

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON
15th DECEMBER 2021**

Present: Councillors, Sarah Boad (Chair), Alan Boad, Will Bryce, Mubarik Chowdry, Judith Clarke, Bill Gifford, Louisa Radice, Susan Rasmussen and Nick Wilkins

Officers: Stephen Marks, Town Clerk

57. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr J McGhee. (Cllr Wilkins substituting)

58. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gifford declared a non pecuniary interest as a member of Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council.

Councillor A Boad declared a non pecuniary interest as a member of Warwick District Council.

59. Public Forum

There were no representations from members of the public.

60. Minutes

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 18th November (Report No.4) are confirmed as a correct record.

61. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Tennis facilities – WDC made a decision regarding management of tennis facilities at their December cabinet meeting.

One world link – contact has been made with One World Link and they are suggesting using the funding offered by the Town Council for tree planting initiatives in Bo. They would also like to explore a letter / plaque / certificate from Leamington Spa to acknowledge the 40 year relationship and suggested a message from the Mayor. The Committee were supportive of this approach.

All Saints Regeneration Project – Town Clerk had provided a letter of support.

62. Projects

The committee considered report number 6, regarding possible funding for projects.

Anti-spiking project

Jon Barnett, Community Safety Officer at Warwick District Council introduced the proposed anti-spiking project. This was a project intended to address the increasingly concerning matter of spiking (e.g. of peoples drinks) in bars and clubs. It was part of a wider initiative around safety in the night time economy being developed by the Community Safety Partnership.

Jon Barnett advised that £1905 funding would enable purchase of approximately 15,000 Stop Topps to protect peoples drinks from spiking and that Warwickshire Police would match fund the same amount. Various aspects of the initiative were discussed. Jon Barnett noted that the Town Council would be fully recognised / acknowledged for any contribution.

Resolved that a £1905 contribution be made to the anti-spiking project.

Commonwealth Games Street Dressing

The committee considered further the matter of street dressing, following its deliberations at previous meetings. Cllr Wilkins advised that the site visit had gone well and an initial proposal for street dressing from Christchurch Gardens down the parade through Bath Street and to the railway bridge had been discussed. Commonwealth Games representatives would draw up a proposal.

There was discussion regarding the suitable amount of funding contribution from the Town Council. It was noted that £4k was available from the projects budget for 2021/22 and consideration could be given to use of anticipated underspends, subject to approval from the full Town Council.

Resolved that £4k from the 2021/22 projects budget be used as a contribution to the Commonwealth Games Street Dressing.

Resolved that it be recommended to the Town Council that a total £12k contribution be made to Commonwealth Games Street Dressing in Leamington Spa, made up of £4k from the 2021/22 projects budget and an additional £8k from anticipated underspends in other budget areas.

63. **Accounting Software**

The committee considered report number 7 regarding benefits of using dedicated accounting software.

Resolved

- i) That the purchase and implementation of accounting software is agreed.
- ii) That AdvantEdge is agreed as the preferred accounting software / system.

64. **Draft Budget 2022/23**

The committee considered report number 8 regarding a draft budget for 2022/23, following its discussions at its previous meeting.

It was noted that WDC had recently advised that the tax base had reduced from 17,221.67 to 17,000.07, meaning that the precept costs would be spread across a slightly smaller number of properties.

As the allocation (£10k) for the Queen's Jubilee was a one off, it was proposed that this be met from balances / reserves, thus minimising the increase in Council Tax.

It was agreed that the cost of civic regalia would be investigated to determine if any savings could be made.

Resolved that it be recommended to the Town Council that the draft budget for 2022/23 (with the agreed amendment) be adopted.

65. **Mayoral Protocol**

The committee considered report number 9 which proposed a draft Mayoral Protocol document. The committee supported the documents. There was discussion regarding the wording regarding the civic service and appointment of a chaplain.

Action: Town Clerk to revise the wording based on the discussion.

Resolved:

- i) That the committee supports the draft Mayoral Protocol subject to the minor amendments discussed.
- ii) That it is recommended to the Town Council that a Mayoral Protocol is adopted.

66. **Community Forums**

The chair raised the issue of Community Forums. In the past community forums for north and south Leamington had met and were supported by WDC / WCC officers. In addition the Town Council had supported the Safer Town Centre Forum. It was felt that these could be restarted, probably in virtual meeting format.

Resolved:

- i) That contact is made with WDC and WCC to request the re-establishment of the North and South Leamington Community Forums, with support from their officers.
- ii) That the Town Council seeks to re-establish the Town Centre Community Safety Forum, subject to engagement from relevant partner organisations.

67. **Railway underpass**

The committee considered report number 11. Following a presentation to the Town Council's Cultural & Community Committee in relation to arts projects, the District Councils Projects & Development Manager / Creative Compact Manager had approached the Town Council to see if the Council would like to be involved in the next stages of a project to install art in the railway underpass.

Resolved – that the Town Council be involved in supporting the next stages of the project.

68. **Payments**

Resolved that the following payments be approved.

