



Minutes of the proceedings of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held at Hutton House, Chilton on Tuesday 26th November 2024 commencing at 6.00pm

Present:-- Chair - Cllr. S. Reece

Cllrs:-E. Bruce, D. English, P. Herbert, J. Houlihan, P. Malpas & S. Sutherland (Mayor)

Town Clerk:- Mrs. Joanne Dickinson (JD)

90. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr V. Collinson
91. **Declarations of Interest-** None
92. **Member Dispensation** – None received
93. **Public Participation-** None present
94. **Approve and accept the recommendations therein-**
 - a. Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 22nd October 2024
The minutes were approved by the Committee
95. **Review the Resolution Log-** JD informed Members that it was a work in progress and advised that it would be an ongoing record of actions/resolutions agreed at each meeting and progression on each matter will be updated regularly. A paper copy will be on display in the Town Clerks Office if Members would like to view a paper copy.
96. **Approve the financial transactions for November 2024 – Appendix 1.** Members were provided with a list of payments to be made and payments made in November 2024 that were urgent payments and/or had been previously agreed. Cllr Bruce queried the payment amount that was due to be paid to her. JD to ask the Finance and Admin Officer to check the information prior to payment. Members asked for a column to be added into Appendix 1 to show if any expenditure is to be paid from external funding rather than from the Town Council monies. JD to arrange a training session for Members to be provided with more detail about what is included in each report.
97. **Receive the year to date Financial Report and budget spend year to date-** Members were provided with the detailed income and expenditure. Cost centres 4227, 4280 and 4376 will exceed annual budget once the payments are made from Appendix 1. Members agreed to note the budget over spend on the cost centres identified will be compensated through accrued income from ticket sales and donations.
JD advised it was a work in progress and finer details on income from events against their expenditure will be provided in the future.
98. **Review the information added to the External Funding Log-** JD to review current funding available and update the log as it is an opportunity to see what funding could be applied for in the future even if the council is not able to apply presently.
99. **Receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan-** Cllr Reece informed Members that there have been postal issues with the Royal Mail. Royal Mail has confirmed they received all of the information in time but are looking into why they have not been distributed. The deadline date will be moved to tentatively the 18th January 2025 but that will be agreed at the next advisory group meeting. There is a drop in session on 30th November from 9am to 12pm at Hutton House. Next advisory group meeting is on 11th December 2024 and an email will be circulated to the group as a reminder. The

current DCC consultations on Biodiversity and Non Designated Heritage Assets could be reviewed at the group meeting. The recommendations from the Net Zero report should be considered by the Advisory Group but members did not feel that it was necessary to engage an external consultant at this stage. Cllr Reece to update Andy Coulthard. Members asked for a thank you letter to be sent to the Green Energy Group for their report.

100. Website Governance- Cllr Reece advised that the web pages for the Neighbourhood Plan was not set up in time for the launch date and the information is now on the front page of the council website. The website developer can only meet on a Wednesday. JD asked to arrange a meeting and be in attendance.

101. Consider arranging a First Aid Training Session(s) for residents- Cllr English had recently attended a very good first aid training course. Only 10% of the country's population have some first aid training and if Chilton residents could be offered first aid training then that would be good for the town. The course is £685 plus vat for 12 people for Emergency First Aid at Work. Another option would be for 2 sessions run on one day for a few hours each with 12 people in each session. The cost would be the same £685 plus vat. These shorter sessions would not give any certification but would be a good overview of basic first aid for all participants.

Members agreed to seek funding from the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner for an initial first aid course for one day and if those present were interested funding could be sought for full accreditation. This is to be linked into a request for a Stab Box in the Town.

102. Discuss the Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings consultation and agree an appropriate response- Members discussed this consultation which was linked to matters raised in a recent speech by the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP. Members were asked to let Cllr Reece or Town Clerk know if they had any comments for the consultation.

103. Increase to National Insurance employer contributions –consider an appropriate response to provide to the local MP on the Town Council being treated as a small business- At the recent CDALC meeting councils discussed the impact the increase in NI would have on them as employers in local government. Within the new system there is an opportunity for Local Authorities to apply for compensation for these payments along with small businesses. This is not currently extended to Town and Parish Councils. A CDALC template is to be circulated for councils to lobby their local MP for them to be exempt from this additional NI cost. **Members agreed that the template would be completed on behalf of Chilton Town Council and sent to the local MP.**

104. Policy Review-

- **Grants Policy** – Policy to be updated with information to stipulate that only Chilton residents can benefit from the funding; In a none election year the specified application period is to be from 6th April for a 4 week period; amounts of less than £500 can be considered; funding must be promoted by the organisation that it was from the Town Council; There is to be a feedback sheet. Members agreed that the policy can be updated with this information and then presented at the next P&R meeting.
- **Social Media Policy-** Members agreed the policy subject to including a statement that a councillor can't speak on behalf of the council as an individual. If there is a need to take down any comments from Facebook or respond to a situation when out of office hours then the emergency protocol will be commenced. The section about private businesses it to be removed.

105. Items to be taken to next council meeting-

- Social Media Policy
- Financial reports

106. Date of next meeting – 21st January 2025

Exclusion of Press and Public- No public present.

107. Street Lighting- The DCC officer has no further update since the last meeting.

108. FOI Requests- None received as at 25.11.24

109. School Playground- JD has pencilled in a meeting on 12th December but is awaiting return of PCSO from annual leave to confirm the date and time is acceptable to him before circulating the details to all parties.
Meeting Closed at 7.26pm.

Cllr Sue Reece,
Chair of the Committee,
21st January 2025