treated as arson by the Police. The Council will need to claim through insurance (subject to the excess of £250.00) for replacement of same.

Noted and Agreed –That the Progress Report subject to the aforementioned is accepted.

90. **CLERKS REPORT**

The Interim Clerk had prepared a report for presentation and the new Clerk updated the Committee as under:

(a) **Review of Council Policies:**

- (i) Local Government Pension Scheme – **Noted and Agreed** that the Pensions Discretions Policy statement be adopted.
- (ii) Green Belt Policy – **Noted** the paper is still “work in progress” – will need to introduce measures to monitor progress to ensure compliance.
- (iii) Annual Investment Strategy – Amendments have been made to the AIS plan ADOPTED in November 2018 and set out in the revised document circulated to members. **Noted and Agreed** to accept the amendments as detailed therein.

(b) **Allowances for Parish Councillors:**

Noted but given the current situation not in favour of pursuing Allowances and Payments as previously proposed. **Agreed** reference to Chairman’s Allowance be renamed to avoid confusion.

(c) **Window Flowers Contract:**

Order placed prior to lockdown but awaiting confirmation of order. Anticipated installation end of May/early June. **Noted and Agreed** to approve **retrospective expenditure of £5,966.80** order for the provision of summer Hanging Baskets. Clerk to check progress and that the Contractor will be able fulfil the Contract as anticipated.

(d) **GDPR:**

A large amount of detail is on sharepoint for dissemination. **Noted and agreed** to accept this as an “Interim Report” so that the new Clerk can fully review same to cover the Councils changing needs. Thanks noted to Interim Clerk for his work to-date.

Action – New Clerk to review same and report back

(e) **Business Continuity Policy:**

First draft of Policy circulated but given current situation will use it as “work in progress” to form basis against which to benchmark changes in need of current operations during COVID C19 arrangements,

(f) **The Community Hub Repair Café and Charging Policy:**

Proposals now on hold – but noted the following items:

- Hub facility and Charging. Community and not for profit use will continue to enjoy free use of the hub.
- Will introduce charging for other usage including surgery for MP/County Council activities.
- CAB and Housing Support – no charge .

(g) **Christmas Tree Lighting (Removal redundant lighting):**

Reported to Committee that 3 trees need to have the lighting (which is now considered life expired) to be removed as two of the tress are also considered to be too weak to host further lighting.

- **Noted** awaiting feed back from Iver Heath Residents Association regarding their preference for replacement feature.
- Richings Park have responded with proposals.
- Clerk reported now has new quote and will arrange to get working group organised as cut off date for new orders will be end of June.
- Remaining budget allocated for the year 2020/21 - £4,000.00

(h) Colne Valley 2020/21

The Annual contribution is now due and they have requested a grant of £2,500.00 from Council, as part of their Bringing the Colne Valley indoors project. Other contributions come from CIC funds including Cola Cola, Heathrow Community Funding, Heritage Lottery Fund.

Noted and agreed to approve expenditure contribution of £2,500.00 to the project.

(i) Grant Application – Domestic Abuse Survivors:

A grant application of £200.00 has been received from Vicky Wheaton the founder of DAS towards the cost of a van. Noted that she has also received help from London Borough of Hillingdon. Noted that this is the first year of operation, so no Accounts available for ratification. and **Noted and Agreed to facilitate approve** the Application for grant of £200.00 the coming year.

(j) New Policy on Virtual Meetings:

New Policy on holding and managing virtual/remote meetings has been presented to Council in accordance with “The Local Authorities (Cononavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings [England] Regulations 2020) and available on Sharepoint for reference.

Noted and Agreed that Virtual Meetings Policy Be adopted.

(k) Revision to Standing Orders:

Underpinning the requirements to meet the above regulations and provisions for Virtual Meetings, the new Clerk has put a paper as “work in progress” to form a working framework for such meetings. Main provisions:

- Notice of meetings – Need at least one hard copy to be posted with e notice on the website 3 days beforehand.
- Need to extend publication across all platforms and
- Include Residents Associations, Buckinghamshire Councillors & T.V.P.

Noted and Agreed to adopt revision to Standing Orders.

(l) Mobile Phone for new Clerk:

Existing phone are over 3 years old and may not facilitate full access to off site working. Clerk will put together new report identifying needs, but at this stage need to source a compatible phone for the Clerk. With this in mind the Clerk has identified a Baseline Samsung on a 12 month contract at a cost of £19.06 per month.

Resolved that the Clerk will prepare a full report for presentation to Council. **Noted and agreed** that in the interim the Clerk will secure a new phone on a 12 month contract.

(m) Changes to Existing Mandate:

As a result of the Appointment of the new Clerk, the Committee were asked to approve the following changes to existing mandates:

- **Metro Bank**

- (a) Mrs Stephanie Bennett to replace Mr Michael Kennedy as the Councils authorised individual to contact the Bank on all banking matters.
- (b) Mrs Stephanie Bennett be authorised to hold a Metro bank Debit Card and that the current card held by mr Michel Kennedy be cancelled.
- (c) Mrs Stephanie Bennett be authorised to have access to the Metro Bank online Business banking for viewing the bank balance and all debit and credit transactions accordingly.

- **Churches Charities and Local Authorities – (CCLA)**
 - (a) Mrs Stephanie Bennett be authorised to make transfers from the Councils CCLA Account to the Council's nominated Bank (currently Metro Bank) and from nominated Account to CCLA for the purpose of maintain the Councils cash flow and optimising the Council's income generation by CCLA.
- Nationwide
 - (a) Mrs Stephanie Bennett to replace Mr Mike Kennedy as the Council's authorised individual to contact the Society in respect of all banking matters, and manage transfers between the above accounts.

It was **resolved that** the Clerk be authorised to make all arrangements with each of the institutions to change the mandated authorised officer as detailed above.

(n) Arrangements for Virtual Meetings:

Thank you noted to Cllr Ann Mayling for use of her Zoom Account to facilitate current meeting. Clerk reported that the Council can have it's own Account for a cost of £11.99 per month

Noted and agreed that the Clerk be authorised to open a Zoom Account for the use of Council to hold virtual meetings.

91 **CHAIRMANS REPORT.**

(a) Current Office and staffing arrangements:

The Chairman confirmed the Clerk is now in post and will be working from the Office, whilst other Office staff will continue to work from home. Ground team are working on a reduced work plan on a rota basis to maintain the Councils property and grounds. Thanks were extended to Lorraine, Margaret together with Cllr Ann Mayling and husband John for their work with the Covid 19 Community care Kits.

(b) Vacancies – Councillors

We now have 4 vacancies for Councillors, and guidance in light of the postponement of the Local Government Elections from May 2020 to 2021 and the new regulations has now been promulgated by the Returning Officer for Chiltern and South Bucks area of the new Buckinghamshire County.

- Notice of the 4 vacancies to be posted on the Website and Notice Boards for 14 working days.
- In the event of more than 4 candidates coming forward and 10 or more residents calling for an election – then the earliest date will still be May 2021.
- The Council will be able to fill the 4 places from the list of candidates (if any) otherwise they may invite other known residents to fill the vacancies (Co Option) pending elections.

(c) New Council for Buckinghamshire.

The new Council is now up and running and incorporates the 4 former District Councils. Councillors from both the District and County will continue to serve the new Authority until elections next year.

- Work currently is being concentrated on Covid 19 and many staff have been given new temporary rolls.
- Committee Structure still to be confirmed.
- New Planning Area organisation for Chiltern and South Bucks now in place, and Planning Applications are being validated. Currently decisions in respect of applications that need site visits or are called for full meetings will need to be deferred until Covid 19 regulations are relaxed.
- Parish Councils will now have the opportunity to present in own right at Planning Meetings. Both objections and representations in support of schemes will now the facility to present to Council.

- Each Councillor can now also call an application to be reviewed at a Planning Meeting. *(no need for 10 or more objections to be received to call for the application to be referred to Cabinet)*
- Martin Tett (*Leader of the Council is sending out regular updates*) regarding operation of the new Council.
- The Clerk will co-ordinate these broadcasts and other news items for weekly dissemination to members.

92. **FINANCE**

(a) **Budget analysis papers:**

Two sets of papers were presented to Council:

- (2019/2020)
- (2020/2021)

Noted and agreed to accept the budget analysis papers.

(b) **Consideration of outstanding debts:**

- Oakwood Estate Agents and Pinewood Studios in respect of sponsorship offered for promotion of activities at last years fun day at Iver Heath.
- Pranic Health Clinic – Hire of Jubilee Hall in reconciling actual usage with that invoiced. Sessions now cancelled and may have difficulty in contacting the organiser who has not responded to earlier messages.

Noted and agreed to accept write off of debts in respect of the fun day as both organisations have since supported the Council with other projects, it was also **noted** that the shortfall had been covered by grant from the Heathrow Community Fund. . **Noted and agreed** that should the user of the hall look to re hire efforts will still be made to cover shortfall of hire fees before writing off the outstanding charges.

(c) **To review authorised payment of Accounts: from March 2020.**

Due to the rapid close down of the Office in March, it was realised that Accounts for the week commencing 19th March had not been signed off. The papers have now been recovered and will be signed off this week.

Noted and agreed to accept summary of Accounts and sign off accordingly with authorisation for payment.

- o Query was raised regarding the high expenditure shown for 2019 vehicle expenses – Understood this was due to urgent MOT work and replacement Tyres and urgent repairs undertaken last summer. Clerk to check history and advise accordingly.

93. **PRESS RELEASES/WEBSITE**

- **Note of thanks and introduction of new Clerk.**

Agreed to post an article of thanks to Mike Kennedy as Interim Clerk for his work over the past 6 months and to welcome Stephanie Bennett in post as the new Clerk.

The Chairman prior to closing the meeting gave formal thanks to Mike Kennedy for his work and looked forward when self isolation ends that he will return and visit the office in person.

Meeting closed at 7 .08 pm

Signed by the Chairman.....

Date of next meeting, Wednesday 3rd June 2020. at 7.30 pm – Venue and timing to be confirmed in due course.