

Minutes of a meeting of the **Resources Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 1st August 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. A. Mahi	Town Mayor
Cllr. H. Mordue	
Cllr. M. Smith	
Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark	
Cllr. R. Stuchbury	
Cllr. M. Try	

Also present:

Mr. C. Wayman	Town Clerk
Mrs. K. McElligott	

274/16 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive apologies from Cllrs. Ms. R. Newell & Mrs. L. O'Donoghue.

275/16 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest, except insofar as the whole Council was the employer for Minutes 278 & 282.

276/16 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 13th June 2016 ratified at the Full Council meeting held on 27th June 2016. There were no matters arising.

277/16 Minutes of CSG Committee

To receive the minutes of the CSG Committee meeting held on 6th July 2016 (CSG/06/16)

195/16 Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Smith, and **RECOMMENDED** to add "10.6 To monitor and improve the Council's communications impact as in so far as they relate to this committee".

Agreed.

278/16 Minutes of the Personnel Subcommittee

To receive the minutes of the Personnel Subcommittee meeting held on Monday 11th July 2016 (PERS/01/16).

207/16 Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Hirons and **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to the Resources Committee that following the review of Job Descriptions that an external person be engaged to evaluate each position.

Cllr. Bates had reviewed the job descriptions, but in the interests of financial probity and fairness it was felt that external evaluation was appropriate. The results would be brought to the Committee for agreement.

Recommendation Agreed.

279/16 Action Report

279.1 (533/15: DisabledGo) Cllr. Strain-Clark reported that the launch event was scheduled for 13th September 2016. She was asked to remind Members nearer the time.

279.2 (868/15: Cotton End steps) Cllr. Stuchbury asked for the Town Clerk's opinion on the way forward now that AVDC had agreed it was bound by the Equality Act 2010 which had been in force when steps were substituted for the ramp; the Town Clerk said that at a recent meeting (notes yet to be circulated) it had been agreed that he would supply a sketch to the developers who would make drawings on their surveyed levels to be agreed with BCC (for eventual adoption). Members agreed that the matter should be progressed as rapidly as possible, and retained on the Action List.

279.3 (660/15: Finance software) The Town Clerk said that due to pressure of work this had not been actioned. He hoped to have a report for the November meeting.

279.4 (625/13: Apprenticeship) The Town Clerk said that with new staff arriving over the summer it might not be possible to have this organised by September.

280/16 Accounts and Budgets

Members asked about

- An invoice over £3000 for 'furniture': this was for benches for the changing rooms at Lace Hill
- The overspend on the advertisement budget: this was due to the unforeseen number of job adverts required this year
- The amount taken from the Training budget so far: this was mainly because of the renewal of the playground safety inspection certification for the outside staff (@ approx. £700 each). Cllr. Stuchbury said that the Council was lucky to have such well-trained staff to check its play areas, and noted that the new equipment at Lace Hill was already broken.
- Cllr. Hirons asked why no funding payments had yet been made to the Old Gaol and the Film Place: these payments were made on receipt of invoice, normally in January
- The Mayor's Salvers budget was overspent: due to the number of awards at this year's Reception
- Councillors Mileage: Cllr. Stuchbury recommended reviewing this allocation for the next Precept, as the number of meetings Members would be attending was likely to rise over the next year
- Other Grants: The Town Clerk noted that this was underspent because the Fibromyalgia Group had folded before payment of the grant awarded
- Roundabouts: Cllr. Hirons wondered why the variances were such odd small amounts – the Town Clerk would investigate. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**
- Lace Hill: Cllr. Try suggested Communications should be a separate budget heading. The Town Clerk said that this was probably not possible during the financial year but could be arranged for next. Meanwhile the bills would be listed under Repairs and Maintenance.

281/16 Strategic Plan (872/15)

An updated report on Key Performance Indicators had been circulated with the agenda.

Cllr. Collins felt that the report should include aims for the KPIs so that performance could be measured, and also some indication of 'good' or 'bad' directions of movement; for example rising house prices might be considered good (in that it

indicated prosperity) or not (young people unable to afford to buy); anti-social behaviour – low numbers might reflect general good behaviour, or a lack of reporting/action.

Members reviewed the headings and agreed classifications as follows:

281.1 Neighbourhood Plan

- The greater the number of planning decisions made that are compliant with the BNDP the better

281.2 Improved Community Spirit

- Declining Anti-Social Behaviour statistics – good
- % of groups and societies in the town that report positive/stable trends in voluntary support – good. Members confirmed the list of 10 organisations to be contacted.

281.3 Establish greater active engagement with local Partners and Public (including the university and other key stakeholders)

- Number of meetings with other organisations – the more the better
- Measure Social media hits/likes/comments and website hits – the more the better

The Mayor asked what the point of these measures were, and what was to be done with the figures when obtained. The Chairman said they were a way to monitor progress to goals. Cllr. Stuchbury recommended the traffic-light system of scoring; if an indicator previously green had moved to amber clearly that field was worsening. The Chairman felt that it was too early to start signalling in this way; the base figures needed to be established first.

Cllr. Collins advocated that only matters that the Town Council could influence should be included. The Chairman disagreed, as the measures indicated whether the Town was doing well or not. Cllr. Collins noted that there was a difference between the Town Council's performance and the Town's.

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Mahi, that the less valid indicators, such as the FTE comparisons, be removed from the list.

Cllr. Stuchbury argued that these were the subjects agreed, and the reporting had not been in operation for long enough to tell which were useful. Whether the long-term figures showed the town moving forward or backward, the information would inform any decisions. 12 months should be long enough to show which were the subjects worth retaining.

Cllr. Strain-Clark noted that some of the information sought was not available, so it would be difficult to make any judgements.

Cllr. Smith said that Buckingham didn't have many 'major' employers, and compiling these figures took time the office didn't have at present. Perhaps a pragmatic view would be to put some subjects aside for the time being.

The Chairman then asked for votes on the proposal above, which were:
2 for the proposal; 8 against; 2 abstentions.

Consideration of the list resumed:

281.4 Promote and improve economic activity in our town

- Level of shop and industrial unit occupancy (no update - awaiting information from AVDC) – the fewer empty shops the better
- Town car park occupancy level (AVDC Parking Services were unable to give any figures more recent than February at the moment; they should be available

in 2 weeks' time). A high occupancy level was good to an extent; it depended whether the spaces were full all day, or repeatedly ('churn') which implied more shoppers/visitors. The number of tickets sold was not a refined measure; the number of empty spaces was better, but hard to quantify. AVDC would be asked if they broke down the total tickets sold into duration of stay paid for, which was a more useful figure if future additional parking was being considered. Such breakdowns were made for Scrutiny Committee reports, so AVDC may release them if it was explained why they were being requested.

- FTE numbers in town's top 10 major employers (awaiting information from AVDC)

Cllr. Collins asked if the resultant total could be judged 'good' or 'bad' – without knowing what the total workforce was, how could an increase in numbers for these 10 companies be judged, and what if smaller employers were going out of business faster? Cllr. Smith pointed out if the trend reflected national statistics little could be done; a trend against national figures would be of concern.

The Town Clerk was asked to try and obtain this information, but if it proved impossible to leave it for the time being.

281.5 Maintain, improve and expand our green and open spaces (including allotments and cemetery)

- Complete Keep Britain Tidy survey - good
- Achieve green flag park standard - good
- Keep track of the number of complaints (as derived from phone calls, emails and the BTC Facebook page) – the fewer the better. However Members decided that they did not require details of individual complaints, and that a log of compliments should also be kept.

281.6 Maintain Quality Council Status

- Local Council Gold Award - The Town Council received the award (good)
- Anonymous Cllr. survey on how coherent, focussed and strategic our Cllrs. feel our council is. The Town Clerk was working on this. Members also felt that the Town Clerk should be referred to as such in reports, not by his initials.

281.7 Develop an effective resources plan (to include adequate income generation plan, adequate staffing to achieve our ambitions and good value council processes)

- Create a milestone plan
- Measure income generation and financial health of the Council – effective and efficiently

These were both being carried out by the Deputy Town Clerk, and would probably not progress until the new appointee had settled in.

281.8 Make Buckingham an even more attractive town/parish (including improved infrastructure)

- Average house price in comparison to Brackley, Towcester and Winslow - good; Cllr. Bates said that rental charges were more relevant to younger people and should be included. Members agreed, and furthermore this should be separated into private and social rents, as the latter rising was a 'bad' indicator.
- Score on Best Kept Village – improving year on year was 'good'.

A new KPI on average wages was suggested, but agreed to be difficult to detail; a comparison with neighbouring towns might be of interest to put against the price of housing.

Cllr. Collins suggested renaming the item Key Indicators; Cllr. Try suggested Key Town Indicators; the latter was agreed.

282/16 Staffing Review/Job Descriptions

To receive a verbal update following the Personnel Subcommittee meeting.

The Town Clerk reported Cllr. Bates had worked very quickly and had completed the new job descriptions, and there was now discussion on which outside consultant to employ. Cllr. Newell had recommended using AVDC or BCC; Cllr. Mordue said that AVDC used a company called iESE; BALC was also suggested.

Cllr. Bates estimated perhaps 2 or 3 days work was involved and £200-£300 was a not unreasonable day rate.

Cllr. Stuchbury said that it needed to be resolved before the Precept was set; Cllr. Try expressed concern that the Town Council might not be able to afford any upgrading – it was unlikely any post would be downgraded. If a job was split another person would have to be employed. It was pointed out that it was the value not the quantity of workload that was being assessed, and it was aimed to bring the scheme in in the next financial year.

Cllr. Collins suggested that to retain staff a local weighting might have to be added to national pay rates.

The results would be reported back to the Personnel Committee who would make a recommendation to the Resources Committee.

Cllr. Bates was thanked for taking on this task.

283/16 Lace Hill Events

Pegasus Bars had made an offer to supply bar facilities for Lace Hill Community Centre and Town council events.

Members felt that appointing a preferred supplier was inappropriate, particularly as Community Centre hirers may well have their own caterer and bar arrangements.

Cllr. Bloomfield said that Temporary Licences (TENs) were quite easy to get, and he thought that the total allowed had increased to 15 per year.

Members briefly discussed the damage caused by spillages etc, but were reminded Lace Hill was in the remit of the Environment Committee.

284/16 News release

None agreed.

285/16 Chairman's Announcements

None.

286/16 Date of next meeting: Monday 19th September at 7.00pm

Meeting closed at: 8.05pm

Signed.....

Date.....