

GOOLE TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held on 20th April 2023 commencing at 7.26pm

PRESENT: Councillors Flynn (In the Chair), Bailey, Bottomley, Harrison, B Jeffreys, D Jeffreys and Raspin.

OFFICERS: Mr B. Robertson (Town Clerk)
Ms S. Norfolk (RFO/Deputy Town Clerk)
Mr G. Whitehead (Head of Arts & Culture) – attended the meeting for items **PR2258** and **PR2259**.
Mrs C. Brophy (Administration Assistant)

PR2254 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Handley, Marshall, Moiser, Penn, Turner and Walker.

PR2255 **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND THEIR NATURE**

There were no declarations of interest.

PR2256 **REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER/DEPUTY TOWN CLERK**

(a) Monthly Payments – Feb 2023

Members were in receipt of the above report.

Members were recommended to approve the schedule of payments for February 2023 of £154,396.97.

Councillor Raspin queried the payment of expenses to various individuals. He asked about the possibility of a credit card being available in the office.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the credit card does stay in the office. She explained the reasons why she would be unhappy for it to be left with anyone else and the reasoning behind not having a card in the Council's name. The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk told Members that were she to leave her job, the card would be cancelled. She also made it clear that following a phone call to her, the card is always available.

Councillor Bottomley queried the three payments to Fisher Alarms.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that there are three regular payments to Fishers every month.

Councillor Bottomley also queried payments to DN Electrical and Helm & Ransome.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that water heaters have had to be replaced at the Cemetery, West Park and Riverside Gardens.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk reminded Members to email any questions prior to the meeting.

Councillor B Jeffreys **PROPOSED** that Members **APPROVE** the schedule of payments for February 2023 of £154,396.97.

This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Raspin.

It was **RESOLVED** that Members **APPROVE** the schedule of payments for February 2023 of £154,396.97.

(b) Monthly Bank Reconciliation & Bank Statement – 28th February 2023

Members were recommended to approve the bank reconciliation for:- 28th February 2023.

Councillor B Jeffreys **PROPOSED** that Members **APPROVE** the bank reconciliation for 28th February 2023.

This was **SECONDED** by Councillor D Jeffreys.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the bank reconciliation for 28th February 2023.

(c) Income and Expenditure to 28th February 2023

Members were recommended to note the report for the period ending 28th February 2023.

Councillor B Jeffreys **PROPOSED** that Members **NOTE** the report for the period ending 28th February 2023.

This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Bailey.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the report for the period ending 28th February 2023.

PR2257

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK – POTENTIAL CHANGES TO COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Members were in receipt of the above report.

The Town Clerk informed Members that there could be potential changes to the timing and frequency of Meetings following a request from Members. He explained the reason that meetings are normally held on Thursdays. Members agreed that they should continue to be held on Thursdays.

Councillor B Jeffreys asked whether meetings could commence at the earlier time of 6.00pm.

The Town Clerk informed Members that a 6.00pm start would also benefit Officers.

Councillor Flynn expressed his concern about reducing the number of Members on Committees asking whether this would lead to a problem being quorate as has been the case recently.

The Town Clerk informed Members that he would suggest perhaps five Members in a Committee. This will also change the number required for being quorate.

The Town Clerk informed Members that one option would be to hold meetings monthly, all on the same night. He said that Planning meetings often take less than half an hour, there is a statutory 21 day period to respond. We could look to hold more meetings during the day, this would however restrict people who work. Provided that the statutory notice of meetings is given, ad hoc planning meetings could be called when necessary. This can be monitored by the Admin assistant and Town Clerk on a trial basis and working parties and planning meetings can be called as required.

Councillor Raspin **PROPOSED** that the meeting schedule is changed to monthly meetings with all Members attending. Meetings will now commence at 6.00pm.

This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Bailey.

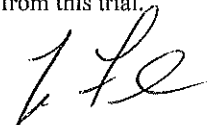
It was **RESOLVED** that the meeting schedule is changed to monthly meetings with all Members attending. Meetings will now commence at 6.00pm.

PR2258

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK – JUNCTION OPENING HOURS

Members were in receipt of the above report.

Councillor B Jeffreys informed Members that she would like to suggest a trial period of changing the reception opening times from 10.00am until 3.00pm Monday to Friday and to gain statistics from this trial.



The Town Clerk informed Members that this would have to be staffed accordingly.

Councillor Raspin added that this has been discussed at length between Councillors and the majority would like to see longer opening hours. He also asked what the plans for the café are.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the café is only currently open when an event is on.

Councillor Raspin stated that Councillors would like to see downstairs open more.

At this point, the Head of Arts & Culture entered the meeting.

Councillor Raspin asked him about the long-term future of the café and whether it is possible to look at longer opening hours.

The Head of Arts & Culture answered that it is a possibility, the last person who owned the café had however reduced her hours. She opened 10.00am until 2.00pm as she found it very quickly quietened down after this time. The budgets have been set based on demand, we could open longer hours but this would have an impact on staff costs of five hours per week, two hundred and fifty plus hours per year.

The Head of Arts & Culture said that 10 until 2 are the core hours. Some days however, the café is open for films or other events and the building is open longer when we have hires such as 'Families in Goole' using the building.

He informed Members that the intention is to move the Box Office behind the bar. People will be able to purchase tickets and buy drinks and snacks at the same time. This will also save on staffing costs. As part of the restructure we allocated twenty hours per week to an Arts Admin Assistant. The previous four Admin assistants have been re-allocated to other areas. Longer opening hours would cause a problem as to who would work them.

The Head of Arts & Culture informed Members that he genuinely did not think that it is a good idea to open longer. If in the future however the demand for the café becomes greater, this can be reconsidered as the plan is to have the bar open serving drinks, coffee, tea, and cake.

Councillor B Jeffreys informed Members that she would withdraw her proposal.

In conclusion, The Chair, Councillor Flynn informed Members that the opening hours will remain the same as currently 10.00am until 2.00pm.

It was RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded for the following item under the public bodies (admission to meetings act) 1960 in that it contains commercial or personal information as defined under the local government act 1972 schedule act 12a the divulgence of which may be detrimental to the council.

PR2259 **MONTHLY DEBTORS**

Members were in receipt of the above report.

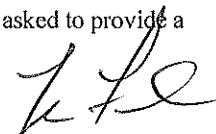
Councillor Flynn stated that it is good to see a payment plan has been put in place for Debtor A.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that we have deconstructed the bills for the last year and created a spreadsheet with a breakdown of charges for gas, electricity and water. Due to energy relief, the debt has reduced. There are still ongoing talks re payments.

Following further discussions regarding Debtor A, the FRO/Deputy Town Clerk assured Members that the spreadsheet is being monitored monthly and we are keeping an eye on the situation.

Councillor Raspin expressed his concerns re Debtor B.

The Town Clerk informed Members that Debtor B is on a rolling contract. He said that he has written a letter to him which states that if the rent is not paid, he is in breach of contract. He has also been asked to provide a



copy of insurances, Pest control contract, Food hygiene certificates, Public and Employers liability insurances and a copy of his accounts. He has been given to the end of the month to respond. The Town Clerk told Members that we should work with Debtor B, giving him a chance to sort the business out.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed members that he is making payments and that further payments have been made since the report was written. Debtor B is making weekly payments to address the issue.

The Town Clerk reassured Members that should all the relevant documentation not be provided by the end of the month, three months' notice can be given for breach of contract.

Meeting concluded at 8.25pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. D.', located in the bottom right corner of the page.