



Meeting (No) **Full Council Meeting (7)**
 Time & Date **25th January 2022 at 6.00pm**
 Location **Neston Town Hall**

Minutes

Present: Cllrs Wastell (Mayor), Davies, Flockhart, Griffiths, Hinks, Hudspeth, Jones, Kynaston, Marple, Samuel, Smith, Warner and Mrs A Kunaj (Council Manager) and Mr T Godfrey (Finance Manger).

PART 1: Items considered in the presence of the press and public

64 Apologies for absence

Resolved to accept apologies from Cllrs Jackson (personal) and Willis (personal).
 The absence of Cllr Townsend was noted.

65 Questions and comments from residents: None.

66 Minutes of the meetings

Resolved to approve the minutes of the meetings held 16th November 2021 as a true and correct record and the inquorate record of 4th January 2022. The Mayor signed the minutes and the record.

67 Declarations of Interest: None.

68 Mayor's Report

The Mayor's report FC7/68 was received.

69 Council Manager's report

The Council Manager's report FC7/69 was received.

70 Council Budget requirement for 2022/23 Council year

The projected outturn, budgets and draft precept figures were received and discussed at length.

Members were asked to consider that the council had taken over from CWaC, the High Street Christmas lights. Funding for this and budget for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee event, along with some consultancy works was being made available in next year's budgets. The costs for these alone is more than £29,000.00. An underachievement of income generated from the town hall hire and market was also a consideration, as the impact of Covid and its restrictions have continued for a longer period of time than had been expected.

71 Precept 2022/23

- a The RFO reports; summary sheet, report and band rates were received and considered. Comparisons to other Town and Parish councils were provided.
- b Members considered the Resources and Policy committee 14.12.2021 item 82 c recommendation: That a precept request of £291,303 be applied for to CWaC for the council's budget requirement for 2022/23.

This would result in a 3.2% increase on Band D from 2021/22.

Mayor's initial and date *SW*

Various percentages and financial impacts for band D households were considered. Members noted that since the retirement of the Market and Estates officer, and as this role had not been replaced, general town hall maintenance issues were being missed. It was considered too, that stability of the market could be enhanced by employing a member of staff rather than using agency staff, however this would have additional cost implications.

Members considered if spending plans could be reduced. It was noted that until more recent years council had, for a period of years, not increased the amount being paid by band D households.

A proposal was made to consider the R&P recommendation that a precept request of £291,303 be applied for to CWaC for the council's budget requirement for 2022/23.

The proposal fell.

A proposal was made for council to make application to CWaC for a precept request of £294,953 for the council's expenditure requirement for 2022/23. Resulting in a charge of £49.67, an increase of 4.4% or £2.11 on last year, for band D households.

The proposal was carried.

Resolved that council to make application to CWaC for a precept request of £294,953 for the council's expenditure requirement for 2022/23. Resulting in a charge of £49.67, an increase of 4.4% or £2.11 on last year, for band D households.

72 Finance and Risk Assessment

- a. **Resolved** to approve expenditure of £46,306.99 net from the Council's current account authorised by the RFO from 01.10.21 to 30.11.21, and Equals card payments of £105.97 net from 01.10.21 to 30.11.21.
- b. The current account income of £41,522.66 net from 01.10.21 to 30.11.21 was noted.
- c. **Resolved** that the reconciliation of the Council's three bank accounts to 30.11.21 agreed. The Mayor signed the balancing figures.
- d. **Resolved** to approve the Full Council risk assessment and action plan. No action is required.

73 Councillor Surgeries

- a. **Resolved** that an initial trial period of 3 months, extending to 6 months if successful, would be set up to facilitate Community Engagement Surgeries. These are to be held at Neston Library alongside the current Police Surgeries that are currently scheduled as detailed in motion. Some surgeries had already taken place. The next surgeries would take place on 28.01.22 at 5.30pm and 02.02.22 at 2pm.
- b. Councillors Griffiths, Hinks, Jones, Kynaston, Marple, Samuel and Wastell willing to attend at the surgeries, were nominated to attend.

74 Councillor Vacancies and Co-option of members

Mayor's initial and date

Skin

15 FEB 2022

a Members noted the casual vacancies for the wards of Neston and Little Neston. Confirmation that an election was not called for these vacancies was provided.

b To receive and consider application/s made or nomination/s for co-option to the Council for the wards of;

- Neston Ward – Stuart E Harper

Resolved to nominate Mr S E Harper as one of the Neston ward members for Neston Town Council.

- Little Neston - Neil Heritage

Resolved to nominate Mr N Heritage as one of the Little Neston ward members for Neston Town Council.

The Council Manager will look to change the application form to request that future potential candidates attend at the selection meeting.

75 Recommendations from committees

A *Resources & Policy 14.12.2021 items 85 & 95 respectively*

1. Mid-year review of R&P structure/terms of reference

Members considered the committee recommendations.

Resolved that;

a) at the commencement of the 2022 council year the current Resources & Policy Committee should be replaced by

- Finance & Administration Committee (to take responsibility for sections A & E of the current R&P terms of reference)
- Market & Town Hall Committee (to take responsibility for section C of the current R&P terms of reference)
- HR Committee (to take responsibility for section F of the current R&P terms of reference);

b) the communication elements of section B of the current R&P terms of reference should be transferred to Community & Environment Committee's terms of reference to sit alongside C&E's responsibility for community engagement;

c) strategy and economic development should revert to Council and Council should establish task & finish groups to investigate any aspects of either of these issues as deemed necessary.

2. Social Media Policy

A proposal was made to amend the policy by replacement of: 'The Council Manger, Senior Market and Support Officer, the Governance and Operations Manager and primarily two councillors nominated by council, will be able to post on the council's Facebook page.

With: 'The Council Manger, Senior Market and Support Officer, the Governance and Operations Manager and all councillors will be able to post on the council's Facebook page.'

Mayor's initial and date



15 FEB 2022

Resolved to adopt the draft policy for social media as amended, with implementation following approval of a clear plan and costs, subject to amendment of the policy.

It was noted that the R&P committee had established a task and finish group to draft a social media action plan.

76 To note the minutes of the committee meetings

- a *Community and Environment:* The minutes of the meetings for 9th September, 12th and 21st October and 7th December 2021 were noted.
- b *Resources and Policy:* The minutes of the meeting of 14th December 2021 were noted.

77 External Facilitator for Council review

Members considered and approved the specification issued to contractors, outlining the details of services that would be provided by external facilitator / consultant to facilitate a Council review.

78 Next meeting date

- a. The next scheduled council meeting was confirmed as 17th May 2022, the Annual Meeting of the Council. An additional meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 15th February 2022 at 6pm.

Apologies were given by Cllrs Hinks and Hudspeth (personal) and Warner (business) for the 15th February meeting.
- b. Members noted that the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for 19th April 2022.

79 Any other Items: None.

80 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act (Financial or Business Affairs of any particular person). The Public Interest Test had been applied and favours exclusion.

PART 2: Items considered in the absence of the press and public

81 External Facilitator for Council review

Using item 77 as the benchmark specification issued to a number of consultants.

Resolved to approve proposal by Pete Cooper on behalf of ChALC to assist Council with its Strategic Planning and to conduct a Staffing review.

Resolved that pre-contract discussions with councillors and staff would take place with Pete Copper before the costs were approved.

Resolved that the quotation would go back to Council following the discussions in order to approve the costs.

Meeting closed at 7.55pm

Signed



Dated

15 FEB 2022