

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD
ON TUESDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2015 AT 7.30PM IN THE TOWN HALL.**

PRESENT:

Cllr R J Gell (Chairman)
Cllr D C Lawson MBE
Cllr H L Jackson
Cllr Mrs P H Whiting
Cllr Mrs A M Sauntson
Cllr Mrs V Newbery
Cllr P Tomas
Cllr Mrs S Mantle
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)

1. **APOLOGIES**

None.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10th November 2015 be signed by the Chairman as being a true and correct record.

4. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

No public present.

5. **GRANT APPLICATIONS 2016/17**

It was noted that a letter of application for a grant from had been received after the deadline of 30th October and was not on the correct form.

5.1. **Higham Ferrers Bowls Club.**

The Bowls Club had applied for £3800 towards maintenance of the green.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That a grant of £3500 be agreed for 2016/17, which was the same as the current financial year.

5.2. **Higham Ferrers Colts.**

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That a grant of £2000 be agreed for 2016/17 towards the cost of security works at Lancaster Park. Funds to be released on receipt of invoices for the works.

5.3. **Higham Ferrers Cricket Club**

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That a grant of £1330 be agreed for 2016/17 towards the cost of maintenance of the wicket.

6. **SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL**

Town Clerk reported that the current person had resigned and would finish at the end of term.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

- That the Council would work with Northamptonshire County Council to recruit a replacement School Crossing Patrol person and fund the training

costs which would be in the region of £1350.

- That the Town Council continue to contribute £2400 towards funding of the School Crossing Patrol for 2016/17. The schools had agreed to contribute £750 each.

7. **RUSHDEN-HIGHAM LINK**

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That the Council allocate £5400 towards the Rushden Higham bus link in 2016/17. Funding would not be released until final figures and information had been received from Expresslines via the County Council.

8. **FARMERS' MARKET STALL FEES**

RESOLVED:

That the Farmers' Market stall fees remain at £20 per month for 2016/17.

9. **ACCOUNTS PACKAGE**

A report had been circulated detailing an alternative accounts package called Omega Financial Software produced by Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd. The software is specific to the sector and is used by 751 Councils. It was more suitable than the current package to larger councils, and also if for any reason the RFO was not available at the end of year they could come in and run the accounts of the Council

RESOLVED:

That a demonstration be set up for Councillors in January.

10. **EQUIPMENT**

Community Payback had requested the purchase of the following hand tools for use in Higham Ferrers. These would be kept by the Town Council.

2 Grass Rakes

3 Loppers

3 shears

4 wire brushes

1 Mattock

Cllr R Gell reported that he had access to the tools that were used by Riverside Park volunteers, which included some of the items detailed above. He would hand them over to the Town Council so they could be used.

RESOLVED:

That a maximum budget of £130 be set for the purchase of tools from the list above.

11. **BUDGETS 2016/17**

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That the budgets as attached to the minutes be agreed for 2016/17.

12. **PRECEPT 2016/17**

Based on the budget figures agreed above the precept figure proposed was £290,000. Based on the indicative Council Tax Base of 2683 this was a Band D figure of £108.09. An increase of £11.77pa from the current year.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That the precept figure 2016/17 be set at £290,000.

13. **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That the draft Social Media Policy as amended and circulated be adopted.

14. **DATA PROTECTION POLICY**

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That the Data Protection Policy be reviewed without change.

15. **HERITAGE CENTRE**

The Clerk gave the following report:-

- The survey has now been completed and budget prices are being obtained for the works.
- Sketch drawings are being undertaken by Jon Sidey.
- Claire Browne, East Midlands Regional Museum Development Manager has been out to view the site and meet the working group. She is of the opinion that the project has good potential and the building is in a good location. She will send a letter of support.
- The Duchy has agreed an extension of the deadline to the end of January. He has also said he possibly has some capital funding that he could help with. Still waiting for information from him on ~~H~~Heads of Terms of lease so a valuation can be obtained.
- Consultation has been ongoing. 44 responses so far:_
 - 41 are in favour of a Museum and in this location.
 - 14 support a £20 a year increase, 15 support £15 a year and 8 support £10 a year and 9 have not answered, so it is presumed a zero increase.
 - Several people have volunteered to be involved with the project.
- The Stage 2 application for the Community Facilities Fund has to be submitted by 21st December.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

16. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

The Clerk reported as part of the review of workload, she was obtaining prices for outsourcing HR and Health and Safety work.

17. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

9th February 2016