



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy Working Group held at Arms Everytyn House on Thursday 8 March 2018 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillors: J R Potts (Chair), A Cartie, E Anderson-Smith, D Carr, O Potts, K Nisbet, J Reid, M Richardson, L Rickerby, S Stanger, W Taylor, D Walls

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Councillors K Ellis, R Parker, G Thompson, G Webb
2.	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS & THE GRANT OF ANY DISPENSATIONS None.
3.	MINUTES FROM THE POLICY WORKING GROUP HELD ON TUESDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2017 Committee agreed to ADOPT the minutes.
3.1	MATTERS ARISING <u>VAT</u> The Town Clerk confirmed that everything is in order and BTC did not incur any penalties.
4	OFFICE ACCOMMODATION Members noted the information contained in the Deputy Town Clerk's report.

	<p>A discussion took place around future plans for office space, with some members reiterating their preference for an office based in the town centre and looking at the possibility of buying a building/new build.</p> <p>The Chair asked all Councillors to think about what they see as the requirements for an office for BTC and submit these to the Town Clerk following which a meeting will be arranged to discuss this matter further.</p>
5	<p>REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK</p> <p><u>Investment Strategy</u></p> <p>Members noted and agreed with the recommendation below.</p> <p><i>"The current policy be continued and maintain the level of investment in the LAPF at £500,000 and any other surplus funds be placed in the deposit account. This decision will be reviewed if the investment markets move in a direction that allow investment in the LAPF."</i></p> <p><u>Letting of Rooms at Arms Everytne House</u></p> <p>Members noted the information and agreed with the recommendation below regarding the Council Chamber, on the basis that the Town Clerk seeks clarification regarding liability insurance. However, Councillors decided that the members room should only be used for BTC purposes.</p> <p><i>"The Council Chamber be made available at no charge, providing it is not needed for BTC purposes, to charitable and public bodies subject to the agreement of the Town Clerk."</i></p> <p><u>Appointment of a Consultant</u></p> <p>Members noted the information and agreed with the recommendation below. The Town Clerk explained he would like all Councillors involved in this piece of work. Alongside this he will review the way reports are prepared and how information is provided to Councillors as well as the minutes and agenda templates.</p>

	<p><i>"The consultant who assisted in the development of the governance arrangements be appointed to help identify the objectives of the Council and produce a related action plan.</i></p> <p><i>It is estimated that this will take three to four days at a cost of £1,500 including travelling expenses. This can be met from the 2018/19 budget of £7,000."</i></p> <p><u>Operation London Bridge</u></p> <p>Members noted and accepted the information.</p>
6	<p>RISK ASSESSMENTS</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the risk assessment have been reviewed. The risk has increased in one area only, play areas, because of the current involvement with an insurance company. Councillor Reid queried whether play areas should be risk assessed with regard to attacks from dogs. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that BTC have a responsibility for the physical structure of the play area.</p> <p>The risk assessments were noted and agreed.</p>
7	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS OR ITEMS FOR URGENT ATTENTION</p> <p>There was no urgent business.</p>
8	<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next Meeting of items covered previously by this Committee will be under the Governance Committee which will be held on Thursday 21 June 2018 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber.</p>

MEMBERS OF THE POLICY WORKING GROUP

All Councillors

Officers:

J Hughes, Town Clerk

M Hawthorne, Committee Clerk

ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE

Date of Committee /Minute No	Action	Responsible Officer	Comments	Date Action Completed
7/3/17 3.1	Clarify position with regard to VAT	Town Clerk	There continues to be a delay with HMRC	
7/3/17 8	Explore displaying the artefacts in the 3 libraries Consider purchasing additional display cabinets for the office Consider an annual open day for members of the public to view the artefacts.		Ongoing	