

GOOLE TOWN COUNCIL  
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 commencing at 6.30pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Flynn (In the Chair), Bailey, Cooper, Handley, B Jeffreys, D Jeffreys, Raspin and Turner.

**OFFICERS:** Mr B. Robertson (Town Clerk)  
Ms S. Norfolk (RFO/Deputy Town Clerk)  
Mr G. Whitehead (Head of Arts & Culture)  
Mrs C. Brophy (Administration Assistant)

**PR2251** APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Boatman, Bottomley, Harrison, Marshall, Moiser, Penn and Walker.

**PR2252** TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND THEIR NATURE

There were no declarations of interest.

**PR2253** FINANCE REPORTS

(a) Revised Financial Regulations

Members were in receipt of the above report.

Members were recommended to approve the Financial Regulations

Councillor B Jeffreys informed Members that she would like to make several proposals. These are all on page 7. Item 4.1 – where it states ‘this authority is to be determined by: the Council for all items over £25,000’ she would like this changed to – all items over £5,000. Item 4.1 – where it states ‘the RFO and Town Clerk in conjunction with Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee, for any items between £10,000 and £25,000’ she would like this changing to any items between £5,000 and £10,000. Item 4.1 – where it states ‘Heads of Service in conjunction with the RFO and Town Clerk for any item below £10,000’ she would like this to include the Chair of P&R.

The Town Clerk informed Members that legally, a single Councillor can’t approve payments.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk reiterated that budgets are agreed at the start of the year and the payments are signed by three Councillors. There are two statutory roles, the Town Clerk and RFO/Deputy Town Clerk. Councillors cannot delegate to a single councillor.

Councillor Handley asked whether all Councillors should be included. She said that Councillors never get to ratify items bought, these are also not included in the minutes and Councillors are only made aware once an item for example costing £8,000, is purchased. She said that transparency is needed and the public need to see that the Council is looking after their money.

The Town Clerk informed Members that they are given a breakdown of expenditure every month, he said that this is also in the public domain. He asked whether we would be expected to wait for example if a lawnmower broke down and approval for expenditure was required by Council.

Councillor Bailey asked whether 4.5 could be used in this case.



The Head of Arts & Culture answered that a lawnmower would not be considered as an emergency purchase.

A discussion took place regarding the office refurbishment. The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that we don't have a Capital programme. The office refurbishment was as a result of a Health & Safety visit during the restructure.

Councillor Turner informed Members that the office refurbishment was not stated in the restructure report. An email should have been sent out to inform Councillors.

Councillors again discussed the importance of better communication and inclusivity to keep them aware.

Councillor Turner asked what the impact of reducing from £25,000 to £5,000 would be.

The Head of Arts & Culture answered that it is not very often that amount is spent. The cost of the office building works was approximately £8,000 in total.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that there had been the time when £19,500 was required in an emergency to replace equipment at West Park. She added that Standing Orders are always followed and three estimates are always obtained for items over £5,000.

The Head of Arts & Culture informed Members that the item was taken to P&R. He told Councillors that they are employing skilled, experienced people to make these decisions.

The budget was discussed and Councillors asked whether something could be timetabled in earlier in the year to look at the budget. The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that she has to forecast at the end of October although she does not receive any figures until possibly the start of December. She doesn't receive the Council Tax figures from ERYC until the end of November. Heads of Departments look back on their figures, going through thousands of cost heads. The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk cannot give definitive answers until the Council Tax base is received.

It was suggested that Councillors need more training in order to better understand budget setting/finances.

The RFO/Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that she sent out training details and only had one response.

It was agreed that an induction pack be put together for all Councillors.

Councillor Handley also stressed the need for Councillors to complete vital safeguarding training.

Following further discussion Councillor B Jeffreys **PROPOSED** that expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is determined by: the Council for all items over £10,000. The RFO, Town Clerk and Heads of Service in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy and Resource Committee, for any items between £5,000 to £10,000.

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

It was **RESOLVED** that expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is determined by: the Council for all items over £10,000. The RFO, Town Clerk and Heads of Service in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, for any items between £5,000 to £10,000.

Meeting concluded at 7.45pm

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