

MINUTES of the proceedings at a Meeting of the **POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** of the Fakenham Town Council held at Fakenham Connect, Oak Street, on **TUESDAY 1 AUGUST 2017** at 5.30pm

Present:

Cllr G Acheson (Chairman, presiding)
Cllrs J Holdom, M Coates, T Edwards, G Foortse and T Duffy

One member of the public

Town Clerk - Linda Jennings

56 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 May 2017 having been circulated were on the proposition of Cllr Acheson, seconded by Cllr Coates APPROVED and signed by the Chairman.

57 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies

58 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was none.

59 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

59.1 Web Site – ***the Clerk will prepare a short list of 4 or 5 companies who can update the web site. She will get examples of their work and also the names of other Council's they have worked for.***

46.2 Social Media Training – No further action.

46.3 Electronic tablets – On the proposition of Cllr Acheson, seconded by Cllr Coates, ***the Clerk will advertise these for sale on Gumtree at a cost of £30 each or nearest offer. These will also be offered with cases and stylus.***

60 TO DISCUSS THE VOTING PROCESS RECORDED ON STANDING ORDERS WHEN APPOINTING NEW COUNCILLORS BY CO-OPTION

Standing Orders shall record that ***when a Candidate is to be co-opted there will always be a secret ballot on paper. The vote will be according to the Protocol for the recruitment of new council members as follows;***

Fakenham Town Council supports the principle of Equal Opportunities.

Individuals will be treated equally and fairly and decisions on recruitment, selection and training of staff or councillors will be based solely on objective and job related criteria.

In the process of co-option to fill a vacancy on Fakenham Town Council, councillors will follow guidelines based on objective criteria to achieve a balanced and diverse body which is truly representative of the constituency of Fakenham.

The process to advertise a vacancy on Fakenham Town Council will aim to encourage candidates, with skills or life experience relevant to the role of a councillor and the council's work, from all demographic groups including minority groups based on age, gender and ethnicity.

The selection process to co-opt a new member will recognise the value of knowledge and experience in such fields as Estate Management, Legal

Matters, Finance, IT, Business, Local Government, Community Services and Voluntary work with which to invigorate the council body. Fakenham Town Council is not obliged to automatically fill a vacancy by co-option if there is good reason to judge the undesirability of a lone candidate.

61 TO CLARIFY IN STANDING ORDERS THE APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER OF A COMMITTEE TO THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE WHEN THE CHAIRMAN OF THAT COMMITTEE IS ALREADY A MEMBER OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE BY RIGHT

On the proposition of Cllr Acheson, seconded by Cllr Holdom with 4 votes for and 1 against, AGREED the following amendment was made to Standing Order 16 c. The Chairman of Leisure & Environment and Development & Market committees will be members of the Policy & Resources Committee. Should the Chairman of that committee already be a member of the Policy & Resources Committee by right then the Deputy Chairman of that committee will be a member of the Policy & Resources Committee. When both the Chairman and Deputy Chairman are members of the Policy & Resources Committee by right then members of that committee will elect another member.

62 ANNUAL COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AWARD

Following a discussion it was agreed that more community groups need to be informed of the Award. The Clerk will circulate a draft list to all Councillors and ask that they add any others to it.

63 TO DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 2016/2017

The Final Internal Audit received 5th June 2017 was discussed having been deferred from the Full Council meeting of 13th June 2017.

R1) The Policy & Resources Committee decided it should go through the Governance Review, section by section during this year, to consider its recommendations and particularly with reference to matters raised in the 2017 Internal Audit report in Recommendations 1 and 2.

(See attached the Recommendations List pages 1-16 Appendix 1)

R2) The Clerk is working on the Annual Schedule/Timetable which should include Forward Planning of at least five years. There was a discussion as to its format. The Clerk will bring the document to the next meeting.

These items will be the first items on the next Policy & Resources Committee agenda.

Cllr Duffy joined the meeting at 18.15pm.

R3) Payments of Grants. This recommendation has been noted and acted upon. Subsequently Council has sought alternative statutory powers i.e. when awarding a Grant for a Defibrillator. The Council is also

investigating its suitability to obtain the General Power of Competence.
R4) The status of the Market Tolls account. The Council has obtained advice from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Norfolk ALC and Community Action Norfolk. It has also received verbal information from the Charity Commission confirming that there has been no legislation subsequent to the provision set out in Section 29(4) of the Settled Land Act 1925, which would change the status of the recorded deed of trust, and require it to be registered. They furthermore indicated that since the assets are held on trust for the benefit of all inhabitants of the parish, it is not clear how such a wide definition would fit within the list of charitable purposes under the Charities Act 2011.

On the proposition of Cllr Acheson, seconded by Cllr Duffy RESOLVED that given the weight of advice received, the Council on balance, does not consider it justifiable to spend council tax monies on further investigation and therefore proposes to continue managing the Market Tolls trust fund in accordance with previous practice, maintaining separate accounts and confirming any liabilities cover as noted in R5.

All in favour.

R5) The Council to check on any implications regarding insurance cover for its employees and public liability for the Market. **The Clerk will contact the Insurance Company.**

64 THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

On the proposition of Cllr Coates seconded by Cllr Acheson that this item has been discussed but no decision has been made. Councillors recommended that this item will be added to the earliest agenda following the next Election in 2019.

65 UPDATES REGARDING THE THURSDAY MARKET BEING REGISTERED AS A CHARITY

See item 63 R4).

66 TO PURCHASE A NEW MOBILE PHONE FOR THE GROUNDSMAN

On the proposition of Cllr Foortse, seconded by Cllr Hold RESOLVED to purchase the Groundsman a new telephone contract with Talk Talk Business at a cost of £10 per month. All in favour.

67 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

On the proposition of Cllr Coates, seconded by Cllr Acheson RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Public & Press be excluded from the Meeting, as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the nature of the business to be transacted.

68 STAFF MATTERS

See confidential minute.

69 OPEN SESSION

On the proposition of Cllr Coates, seconded by Cllr Acheson RESOLVED that the Council moves into Open Session.

70 DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next Policy & Resources meeting will be held on Tuesday 5 September 2017 at 5.30pm.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

CONFIRMED this day of 2017.

CHAIRMAN

Appendix 1

Recommendations List

A. Recommendations: Background data – It is recommended that:

1. The Council further strengthens its position as the strategic body for the town with a broad public service remit.
2. The Council develops a clear description of its purpose which is agreed by Councillors and explained to the public, not least through its website.
3. The Council annually adopts a clear plan outlining its objectives for the year, the actions it proposes to take, the reasons for taking those actions and the budget and timescale it has allocated in order to achieve this. This should be a simple table supporting public understanding.
4. Within its action plan, the Council describes its ambition to prioritise contributing positively to 5 or more concerns for Fakenham, including its statutory duties. One of these ambitions, which would also cover one of the Council's statutory duties, might be to contribute to crime prevention through actions such as maintaining productive relations with the police, considering new police initiatives or changes to policing which affect the town through the Policy and Resources Committee, taking into account any impacts on crime and anti-social behaviour levels when considering planning applications and maintaining a CCTV presence in the town.
5. The Council takes into account its priorities when considering Market Tolls grant applications.
6. As part of its efforts to establish achievable and realistic priorities, the Council should identify available resources, office and/or Councillor capacity to drive the matter forward and, whether the outcome is best achieved by direct action or through support to another organisation.
7. The Council should consider the creation of Councillor portfolios to support its work on named strategic issues such as 'health' and 'community safety' (see Councillors below).
8. The Council should ensure its achievements are made clear to the public, including its support to other organisations, and feedback on its proposed and actual activities should be embraced.