

Minutes of a meeting of the **Resources Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 4th January 2016** in the Council Chamber, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham at 7pm.

Present: Cllr. J. Bates
 Cllr. T. Bloomfield
 Cllr. P. Collins
 Cllr. J. Harvey Chair
 Cllr. P. Hirons
 Cllr. D. Isham
 Cllr. M. Gateley
 Cllr. A. Mahi Town Mayor
 Cllr. H. Mordue
 Cllr. Ms. R. Newell
 Cllr. Mrs. O'Donoghue
 Cllr. M. Smith
 Cllr. Mrs. Strain-Clark
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury
 Cllr. M. Try

Also present: Mr. C. Wayman Town Clerk
 Mr. D. Jones Deputy Town Clerk

653/15 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive apologies from Councillors G Collins

654/15 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Smith declared prejudicial interest in the Old Gaol as a Trustee
 Cllr O'Donoghue Prejudicial interest as employee of Youth Club
 Cllr Mordue declared prejudicial interest as a trustee of the Swan committee
 Cllr Bloomfield declared prejudicial interest as trustee of the Community Centre

655/15 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 9th November 2015 and ratified by Full Council on 23rd November 2015.

656/15 Minutes of CSG Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 2nd December 2015.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Harvey, and **RECOMMENDED** that the budget increase to £7300, in order to cover extra delivery costs and to allow for growth in the town.

Agreed

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Smith, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Annual Town Meeting is more interactive to encourage residents to engage more fully and come forward with their ideas for the council's coming year.

4th JANUARY 2016
 24/03/2016

RATIFIED 25TH JANUARY 2016

1

Initial.....

Agreed

Members mentioned the legal requirements of holding the annual meeting in alternative format. Town Clerk said the requirements are light and therefore we can be flexible.

It was suggested that members maintain the elements of the meeting which give them the ability to ask direct questions. Cllrs suggested that there should be a more formal setting for the annual meetings and a forum style meeting may be more suitable at another time. Members wanted to emphasise that the reasons for the new format proposal is to encourage members of the community to come along and engage instead of the perception of being talked at.

Members suggested that each committee Chair could submit half a page summarising their activities during the formal town meeting and then break the other half of the meeting down into interest groups. Members said that so long as it is legal this might encourage more people to come and engage with the town and this would emphasise the importance of the public seeing who the councillors and chairman of the various committees are in order that they know who to talk to on varying issues of concern. The Chairman suggested that all Councillors organise a meeting to decide on the final format of the meeting.

Cllrs **AGREED** in favour of amending the motion (*13 for the motion and 2 against*).

Cllrs **AGREED** in favour of incorporating a formal and less formal format. And that all committee chairs come together to discuss the format in more detail

ACTION: TOWN CLERK & COMMITTEE CHAIRS**656/15 Grants applications 2016 Appendix A**

To agree recommendations to the Precept meeting on community grants for 2016/17

656.1 Prior to decisions on what grants were given members expressed their views on how decisions are made and what groups should be entitled to grants. Cllr Smith felt that we should have a ceiling figure as opposed to an open ended option and that some applicants should receive ongoing funding without the need to submit a grant application. Cllrs mentioned that there are minutes which confirm that in the past grant totals have been set as a percentage of pence per population. Town Clerk confirmed that the agreement was that the grants be 3% - 8% of precept. Cllr O'Donoghue expressed a need to receive a list of historic grants as a means of deciding on current applications for funding. Some members felt they were at a disadvantage in not having the list. Cllr Hirons had requested a breakdown of all grants over the last ten years prior to the meeting to work out which of those requesting grants had received sums of money on previous occasions. Other members felt the grants should be given on the strength of their application. All Cllrs agreed that we can still make a recommendation and agree it at full Council. Cllr Smith said he thought we had agreed that we would provide funding for more than 3 years. Cllr Newell mentioned that there are a number of organisations that have received funding for longer than 3 yrs. Cllr Strain-Clarke said that historically the grants were intended to encourage smaller organisations to become viable and shouldn't necessarily be something that organisations become reliant on. Cllr Bloomfield said it's a one off each year and should therefore be based on their accounts alone. Cllr Stuchbury said that we have an opportunity at the Precept meeting to make the decision to fix the amount.

656.2 Members felt that Buckingham and Winslow Citizens Advice and Buckingham Youth Clubs Ltd should be treated in a similar way to the Film Place and the Old Gaol. Cllr Try asked why we ring-fenced just those two? Members replied that they reflect the same elements and virtues as TIC and on that basis should sit in the same area. Cllr Bloomfield suggested that by

taking these two applicants out of the mix it would allow for increase funding for other applicants.

656.3 Cllr Smith proposed and Cllr Harvey 2nded

Buckingham and Winslow district CAB and Youth Club be taken out of the application process and dealt with as separate fixed sums within the budget on a three year SLA basis.

Unanimously Agreed

656.4 Following this discussion it was decided that each applicant would be judged on the merits of the application submitted and their grant would be decided by a 'Dutch auction' to the point at which a majority agreed (as suggested by Cllr P Collins). The rules for the grant application process should be revised in the application form to ensure that applicants know whether they can apply again. (Agreed that the Town Clerk return with such revisions for approval)

656.5 The Council Agreed to funding totalling **£19702** (*£10000 of this is to be made up by the two £5000 applications from Buckingham Winslow and District Citizens Advice and Buckingham Youth Clubs which will now form part of the Town's ongoing Budget using a 3 year SLA process which would be visited every three years*)

Grants are as follows	Grant applied for	Grant Awarded by majority
Aylesbury Vale Fibromyalgia	£598	£598
Buckingham Camera Club	£500	£250
Buckingham Summer Festival	£1,500	£1,200
Buckingham Tennis Club	£1,500	£1,000
Buckingham Town Cricket Club	£5,000	£1,000
Buckingham West End Bowls	£300	£300
<i>Buckingham Winslow and District</i>	£5,000	£5,000
<i>Buckingham Youth Clubs Ltd</i>	£5,000	£5,000
Chandos Park Bowls Club	£500	£300
Friends of the Old Gaol		
Museum	£500	£500
Open House (Community Care	£200	£200
Project Street Life	£500	£500
Revitalise	£354	£354
Slade Recreation Club	£1,000	£500
Swan Credit Union	£2,000	£2,000
The Swan Community Hub	£1,000	£1,000

ACTION – TOWN CLERK

All thoughts around the means by which grant making decisions are arrived at are to be summarised to ensure that all elements of the discussion that has taken place prior to the grant decision are taken into consideration.

657/15 Precept Report R/39/15

To receive a written report from the Deputy Town Clerk

4th JANUARY 2016
24/03/2016

RATIFIED 25TH JANUARY 2016

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Initial.....

657.1 Cllr Collins suggested that the precept increase was too high and that there are sufficient reserves to cater for the additional elements of the budget. Town Clerk mentioned that a large proportion of the reserves Cllr Collins referred to will have been spent once the Depot and River Banks project has been paid for. Members suggested that Capping of Town and Parish Council precept may be introduced in the future and to take this into account especially when there hasn't been an increase for 6 years. Cllr Smith mentioned that over time more things could be handed down to us from District and County level and we should be prepared financially for this eventuality. Cllr Stuchbury reminded members that all elements within the precept were agreed in previous meetings and therefore we should go ahead with it. Cllr O'Donoghue thanked Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk for work put into this.

Proposal from Cllr Collins and seconded by Cllr Hirons to instruct the Town Clerk to leave the precept Band D unchanged **DECLINED (4 voted in favour 11 against)**

Recommendation to approve proposed changes (to the precept) and include approval for additional staff at the Community Centre. **APPROVED (11 for 4 against)**

658/15 Action Report

Members Noted the Action report

658.1 Deputy Town Clerk updated members on Chamber Door that we didn't receive any successful tenders due in the main to the time frame set to complete the work not being far enough into the year. The Deputy Town Clerk is putting the work out to tender again with a longer period of time in which work can be completed.

658.2 Deputy Town Clerk updated members on Apprenticeship scheme mentioning that we had one application and it was unsuccessful. He will continue to advertise the post and ensure that the advert is sent out more widely and seek assistance from Cllr's O'Donoghue and Stuchbury who have contacts who may be able to point interested applicants in our direction. Social media will also be deployed.

ACTION: DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

658.3 Members expressed a need to chase up action regarding Cotton End Steps

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

659/15 Accounts and Budgets

Members are asked to receive and consider the attached Income and Expenditure reports. Noted

660/15 New proposed reporting format - to receive a written report from the Accounts Assistant

R/40/15

660.1 Chairman took committee through changes to presentation of the accounts

660.2 Members suggested that it may be the accounting system itself that needs looking at and not the way the accounts are presented. There was concern that in producing this 'lighter' version of the accounts that we are in some way not being transparent. Cllr Collins felt that a better accounting system must be available and that we should look at all options available. The Town Clerk agreed to look into this for the Council. Other members suggested that familiarising themselves with any new format can be confusing for Councillors and Officers. Cllr Smith supported the idea that we look for alternative software that is easier to understand but not to go ahead with the proposed reporting format. Cllr Newell suggested we could have a

summary hard copy and more detailed version as soft copy. Cllr Try felt that the new version was a move in the right direction. Cllr Stuchbury likes to have paper and thinks that removing detail could be perceived negatively in the sense that it may prevent the community from seeing the information they were entitled to see reiterating that it was important that members have the correct information at the meeting. Cllr Hirons and Cllr Collins were very much of the opinion that the accounting system itself is inadequate and needed to be reviewed. Cllr Mordue mentioned that historically he found SAGE very difficult for local authority accounting and he suspects that this is still the case and on the issue of soft copy accounts electronic isn't such a burden it might be the way forward. Town Clerk said it was as much a point that we have a glossary of terms as to aid Cllrs understanding as a need for a new format. We need to look at the possibility and functionality of the system to see if we can have a phased budget which is desired by some members.

660.3 Proposal

Every resources committee meeting receives the new summary and a more detailed version is received for all other committees.

(Vote for 8 and against 7 Votes for Cllr. R. Newell, Cllr C. Strain-Clark, Cllr. P. Hirons, Cllr. M. Gateley, Cllr. A. Mahi, Cllr. T. Bloomfield, Cllr. H. Mordue, Cllr. J. Harvey. Votes against Cllr M. Smith, Cllr. P. Collins, Cllr. J. Bates, Cllr. L. O'Donoghue, Cllr. M. Try, Cllr R. Stuchbury)

Approved

660.4 Proposal

Town Clerk to look into better software and provide a report on other options available. To be added to the Action List. (voted for 14 and against 1) **Approved**

661/15 Financial Documents for approval

661.1 To review and approve the Financial Regulations

Noted

661.2 To review and approve the Standing Orders

Noted

Cllrs Smith noted the version date of the document has changed from and to 06.10.14

Action Town Clerk to Double Check

Cllr Collins Proposal to vote on removal of 3.2.15 bottom of page 5 Cllr Smith seconded on motion to remove. **Voted against (4 for 10 against)**

662/15 Staffing Hours

To receive a written report from the Town Clerk

Cllr Collins thanks Clerk for doing this. Fully agrees that we should demonstrate to the public that we are acting in a certain way. Cllr. Collins felt that a disproportionate amount of time based on this analysis is spent on administration. Cllr Smith suggests that we reflect that we have 3 full time grounds people which isn't reflected in the analysis and that a good proportion of staff time is spent on town events. Cllr Mordue suggested that we use the report to allocate time and wages to the various committees. Cllr Stuchbury suggests we note the recommendation.

Chairman proposes that we note this report and don't use this data for the Precept but that we do repeat the exercise for all staff in 2016.

Agreed to note the report won't be used as a basis for the precept and that it will include revised figures with a snapshot of maintenance staff so we have a full reflection with every staff member involved **Approved.** (10 for the proposal 4 against and 1 abstention)

663/15 Internal Audit

To receive and agree the Letter of Engagement for services 2015/16

4th JANUARY 2016
24/03/2016

RATIFIED 25TH JANUARY 2016

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Initial.....

Approved

664/15 To agree to stay opted in to the Sector Led body for Auditing
Approved

665/15 Salary Payments
To receive a written report from the Town Clerk
Cllr approved and agreed recommendation

666/15 Buckingham Visitor Information Centre
To receive the proposed budget for agreement
Agreed and Approved

667/15 Improvement of Economic Activity in the Town Centre R/43/15
667.1 To receive a written report from the Town Clerk and agree a way forward
Agreed and approved
667.2 Cllr Hirons expressed the need to scrutinise and continually review what we are doing.

668/15 Chairman's Announcements

None

669/15 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

Exclusion of Public and Press

RECOMMENDED In terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RECOMMENDED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

Date of next meeting: 29th February 2016

Meeting closed at: 9.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....