

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 23rd OCTOBER 2023

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23rd October 2023 AT 6PM IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ROOM LOCATED IN THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON

PRESENT: Councillors Marriott (Chair), Birch, Connolly, Hallam, Haque, Holland-Delamare, Joyce, Kilbride, Soan, Stevens and Tarasiewicz

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs J Thorneycroft (Deputy Town Clerk) and Mrs C Maclellan (Finance Officer)

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC PRESENT: Mr Clive Millman

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Alwahabi and Russell and Stuart Carter (The Town Clerk)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND ASK QUESTIONS AS TO THE PROGRESS OF ANY ITEM

RESOLVED: The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th September 2023 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings with the following amendments;

As stipulated in 2.2 of the Financial Regulations, A member other than the Chairman or bank signatory shall, for all bank accounts sign both the bank reconciliation and bank statements as evidence of verification. The activity shall be reported including any exceptions to and noted by the council. – 2 x volunteers Cllr Holland-Delamere and Stevens carried out the verification and signed both bank statements and Reconciliations for the months August, September and October 2023. No exceptions were noted.

4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING FOR INFORMATION:

The minutes of the Accounts Sub-Committee meeting held on 12th September and 9th October were circulated at the meeting.

Amendment – it was noted that an attendee had been listed twice – this will be amended on the minutes.

Action – FB

5. BUDGET PRINCIPLES

Prior to the meeting the Forward Budget presentation slide pack had been circulated to all councillors.

The Chair explained the budget principles report submitted by the Clerk. Each committee will hold its own budget setting meeting throughout October and November. The Chair invited questions around the budget principles and the forward budget, it was noted the Forward Budget is a simulation over the next 5 years and each committee has to agree their own budget.

A number of questions were raised with reference to budget, reserves and net operating costs. The Finance Officer reported that NTC had passed the AGAR and no concerns were raised by the auditor. It was also asked where are we in terms of levelling up reserves and what are the items we are contractually committed to? It was noted that the future Accommodation issue is still to be sorted and that some budgets may not be used by the end of year.

It was stated that currently NTC doesn't own any assets like other local parish councils such as Duston, and Moulton, assets in these parishes provide income plus precept. Assets enable an organisation to generate income – this is a matter that is currently being considered by this committee.

The Community Needs Analysis project needs to move forward to establish exactly what the community /residents want NTC to do and achieve – this will be noted as an action and an item for discussion at the next Community Services Committee on 27th November.

ACTION: Community Needs Analysis project to be discussed in detail at the next Community Services Committee

All committees might wish to consider the benefits to all areas of the town, some councillors are looking to see an even spread of events across the town council wards.

6. CASH INVESTMENTS

Included with the agenda was the latest information regarding the Council's cash investments with the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.

7. VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Cllr Hallam proposed that the handbook was agreed in principle subject to a few minor changes, the committee agreed. The following actions to be taken by JT.

- Mobile phones paragraph to be revisited
- Examples of the types of roles could be listed with a link to Voluntary Impact Northampton
- Ensure the handbook is compliant with GDPR
- Add rewarding and consider an accreditation for volunteers
- Volunteers have some sort of recognition to retain

8. PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM

Resolved: it was resolved to introduce the project template in 2024 – the form will be subject to the following considerations:

- An equalities impact assessment – are there any missing groups?
- Change the word Ideas to project
- Change wording - officer to Cllr
- Projects such as the Bleed Kit Project, speeding enforcement etc were good examples where the template would be useful
- The template should apply to existing projects as well

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

- Asset Register
- Paperless agendas
- Accommodation update

MEETING CONCLUDED: 7:23 PM

X