

Minutes of a meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 11 June 2013 at 8.00 pm

Present: *Councillors K. Baker (Chairman); P. Challis; J. Cheng; L. Hayward; C. Lawley; S. Outen; E. Rowland*

Officers present: *D. Mander, Town Clerk; K. Murray, Service Support Manager*

Apologies: *Councillors K. Haines, D. Mills*

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

2. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 APRIL 2013**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting of 30 April 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. **FINANCE**

a) **Budgetary Control**

The Town Clerk explained that the higher expenditure at this point related to insurance premiums and funds being added to the council's investment portfolio, as budgeted. Under this item the Chairman reported that future monitoring reports would have a column of showing expenditure/income at the same point in the previous year. This would show any changes in spending/income patterns.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 22/13.

b) **Payments**

Under this item Councillor Rowland, one of the Council's signatories, raised the matter of cheque signing while the three new signatories (of six) were waiting for the bank to confirm their status as signatories. Her view was that this was an important role, which included the monitoring of expenditure, and was one for which the controlling group was responsible. In the present situation, while there were only three approved signatories, she was very willing to continue to sign cheques but would prefer for these to be seen by the Council leadership beforehand. Councillor Rowland said she understood from the Town Clerk that Councillor Baker didn't want to do this. The Chairman responded that his approach to this had been not to add an extra layer in the cheque signing process and that he trusted the officers and the present signatories to identify anything questionable in relation to the cheque payments. The Town Clerk explained that regulations required cheques to be signed by two Councillors, this did not imply approval of the payments which was the responsibility of the committee. The Chairman acknowledged Councillor Rowland's view and said he believed that the signing of cheques without the leadership's pre approval should continue in the present circumstances until the new signatories were approved; he was satisfied that this would continue to be properly carried out by the existing signatories and that the Town Clerk would bring any issues relating to invoice payments to his attention.

It was noted that once the new signatories were confirmed the Chairman would discuss and go through the cheque signing process with the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To approve the following payments:

	Current account	Imprest account
March 2013	£108,843.07	£53,544.86
April 2013	£161,314.99	£55,649.73

c) **Keydata**

It was noted that the Town Council would shortly receive a distribution of funds representing 7.125% (£5,710.26) of its nominal holding with Lifemark (Keydata).

Under the agreement with Chase De Vere in this matter, 64% of this payment is due to Chase De Vere. The Town Clerk asked Members to confirm that the remaining sum of £2,055.69 be added to the investment portfolio managed by Rathbones.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To invest the balance of funds of £2,055.69, from the Lifemark distribution of funds, in the investment portfolio managed by Rathbones.

4. **SECTION 106 DEVELOPERS CONTRIBUTIONS**

In response to a question the Chairman reported that, as a member of the Executive at Wokingham Borough Council, he no longer held responsibility for Section 106 Developers Contributions; these now fell within the remit of Councillor Kaiser.

The Service Support Manager confirmed that he and the Leisure Services Manager would be meeting with the officer who administered these funds later that week in order to receive an update on the applications for funds made by the Council. He hoped to have something more substantial to report following that meeting.

Under this item the Service Support Manager responded to a question regarding the Western Avenue entrance to Woodford Park; he had received a quote from Shared Legal Solutions for some initial work on trying to establish ownership of the land and before pursuing this he would be writing to the residents nearby who also enjoyed a right of way over the land to find out if they had any further information that might assist. The Chairman would also be seeking some advice from Wokingham Borough Council about this matter.

5. **GRANTS**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note the letter of thanks from the Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre for their grant.

6. **PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE**

- a) Members considered the proposed terms of reference and the Chairman's suggestion that this sub committee meet at least once a year. During the discussion it was noted that a meeting could be called when Members wished and that the matter of the vacant Oakwood Centre Manager could prompt a meeting of the sub committee.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To approve the terms of reference, as attached.

b) **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the Personnel Sub Committee be made up of four places.

c) **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That Councillors Baker, Challis, Haines and Rowland be appointed to the Personnel Sub Committee for the municipal year.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF WORKING PARTIES**

Members noted the summary of the present situation where one place on each of the Bar Management, Investments and Public Toilets Working Parties were vacant after the appointments of Independent Group members to Conservative Group places on these working parties. This had not been in line with standing orders in respect of proportionality. During the discussion on this matter the suggestion that standing orders be reviewed was made and the Chairman said this was intended over the next six months.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To suspend standing order 4 f) and approve the following appointments to working parties for the municipal year:

Bar Management:	Councillor Hayward
Investments:	Councillor Cox
Public Toilets:	Councillor Hayward

8. **CATERING PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PANEL**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. SR 23/13 which was tabled at the meeting. It had been intended to update Members on a meeting of the Catering Partnership Management Panel on 7 June, however the meeting was not able to be quorate and did not take place. It was hoped that a meeting could be organised in two weeks time and it was suggested that meetings start at 4.00 pm in future. In response to a question the Service Support Manager confirmed that the rent paid and the figures provided in the report included the agreed back rent in respect of the first five months and was payable throughout the 2013/14 year on a monthly basis.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 23/13.

9. **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH TOWN AND PARISH CONFERENCE**

Members considered the letter from Wokingham Borough Council in respect of the Wokingham Borough Town and Parish Conference and

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To propose that the next Borough Town and Parish Conference include:
 - an item on the impact of the proposed changes to youth service funding and the potential need for towns and parishes to step in and negotiate the impact;
 - Community Infrastructure Levy.

10. **LOCALISING SUPPORT FOR COUNCIL TAX**

Members considered the letter from the Department for Communities and Local Government and raised the potential difficulties in the future when the sum allocated to parishes to alleviate the impact of the scheme would not be identifiable. It was noted that

Wokingham Borough Council had approached the allocation of this funding to parishes in a fair way when some billing authorities had not passed this funding on to parishes.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note the letter from the Department for Communities and Local Government in respect of the localisation of council tax support.

11. **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note the correspondence from the Chairman of the National Association of Local Councils and the Policy Briefing on the Queen's Speech 2013.

12. **WOKINGHAM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

Councillor Rowland informed the committee that during her representation on Wokingham District of Association of Local Councils she had acted as the link with the Education Service and said she hoped such a link would continue. She had found the meetings interesting and it had been helpful to meet colleagues from other parishes.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note the minutes of the Wokingham District Association of Local Councils meeting held on 7 February 2013.

13. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

There were no items from the meeting which Members felt should be publicised.

14. **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to legal and personal matters, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw for the following two agenda items.

15. **URGENCY COMMITTEE**

The Chairman presented the minutes of the Urgency Committee held on 29 May 2013. The Town Clerk and Service Support Manager presented the confidential minute items to Members.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note the minutes of the Urgency Committee held on 29 May 2013.

16. **OAKWOOD CENTRE FLOORING**

The Service Support Manager reported that there was, as yet, no further update on this matter.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm
