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Minutes of the **Policy and Resources** Committee meeting of Shepton Mallet Town Council that took place in the Asham Committee Room of Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 7pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs T Faith, W Frapple (Chairman), S Hale, M Harrison, C Inchley, G Kennedy, A McGuire, N Shearn, N Tolson.

**In Attendance:** C Starkie, Town Clerk and L Evans, Assistant Town Clerk

**Public and Press:** No press or public attended.

**Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

**P&R 4.1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Height and Manley.

**P&R 4.2 Chairman's Announcements**

No Chairman's announcements.

**P&R 4.3 Declaration of interest of matters related to this agenda**

There were no declarations of interest.

**P&R 4.4 To receive the minutes from the last meeting 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

Councillor Tolson stated that he was disappointed his grant application for funding for the Cenotaph 100 event had been removed from the agenda, as the charity was ready to proceed with the event but required confirmation of funding from the town council. There was a discussion that confirmed that despite a request for financial evidence to support his application, this had not been made available and so the Town Clerk had not advanced his application.

It was agreed that the internal procedures must be followed and that the Town Clerk and RFOs' request for further information must be fulfilled if the item was to be

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discussed at a future meeting. It was also agreed that Councillor Tolson find another member of his charity to proceed with the grant application.

The minutes from 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were received and accepted as a true record.

**Resolved that:**

The minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 be signed as a true record.

**P&R 4.5 To receive the quarterly bank reconciliation, the financial position for the month nine and to note the list of payments since the last meeting**

Councillors received a quarterly bank reconciliation.

They also received summary of current financial position at month 9, which was illustrating an underspend at year end due to some planned projects being delayed, following an election and some staff changes. Those projects would be delivered in 2020/21 and therefore an element of the underspend would be placed in yet to be determined Earmarked Funds to spend in the future.

**Resolved that:**

The quarterly bank reconciliation be noted.

The financial position of the council at month nine be noted.

The Town Clerk be delegated responsibility to authorise payroll and other payments, on the banking system, in conjunction with another councillor.

**P&R 4.6 To consider the appointment of an internal auditor under a new contract for a 3-year period**

Councillors were informed of the need to enter into a new 3-year contract for internal auditing services.

**Resolved that:**

The RFO be delegated authority to secure new internal auditing services.

**P&R 4.7 Policy Review and Adoption**

**i. Financial Regulations**

Councillors received a report from the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) on the amendments made to Financial Regulations and these were agreed.

**ii. Community Donations Scheme and Community Grant Scheme**

Councillors received a report from the Town Clerk on the proposed revised Community Donations Scheme and the new Community Grants Scheme.

These documents were considered together and discussed. It was agreed that there was a need to encourage smaller groups to apply for donations. In addition, it was agreed that more must be done to encourage all organisations that were in receipt of a grant to give recognition to the town council in a more prominent manner. Grants would also be awarded with a Service Level Agreement, to be agreed case by case.

It was proposed that delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk and RFO to award donations, outside of the proposed 2 meeting cycle, to the upper level of £1,000 per annum, as per the policy.

There was discussion on some particular aspects of the policies which would be amended by the Town Clerk, in relation to meeting the criteria and objectives of the town council.

It was recognised that more could be done to support deprived groups and those in need of financial support, which were struggling due to cut backs in support from other local authorities. It was also recognised that a revised system would create a framework within which applicants would receive support in a timely manner. In addition, information would be provided on other sources of funding, and opportunities for collaboration between community groups would be considered and encouraged. If necessary, the officers would host an information session to assist with applicants.

**Resolved that:**

A recommendation be made to Full Council that the following policies be adopted, subject to minor amendments as listed above.

- Financial Regulations
- Community Donations Scheme
- Community Grants Scheme

**P&R 4.8 Civic Awards Policy and Procedure**

Councillors received a report from the Town Clerk, on the adoption of a Civic Awards policy and procedure. It was proposed that 2 categories of “volunteer individual” and “community group” would be trailed in the first year, and that a maximum of 3 awards would be made in the first year. A decision would need to be made on the actual location of the Civic Reception and councillors were requested to submit any ideas for a name of the scheme. Consideration would need to be given to the launch of the scheme and for marketing material to be developed that adopted a town council brand. The scheme would be reviewed in January 2021.

**Resolved that:**

A recommendation be made to Full Council that the Civic Awards Policy and Procedure be adopted.

**P&R 4.9 To agree to an upgrade of some ICT and office equipment**

Councillors to receive a report from the Town Clerk on a proposal for the office team to purchase new equipment.

**Resolved that:**

Authority to be delegated to the Town Clerk and RFO to make the necessary purchase in line with the report and within the budgets.

**P&R 4.10 Date of next council meeting**

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

The meeting closed at 2010 hrs.

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