

Main points arising: Town Council Precept 2015/16; Amendments to the Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulation Standing Orders; Refurbishment of the Civic Hall; Poynton Neighbourhood Plan; Records of Standing Committees.

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 8.05PM ON MONDAY 5TH JANUARY 2015 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HALL, POYNTON.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr Mrs R Horsman-Johnson

Cllrs: M Beanland, L A Clarke, Mrs S Horsman, P Hoyland, G King, B Lewis, H Murray, Mrs J Saunders, Mrs J Sewart, A Smith, G Smith, Mrs I Thornton-Maddocks and R West.

68. Questions to the Mayor

No members of the public were in attendance.

69. Apologies for absence

Cllrs. G Bartos, C Gorst, M Sewart and I Hollingworth

70. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Interests

The Clerk stated that there is a collective dispensation in place signed by all Members that allows for debate and voting on the Precept. This dispensation expires on 31st May 2015.

71. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th November 2014

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24th November 2014 are approved as an accurate record (12 - 2 abs)

72. Mayor's Engagements

The Mayor provided a brief summary of her recent engagements - a full report is available from the Clerk on request.

RESOLVED: That the Mayor's engagements are received (NC)

73. Town Council Precept for 2015/16

The Clerk outlined the precept for 2015/16, as recommended by the Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 15th December 2014.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council's Precept for 2015/16, as recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, is approved (13 - 1 against)

74. Amendments to the Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulation Standing Orders

A proposal was put forward that, in accordance with SO 76, the revisions to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulation Standing Orders are approved, with the exception of the revision to Financial Regulation Standing Order 6.1 (b). This concerned the level of expenditure that could be authorised by the Town Clerk.

There followed a prolonged debate about this, with some Members supporting the status quo of £2,500, and others arguing that it be reduced to £1,500, as recommended by the F&GP Committee. An amendment to the proposal referred to above was then put forward - that the revisions to the Financial Regulation Standing Orders are approved in their entirety, including that concerning 6.1(b).

A suggestion was also put forward that a small more informal group, such as the Working Party that considers the Standing Orders led by Cllr Mrs Sewart, and which any member of the Council can attend, would be one way forward for considering revisions to the Financial Regulations Standing Orders. This might be helpful giving all Councillors an opportunity in a more informal setting to have their input before it goes before a Committee where they cannot necessarily vote.

The Clerk was asked how often he needed to approve sums up to £2,500. The Clerk explained that this does not arise very often, adding that if he felt there was any potential element of controversy surrounding a payment he would always refer it to the Chairman of the F&GP Committee anyway.

A Member also raised an objection to the proposed wording of the last paragraph of Standing Order 38, since members of the public are not governed by the Town Council's Standing Orders.

In order to resolve the impasse on Financial Regulation Standing Order 6.1 (b) and to deal with the point raised above concerning the recording of meetings, it was suggested that Members vote separately on these two matters, and when those have been resolved then to vote on the whole document. To allow this the two original proposals were withdrawn.

RESOLVED: That the figure in Financial Regulation Standing Order 6.1 (b) remains unchanged at £2,500. (7 - 7 against). In accordance with SO 13b) - an equality of votes - the Mayor had a second or casting vote. (8 – 7 against).

NOTE: This failed to receive the approval of at least two thirds of Members (SO 76), and so the current figure in SO 6.1 (b) remains unchanged at £2,500.

A Member proposed an amendment to the wording of the last sentence of SO 38 to read – “Failure to make such a declaration by a Councillor will be regarded as a contravention of these Standing Orders only.”

RESOLVED: That the wording of SO 38 is amended as proposed above (13 - 1 against)

RESOLVED: That the revisions to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations Standing Orders, with these amendments, are approved (11 – 2 abs - 1 against)

NOTE: This failed to receive the approval of at least two thirds of Members (SO 76), so the proposed revisions, including that concerning SO 38 above, are not approved.

75. Civic Hall roof and Civic Hall/Library Integration project

Cllr A Smith provided a verbal update on the Civic Hall roof and Civic Hall/Library Integration project.

A Member asked if, following the recent heavy rains, the roof had held up to it. The Clerk confirmed that to be the case. The only exceptions were the faulty seals around the double glazed windows in the Main Hall that were installed about three years ago, and the roofing contractors are sorting out that out.

RESOLVED: That the report is received (NC)

76. Poynton Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Hoyland provided a verbal update on the Poynton Neighbourhood Plan. The survey is virtually ready for print. Volunteers, Councillors and others had provided feedback on it, and Cllr Hoyland thanked them. A flyer had been distributed in the January Poynton Post informing residents of the upcoming survey and its importance. The Steering Group will speak at a number of awareness events to encourage as many people as possible to complete it. Cllr Hoyland asked Councillors to help inform residents locally of the survey. The better the return the more credibility it has.

It was confirmed that the survey could also be completed on-line. Banners will also be displayed to increase awareness, and a Communication Group is also engaged in this objective. An Open Morning/Launch event will be held on Saturday 17th January at the Civic Hall. Assistance will also be offered to residents, such as the elderly, who may need help in completing the survey.

RESOLVED: That the report is received (NC)

77. Minutes of Standing Committees

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 27th October 2014 be adopted by full Council (NC)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Management and Establishment Committee meeting held on 28th October 2014 be adopted by full Council (NC)

Item 40 - Cllr Clarke asked if details had been obtained about any outstanding or future Section 106 monies. The Clerk explained that at a recent Planning and Environment Committee meeting he was tasked to write to Cheshire East about this. He did so and sent a reminder a week ago. Cllr Clarke said this should be pursued.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Facilities, Infrastructure and Economic Development Committee meeting held on 3rd November 2014 be adopted by full Council (NC)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee meeting held on 10th November 2014 be adopted by full Council (NC)

Page 155 first paragraph - Cllr Lewis noted that this should read '£12 per person'.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 1st December 2014, with the above amendment, be adopted by full Council (NC)

The meeting concluded at 8.45pm