

**Minutes of a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber,
Newbury Town Council, Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury on
Monday 20th January 2020 at 7.30 pm.**

Present

Councillors: Jeff Beck (substitute); Martin Colston (Chairperson); Jo Day; Sue Farrant; Jon Gage; Olivia Lewis; Stephen Masters; Elizabeth O'Keeffe; Erik Pattenden.

In attendance

Hugh Peacocke, Chief Executive Officer and Margaret Gore, Corporate Services Officer

42. Apologies for absence

Councillors: There were none.

Absent: Councillor Jeff Cant, Tony Vickers.

43. Declarations of interest and dispensations

The Chief Executive Officer declared that Councillors Jeff Beck, Stephen Masters, and Erik Pattenden are also Members of West Berkshire District Council, which is declared as a general interest on their behalf and a dispensation is in place to allow them to partake in discussions relating to West Berkshire Council (WBC) business. A dispensation is in place to allow all Members to discuss the budget and the precept.

44. Minutes

Proposed: Councillor Olivia Lewis

Seconded: Councillor Erik Pattenden

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Monday 14 October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

*Councillor Jeff Beck abstained as he wasn't present at the previous meeting.

45. Questions and petitions from members of the public

There were none.

46. Members' questions and petitions

There were none.

47. Newbury Library Services

Members received a report from Paul James, the Culture and Libraries Manager for West Berkshire Council on progress made by the working group, and the potential impact if Newbury Town Council withdraw their funding for the library. After taking a number of questions, the Chairperson thanked Mr James for his presentation.

Proposed: Councillor Martin Colston

Seconded: Councillor Sue Farrant

Resolved: It was agreed to pay the second and third quarters of the budgeted contribution for 2019-20 to West Berkshire Council for Newbury Library, i.e. £15,637.50.

48. Council's land at Fifth Road

Members received a presentation from Mr John Holt and Mr Norman Casson, Chairman and, Development trustee of West Berkshire Therapy Centre (WBTC) regarding their request to acquire part of the Council's land at Fifth Road to build a hydro-therapy facility. After taking a number of questions, the Chairperson thanked Mr John Holt and Mr Norman Casson for their presentation.

Proposed: Councillor Jeff Beck

Seconded: Councillor Martin Colston

Resolved: That this Committee empowers Officers to explore with WBTC all possible options to build a hydrotherapy facility on any lands owned by this Council. Once complete a formal report for a specific site/sites be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee for consideration.

49. Update on the draft Council Strategy 2019 to 2024

Members received a short presentation from the Chairperson, Councillor Martin Colston regarding the draft Strategy.

Proposed: Councillor Martin Colston

Seconded: Councillor Olivia Lewis

Resolved: To recommend the draft strategy (as at appendix 4 of the agenda) be submitted at the Full Council meeting of 3 February 2020 for approval.

*Councillor Jeff Beck voted against the decision.

50. 2020/21 Budget

50.1. Members received a short presentation from the Chairperson, Councillor Martin Colston regarding the draft budget.

50.2. There was no alternative budget submitted.

50.3.

Proposed: Councillor Martin Colston

Seconded: Councillor Olivia Lewis

Resolved: That the budget for 2020/21 be considered at Full Council scheduled for 3rd February 2020 for consideration and its adoption and formally set its precept (while noting that the Billing Authority (West Berkshire Council) has agreed that the level of precept should be declared by 4 February 2020).

*Councillor Jeff Beck voted against the decision.

51. List of payments

The lists of payments for the period 1 October 2019 to 31 December 2019 was noted.

52. Health and safety reports

The information was received and noted by the Committee.

53. Debts over £500 and more than 3 months old

The Committee noted that there were no debts over £500 and more than 3 months old.

54. Income and Expenditure Account quarter 1, 2019/20

54.1 The income and expenditure account to 31 December 2019 was received and noted by the Committee.

54.2

Proposed: Councillor Martin Colston

Seconded: Councillor Elizabeth O’Keeffe

Resolved: That the overspends shown against the account codes on Appendix 4 & 4a be approved.

55. Internal Audit Report

Councillor Steve masters, Chairperson of the Audit Working Group, briefed Members on the first interim internal audit report for the financial year 2019/20 from Auditing Solutions Ltd.

The Committee received the report and noted that there were no actions arising as a result of the first internal audit for 2019/20.

56. Report from the Grant Sub-Committee

In the absence of Councillor Gary Norman, Members received a verbal report from the Chairperson, Councillor Martin Colston, on the work of the Grants Sub-Committee meeting of 25 November 2019.

* Councillor Stephen Masters declared an interest at this point as The Eight Bells organisation had received a grant.

57. Debit Card Banking Arrangements (Appendix 10)

Proposed: Councillor Elizabeth O’Keeffe

Seconded: Councillor Stephen Masters

Resolved: That the addendum to the Council resolution regarding the change of signatories for the Handelsbanken Debit Cards be approved.

58. Forward Work Programme for Policy and Resources committee meetings 2019/20

The Forward Work Programme was received and noted.

Councillors requested the addition of a review of the S106 and CiL monies, if there is funding remaining once Year End work has been completed.

59. Finance and Corporate Services Manager (Appendix 12)

Proposed: Councillor Martin Colston

Seconded: Councillor Jeff Beck

Resolved: That the Recruitment process, Job Description, Person Specification and Contract of Employment for the Post of Finance and Corporate Services Manager, as recommended by the Staff Sub-Committee on 7 January 2020 be approved.

60. Exclusion of the press and public

Proposed: Councillor Martin Colston

Seconded: Councillor Elizabeth O'Keeffe

Resolved: That under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

61. Staff Sub-Committee

Councillor Martin Colston, as Chair of the Staff Sub-Committee, reported on the meetings of 3 December 2019 and 7 January 2020 which dealt with the following matters:

- Minor amendments to current Contracts of Employment, as recommended by our Personnel consultants, Ellis Whittam,
- A member-officer Protocol for the Council
- Staff Salary review and awards
- The staff salary budget for 2020-21
- To appoint a panel of the Staff Sub-Committee to deal with management and appraisals of the CEO, and
- Recruitment arrangements for a Finance and Corporate Services Manager

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 9.14 pm.

Chairperson

Date: