

**Minutes of Okehampton Town Council Remote Policy and Resources Committee Meeting
held on Monday 11th January 2021 at 7pm**

Committee Members Present: Councillor B Tolley (Chairman)
Councillor J Yelland (Mayor)
Councillor J Goffey (Chairman, Property)
Councillor T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Councillor C Marsh (Chairman, Parks)
Councillor G Button
Councillor B Matravers
Councillor D Sanger
Councillor D Travers

Other Members Present: Councillor C Holt
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor P Jessop
Councillor A Wood

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)

555 **Declarations of Interest** – None

556 **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies received from Cllr Abbots, who was not a member of the Committee, were noted.

557 **Deferment of Business** – None

558 **Members' Questions** – None

559 **Minutes** – The minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 7th December 2020 was **APPROVED** to be signed by the Chairman at a later date, on the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded by Cllr Yelland.

560 **Matters Arising** - None

561 **Grant Applications** – It was noted that the last opportunity in the current financial year for applications to be considered by the Committee was 8th March 2021. The Clerk reported that she had contacted those groups and organisations who normally submitted an application.

562 **Grant Awarded Feedback** – Cllr's Marsh and Tolley declared personal interests being members of OCRA.

Feedback from the following groups/organisations was noted:

- Okehampton & District Community Transport Group for the grant of £2,000 awarded in October 2020
- OCRA for the grant of £500 awarded in February 2020

(Cllr Travers arrived)

563 **COVID-19 Grant Funding Applications** – Cllr Tolley reported that two applications received in December 2020 had been reviewed in accordance with the policy by Cllr's Tolley, Yelland and the Clerk when it had been agreed that neither of the applications fitted the criteria.

Action

564 **Finances** -

564.1 Cllr Marsh reported that the audit of the bank reconciliations and BACS payments had been partly undertaken and no problems had been identified, bank statements were awaited to be able to complete the checks.

564.2 COVID19 Grant budget corrections that had been undertaken following the identification of miscoding was reported by the Clerk, expenditure in this budget totalled £565.

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the management accounts for the month ended 30th November 2020 (month 8).

564.3 The Clerk reported that the invoice in the sum of £3,000 +VAT was for the draft neighbourhood development plan as previously approved by the Council. Expenditure was to be split between Okehampton Hamlets Parish and Town Councils as follows; 18.5%/81.5% and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council would be invoiced for their contribution.

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments dated 11th January 2020.

565 **Budget and Precept 2021/22** – The Clerk reported that formal notification had not been received but Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council Clerk had advised verbally that the funding requests for assistance with the running costs for the two sets of public toilets and the CCTV system which was about to be installed had been turned down.

It was commented that it was important that the difference between the two councils and services offered in the town were recognised and that they were for the benefit of the wider community and visitors.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Travers it was proposed that the £20,000 earmarked for a bandstand be reallocated to assist in current projects.

On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Travers (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** by way of amendment to the previous proposition that the bandstand earmarked fund be vired, if more funding was required and with the caveat that it be refunded, to the Roof Replacement project.

It was noted that a Working Group, which had consisted of the Mayor and Committee Chairmen, had reviewed income and expenditure earlier in the year and recommendations made had been incorporated into the budget. The pandemic had not been foreseen and had contributed to the 2.64% reduction in the Council Tax Base.

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Marsh (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council acceptance of the budget option which included the use of the £7,000 fund earmarked to cushion the loss of the Council Tax Support Grant. The budget consisted of an increase of 4.41%, which equated to an additional £0.11 p/week, on a Band D property. The total precept request being £294,508.

566 **Staff Training** – Mrs Ellis, the Assistant Clerk, was congratulated on achievement of the CiLCA qualification.

- 567** **Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups –**
567.1 **Investment** – No recent meeting to report upon
- 567.2** **IT System Review** – No meeting had taken place. The Clerk reported that she had offered redundant IT equipment to the local primary school, its disposal having previously been approved by the Committee, subject to GDPR requirements being satisfactorily met.
- 567.3** **Queens Platinum Jubilee, 2022** – The initial meeting was taking place the following week.
- 568** **Members’ Reports and Requests for Agenda Items –**
568.1 **Citizens Advice** – Cllr Button advised she had received no information to report upon
- 568.2** **DALC Larger Councils Sub-Committee** – Cllr Tolley advised there had been no meetings on which to report.
- 568.3** **Fairtrade** – Cllr Button reported that Fairtrade Fortnight was unlikely to go ahead in February/March with the possible exception of some online activities.
- 568.4** **Okehampton & District Community Transport Group** – Cllr Leech reported that the group was continuing to work and had been involved transporting people to vaccination appointments. The AGM that was due to have been held in 2020 was being held virtually on 18th January.
- 568.5** **Twinning Association** – Cllr Wood reported that a formal meeting had not taken place, but there had been a socially distanced walk during which ideas for the next visit were formulated.
- 568.6** **Cluster Group for Emergencies** – Cllr Button advised that no meeting had been held.

Cllr Leech reported that a community zoom meeting was taking place at 6pm on 14th January and it was confirmed that Cllr Button was on the invitation list.

PART TWO ITEMS

It was **RESOLVED** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. Proposed by Cllr Leech seconded by Cllr Yelland.

- 569** **Outstanding Balances** – The report dated 30th December 2020 was reviewed and an update provided by the Clerk. The Ass. Clerk to contact groups and organisations which are in credit due to the pandemic offering refunds. Ass. Clerk
- 570** **Card Payment Facility** – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Marsh it was **RESOLVED** to agree the contract with World Pay and use of the card payment facility. Within the last 6 months of the contract, the success of the facility and overall cost to the Council in relation to current costs to be reviewed for consideration of extension of the contract. Clerk/
Ass. Clerk
- 571** **Cemetery Management Software** - On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Goffey it was **RESOLVED** to purchase and subscribe to the Edge (Epitaph) Cemetery Software system, to include the email facility. Clerk/
Ass. Clerk

(Cllr's Holt, Ireland, Jessop and Wood left the meeting for the following item of business)

572 **Urgent Items** – The Clerk reported on staffing matters including furlough and apprenticeship.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part Two and ratify decisions

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.32pm

Cllr Tolley
Chairman