

Portishead Town Council Minutes of the Staff & Finance Committee meeting on Wednesday 17th January 2021 at 7:30pm

DRAFT MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT MEETING

The meeting was held remotely via Microsoft Teams. An audio and video recording of the meeting is available on the Town Council website.

In Attendance:

Chairperson: Cllr Bull

Councillors: Aldridge, Gardner, Goddard, Mason and Slatter

Staff & Others: Martin Salisbury (Town Clerk) and 5 members of the public.

SF.622 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

SF.623 Declarations of interest & dispensation requests

There were no declarations of interests or requests for dispensations.

SF.624 Chairpersons Report

Folk Hall Caretaker & Town Orderly – the new Folk Hall caretaker, Johnathan Harvey, has started and is doing a good job and also undertaking town orderly duties on his 4th working day.

Covid Response Officer – Clair Sepulveda has been employed, similar to the action that was taken in the first National Lockdown, to help manage the increased volume of assistance and queries that are arising. Employment is on an initial 3-month contract. She is doing a great job and helping to reduce the strain on other staff, enable the council to continue with other business and to signpost residents to help and support that is available.

Clerk & Proper Officer – an offer has been made to a lady to take up the Clerk and Proper Officer role, we are currently waiting for formal acceptance and a likely start date. It is hoped that she will start within the next 6 weeks to 2 months.

Traffic Enforcement Officer – a radio aerial on the Folk Hall has been successfully tested to provide coverage for a new traffic enforcement officer. Recruitment of that officer, although delayed by illness, is now proceeding by NSC. It is proposed that the NSC officer responsible for the officers, Alan Taylor, will make a presentation to Town Council on the work of traffic enforcement officers.

Grants – A grant of £10,000 has been received to support Neighbourhood Plan work and we are currently going through the process to obtain Covid support grants. To date around £45,000 has been received and hoping to receive just over £60,000 if all grant applications are successful. This Covid funding will go partly to offset lost hall income of around £45,000 and additional Covid response costs projected to be between £15,000 and £20,000 for the year.

Folk Hall Vaccinations – the Folk Hall will be used to deliver Covid vaccinations from Friday, it is hoped that it will be open 4 days a week, to vaccinate 500 people a day. Work to put an awning outside the Folk Hall and close the car park other than to those being vaccinated has been undertaken.

SF.625 Public Participation

Annette Hennessy – asked how much time Glendale allocate to Portishead under the NSC contract, compared to the purchase of Glendale town orderly services? Cllr Gardner explained that the NSC contract covered a multitude of different services across North Somerset, such as waste collection, grit bin replenishment and roadside maintenance that was not necessarily time based. However, enquiries would be made with NSC to see what analysis of Glendale services performed in Portishead was available.

In response to the recruitment of the traffic warden, it was confirmed that preparatory work, such as the aerial installation was underway but the recruitment of the warden by NSC had been delayed, due to the team manager being ill with Covid. It was expected that recruitment would commence in February.

Paul Maltby – asked about the recruitment process for the new Clerk. Cllr Gardner explained that following advertisement of the position a short list of 3 candidates were interviewed. The interview process included a presentation and discussion with a resident's panel followed by an interview with Councillors. It concluded with a discussion between the resident and councillor panels and a scoring of the candidates. The decision was almost unanimous, and an offer of employment has now been made to the preferred

candidate. He thanked Paul for his suggestion of involving a resident's panel in the process as this had worked well.

SF.626 Approval of the minutes of previous meeting

Resolved – the minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2020 are confirmed as a true record and will be signed by the Chairperson.

All councillors present in favour.

SF.627 Approval bank reconciliation to 31 December 2020

Resolved – to approve the bank reconciliation and that is duly signed by the Chairperson.

All councillors present in favour.

SF.628 To approve the Quarter 3 Financial Management Report to 31 December 2020

Resolved – to approve the financial management report and that is duly signed by the Responsible Financial Officer.

All councillors present in favour.

SF.629 Investment Policy

The RFO presented the investment policy report, proposing that:

- Around 3 months cash flow (£180,000) should be held on instant deposit terms, 6 months (£300,000) on longer 6- or 12-month terms and any balance invested at 1- or 3-months' notice. This policy achieving a balance between liquidity, security, and yield.
- The investment policy should be modernised and widened to allow deposits outside of purely UK 'High Street' banks. It being proposed to allow investment with UK banks, building societies and money market funds which have a high credit rating of A or above.
- It was considered that investment should be with a UK institution covered by the UK banking code and FSA regulation. Accordingly, no investments should be held with offshore institutions or bank branches.
- That to enable access to a wider range of investments, to maximise yield, simplify administration and security that a cash solutions platform and a money market fund should be used to manage the council's deposits. This would have a cost of between 0.15% and 0.25% offset by yield, risk diversification and administration savings.

Resolved – An investment working party comprising Cllr Bull, Gardner and Mason is formed to further consider the proposals and make a recommendation on deposits and changes to the Investment Policy to the next Town Council meeting.

All councillors present in favour.

SF.630 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is 28th April 2021.

Meeting Closed: 20:10

Signed:.....Chairman.

Date:.....

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