

**THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 6.00pm in the Thurston Community Library, Norton Road, Thurston.

In the Chair: Cllr. Dashper. Present: Cllrs. Balaam, Moy and West. In Attendance: Mrs V Waples, Clerk.

The Chair declared the meeting open at 6.00pm and thanked all for attending. The notice for the reporting at meetings of the parish council was taken as read.

1. Apologies of absence –
  - a) Verified apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Bond and Rainbow.
  - b) The submitted apology was approved and accepted by all present, aif.
  - c) In light of the numbers in attendance at the meeting, the committee agreed to invoke Standing Order 4 d viii which allowed for a quorum of a committee to be no less than three members.
2. Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests -
  - a) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registerable interests and non-registerable interests in items on the agenda and their nature including gifts of hospitality exceeding £50 – there were none received.
3. To approve the minutes of the Committee Meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023 as previously circulated –
  - a) **the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place with agreement forthcoming for them to be signed as such by the Chair, aif.**
4. To consider the following matters as part of the Council's year-End Process:
  - a) To note and confirm approval for the 2023-2024 pay scales to be applied to all staff salaries in accordance with their contracts effective November 2023, backdated to April 2023 – all were aware that the pay agreement was a nationally agreed policy and that its implementation formed part of the conditions and terms of employment. In accordance with FR 7.3 (No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or relevant committee), the committee approved the agreed pay scales to be applied backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, aif. All noted the potential impact on the staffing budget in the region of £9,046 as outlined in the accompanying paper.
  - b) To receive an update on the opening of a separate bank account to protect the Council's Financial Assets in accordance with Council's Investment Strategy – whilst it was agreed that the opening of an account was in principal a sound idea, the rates being offered by those previously surveyed were not sufficiently rewarding. With reference to the council's investment objectives: security; liquidity and return, it was agreed to carry out further research into accounts open to local authorities.
  - c) To receive and consider the 1<sup>st</sup> Draft of the Budget for 2024-2025 – the Committee was in agreement that it would recommend full Council consider setting a draft revenue budget in the sum of £204,330 with amendments to be undertaken once the indicative tax base was provided by the District Council (due out 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023). It was noted that the indicative tax base would not be finalised until early January 2024 and that this would be required to ascertain the full impact of the budget being set. It was noted that the draft budget would be discussed further at the full council meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and would be treated as a live document.
  - d) To consider and approve the contract for waste services at the New Green Centre with agreement for cross charging for 50% of the charges (ex. VAT) for recycling and general waste and 100% of the charges for food waste – all agreed that the parish council should take over the contract for the management of the wheelie bins at the New Green Centre and that the cross-charging arrangement as outlined above should be implemented on a monthly basis. Delegated responsibility was given to the Clerk to set up and act as administrator for the account.

So signed and approved at the meeting of 21.02.2024

5. To review and adopt the following policies:
  - a) Fixed Asset Policy – it was agreed that the policy was written be so approved with all noting that it would be incorporated into the suite of policies held by the council.
  - b) Recruitment Policy – acknowledging that this was an existing policy and had been implemented in the recruitment for the Deputy Clerk, all agreed to approve the updated policy.
  - c) Correspondence – Policy and Implementation – whilst this was not a formal policy for adoption, the committee noted that it covered off the procedures for dealing with communication to and from the council and that it sat alongside other policies that cover communications. All agreed that the policy and implementation as written be so approved.
6. To note the Fire Risk Assessment of the Parish Council Office as carried out by the Clerk – the assessment as carried out was noted by all. It was agreed that this should feed into the overall Fire Inspection Assessment that had been undertaken/ was in the process of being undertaken by the New Green Centre Trust. It was also agreed that the Clerk should request clarification of the insurance cover that was in place for the building Sas part of the services provided by the Trust within the rental charge for the office suite.
7. To consider further the Detached Youth work Project:
  - a) To agree to proceed to advert for the Senior Detached Youth Worker using the previously approved Job Description; Person Specification; Advert – whilst it was agreed that this project should be supported, concern was raised at the lack of a qualified persons to oversee this project at the current moment. The Clerk agreed to liaise with Cllr. Bond to ascertain whether she would be in a position to commence the project in January 2024.
8. To consider matters coming forth from Committee Members: there were no further matters raised.
9. Date of future meetings of the committee:
  - a) 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 commencing at 18.00pm in the Community Library, Norton Road –
10. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted: Council agreed that the public be excluded to consider legal advice from council’s solicitor and that publicity of it would be likely to prejudice the legal position of the council.
  - a) Legal Matter relating to transfer of land to the parish council – an update was provided from a recent email from Council’s legal team. Following discussion, the committee agreed to the course of action being proposed.
11. There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.17pm.