

Malmesbury Town Council

Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held in Malmesbury Town Hall on Tuesday 11th October 2016 commencing at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: S Cox, L G Grant, A J Gundry (Chair), S J Poole & F Vandelli

Apologies for absence: Councillors R E Budgen, V L Penfold, C C Doody & H Webb

Public Question Time: None.

Declarations of Interest: None.

22. Minutes

A brief discussion took place concerning the production and extent of a Communications Policy. It was noted that although this addressed how communication might take place, there was no commitment to undertake a programme of publicity/communication with residents.

Resolved: to consider a policy and a programme for publicity at the next meeting (to include use of the Council's website).

The Committee considered the accuracy of the Minutes and noted that Councillor Cox had given his apologies.

Resolved: that following an amendment to include Councillor Cox's apologies, the Minutes be signed as a correct record.

23. Income and expenditure

Consideration was given to Report No.1 which set out the Council's income & expenditure to the end of September.

Issues discussed included:

- Whether the Council is likely to underspend on the salaries budget;
- That it was good practice to review spend at six months, to gain an idea of whether the Council is likely to overspend;
- Whether anything is being done to promote use of the Town Hall;
- Whether Town Hall Hire (1006 701) should be split to discriminate between commercial hire and community rate hire and whether to place rent in a separate code; and
- General and Earmarked reserves.

Resolved:

- 1) To request a statement from the Town Clerk on whether he expects an underspend on the salaries budget this year.
- 2) To suggest to the Town Hall & Facilities Committee that separate budget codes are created for commercial room hire, community rate room hire and rent from the café.
- 3) To consider Reserves at the next meeting and to receive information as to which Earmarked Funds are designated funds (e.g. Cloister Gardens) in accordance with agreements and which funds constitute the General Reserve.

24. Presentation of Financial Information

Consideration was given to the way in which financial information is presented to the Committee.

Resolved: to request that the Town Hall and Facilities Committee identifies non-discretionary expenditure (e.g. 4118 701 Town Hall Maintenance) and that this should be put under the 101 code, within the purview of the Policy & Resources Committee.

25. Consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement

Consideration was given to Report No.2 which introduced the consultation document issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Committee noted that although Malmesbury Town Council's budget is below the £500,000 threshold, the addition of new houses may take the Council towards this figure.

Resolved:

- 1) To answer 'No' to questions 4, 5 & 6 in the consultation.
- 2) That the Town Clerk drafts a response to question 7 and sends it to members of the Committee for comment. The response to object to the extension of referendum principles as this would remove autonomy from local councils, it would be contrary to the government's own localism agenda, the cost of a referendum would place an undue burden on local councils.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm