



Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE
01376 520627
witham.gov.uk

MINUTES

Meeting of: **Policy and Resources Committee**

Date: **Monday, 9th December 2019**

Present: Councillors

	M.C. M	Lager	(Chairman)
Mrs	S.	Ager	
	P.R.	Barlow	
	J.C.	Goodman	
	S.E.	Hicks	
Mrs	A.	Kilmartin	
	T.A.	Pleasance	
Miss	M.L.	Weeks	
	J.	Sheehy	(Town Clerk)
Mrs	G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

61. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Atwill, Mrs S.C. Lager and R.P. Ramage who had previous engagements and R. Williams who was working.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and accepted.

62. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held 14th October 2019 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

63. INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

64. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no member of the press or public present.

65. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's Report on matters arising was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

66. MEMBER'S ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Details of Members' Attendance at Meetings were received.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

67. INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT

The Interim Internal Audit report was received.

The Town Clerk explained that a different partner from the Council's internal auditor, Heelis and Lodge was used this time to ensure complacency is minimal amongst both the auditing firm and Responsible Financial Officer.

RESOLVED That the Interim Internal Audit report be received and noted.

68. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(a) BANK RECONCILIATION

The Bank Reconciliations to 31st October 2019 were received.

The Town Clerk explained that this would be the last reconciliation of the Working Fund as redundant accounts would be closed.

RESOLVED That the Bank Reconciliations to 31st October 2019 be received, approved and signed by the Chairman.

(b) BUDGET STATEMENTS

The Budget Statements to 31st October 2019 were received.

Members queried the Mayor's Allowance and it was explained that the payment is liable to both tax and national insurance. The comment was made that it is up to the Town Mayor how the allowance is spent and any Mayor is responsible for their individual tax affairs.

RESOLVED That the Budget Statements and Earmarked Reserves to 31st October 2019 be received, approved and signed by the Chairman.

(c) SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

The Schedule of Receipts and Payments to 31st October 2019 were received.

RESOLVED That the Schedule of Receipts to 31st October 2019 and totalling £305,344.06 and Schedule of Payments to 31st October 2019 and totalling £140,835.46 be received, approved and signed by the Chairman.

69. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2020/2021

(a) Business Plan

The draft Business Plan was received.

Members agreed that the new Business Plan process was a good system and easy to follow.

RESOLVED That the Business Plan be received and agreed.

(b) Budget 2020/2021

The draft Budget for 2020/2021 was received.

The Town Clerk explained that a 3% increase had been budgeted for PAYE costs taking into account the proposed NJC settlement on Local Government Pay & Conditions of Service. Photocopying costs had been reduced with a new leased machine. Repairs and renewals, and website lines had been removed and supplemented for new designated I.T costs and nominal charges for land searches and administrative enquiries.

Members considered that the Town Mayor's Allowance should be increased to defray expenses incurred as a previously agreed reduction appeared to be too excessive.

The Town Clerk then spoke about the Earmarked Reserves and the changes proposed which included increasing funding for the Information Centre refurbishments and River Walk cycle paths. Community Safety had been significantly reduced on the basis of feasibility study and deliverability appraisals outstanding. Reserve figures had been balanced in accordance with the deliverability of projects and the resulting analysis of the reserves had resulted in a proposed net reduction in reserves held by the nominal sum of £488.00.

RESOLVED That the Town Mayor's allowance be increased to £2,000.

RESOLVED That the 2020/2021 Budget for the Policy and Resources Committee be referred to the Estimates Sub-Committee Meeting on Monday, 6th January 2020.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business due to the confidential nature, legal proceedings and commercial sensitivity.

70. LEGAL MATTERS

The Town Clerk gave a verbal report.

In view of the time it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders.

RESOLVED That Standing Order 3x be suspended to allow business to be completed.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

71. **PUBLIC DOMAIN**

It was agreed that Minute 70 – Legal Matters, should remain in Private Session.

RESOLVED That Minute 70 – Legal Matters, should remain in Private Session.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.37 p.m.

Councillor _____

Chairman

JS/GK/13.12.2019