

Portishead Town Council Staffing & Finance Committee Minutes Wednesday 25 August 2021



Committee Members:

Councillor Robert Bull (Chair)
Councillor Sue Mason (Vice Chair)
Councillor Tanya Slatter

Councillor Patricia Sterndale
Councillor Paul Gardner
Councillor Ben Aldridge

This was a hybrid meeting

Committee Members present:

Councillor Robert Bull (Chair)
Councillor Sue Mason (Vice Chair)
Councillor Tanya Slatter

Councillor Patricia Sterndale
Councillor Paul Gardner
Councillor Ben Aldridge

Other Councillors present:

Councillor Caroline Goddard
Councillor Tina Mason

Others present:

1 Resident

SF648: Apologies for absence (Town Clerk)

- None

SF649: Declaration of Councillors' interests and requests for dispensations (Chair: Councillor Robert Bull)

- Councillor Sue Mason declared a personal interest in the Beacon Hub Grant

SF650: Public participation (Chair):

- No members of the public requested to speak

SF651: Chair's verbal report

- The Community Halls will open with some restrictions on the 6th September 2021.
- Councillor Patricia Sterndale asked: which parts of the Folk Hall will open
 - Clerk: just the ground floor
- The potential to make some alterations to the top floor may be brought to a future meeting.

SF652: Information item: Staffing update (Chair):

- A written report was submitted.
- At the end of last year, a staffing review concluded that the team's roles did not fit with the Council's requirements.
- Now the Town Clerk has been recruited, she has rewritten the team structure, job profiles and reviewed salaries to be more in line with other Councils and standard grading practices.
- Consequently, the team has some vacancies to be recruited.
- The changes provide 40% in extra staff time at 30% cost increase.
- The changes will see more results, especially in projects such as Wellbeing.
- The structure makes staff roles very clear.
- Councillor discussion:
 - Councillor Goddard: Portishead has less staff than other towns of this size.
 - Councillor Sue Mason: Some years' ago, Portishead had 6 wards (18 councillors). With residential development planned, a 7th Ward was expected. The previous Councillors spoke to North Somerset Council and were told to petition the electorate, but not enough people agreed. She suggested looking at this situation again now to increase Councillor numbers.
 - Councillor Slatter: Recommended more promotion of Council activity.
 - Councillor Sterndale: Portishead is no longer a village so it needs sufficient staff to manage, also more Councillors needed.
- **Action agreed:** Town Clerk to contact North Somerset Council re. increasing Councillor numbers.

SF653: Information item: List of grants paid to date for 2021-22 (Chair)

- A report was included with the agenda.
- Councillor discussion:
 - Councillor Aldridge suggested publishing unsuccessful grant applications
 - Councillor Sterndale disagreed
- **Action agreed:** Amendment to the report: The Holocaust memorial was offered £445 not £245

SF654: Approval item: To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure report Apr-Jul 2021 (Chair):

- Councillor discussion:
 - Councillor Sue Mason: Appreciated the work that goes into these reports.
 - Councillor Tina Mason: Questioned the CIL payments
 - Councillor Gardner: The Council receives funding for community infrastructure when new houses are developed.
 - All agreed to approve the report

SF655: Approval item: To receive and approve the minutes of the last (extraordinary) meeting 27 May 2021

- All agreed, minutes approved

SF656: Decision item: Recommendation to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, Councillor Gardner and the Chair to procure works to improve Wi-Fi connectivity at the Folk Hall (Chair):

- Improvements would enable WiFi cover across all 3 floors including rooms to hire and office space
- Maximum budget recommended £2,500 ex VAT.
- This work is separate to IT support contract.
- The quality needs to be good enough for the building's use.
- Councillor discussion:
 - Councillor Slatter: this seems a reasonable cost.
 - Councillor Sue Mason: is there a quality guarantee
 - Chair: unfortunately, not, but the quality will be much improved.
- All agreed, recommendation approved

SF657: Decision item: Recommendation to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, Councillor Gardner and the Chair to procure IT equipment for new and existing staff (Chair):

- This includes the full set up including all associated products e.g., screen, stand, keyboard, etc.
- Maximum budget recommended £5,000 ex VAT.
- To replace some old IT kit and buy new for new staff.
- Councillor discussion:
 - Councillor Sue Mason: what will happen with old equipment?
 - Chair: Bob equipment being replaced will be re-used where possible.
 - Paul – IT kit life 3-4 years, will budget for year
- All agreed, recommendation approved

Date of the next meeting: 24th November 2021

"Resolution: to exclude the press and public from the 2nd part of the meeting

Details: That pursuant to the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business by reason of the confidential nature of business to be transacted – staffing."

All Committee Members agreed to enter a closed meeting to discuss confidential staffing matters.

The public meeting is now closed as the remaining information is considered exempt under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12a.