



LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

2 FEB 2017

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Minutes of a Meeting of The Standing Committee

held on

11th January 2017

Present: Councillors: D Baker (Chairman)
M Eager E Fieldhouse
A Manns J Roberts

In attendance: Mrs K Mitchell – Clerk to the Council
Cllr E Harvey

S.1 – 01.17 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr R Barnes.

S.2 – 01.17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

S.3 – 01.17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 9th December 2016, copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

S.4 – 01.17 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Members considered a request from a Ledbury Town Councillor for information under the Freedom of Information Act for...

“... all correspondence sent from any of the @LedburyTownCouncil.gov.uk server email addresses to Herefordshire council email addresses and all email addresses ending @bblivingplaces.com between 01st February 2015 and today's date” (14.12.16).

The Clerk advised that due to the scope of information involved, which covered a period of some twenty two months and many individual Councillors' email accounts, it was estimated that it would cost more than the appropriate limit of £450 to consider the request i.e. the estimated cost of one person spending 2½ working days in locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

RESOLVED: That the request be refused under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as the estimated cost of processing the request would exceed the appropriate limit of £450.

Cllr Harvey advised that the external auditors Grant Thornton had asked her to provide the information.

The Clerk advised the Committee that the Information Commissioner had received a complaint from a Ledbury resident regarding the Town Council's handling of his Freedom of Information request, and had accepted the case for investigation. A response setting out the Council's position is required by 6th February 2017.

S.5 – 01.17 STANDING ORDERS

Members considered minor amendments to Standing Orders.

Referring to Standing Order 4. d, viii, Committee and Sub Committees - members considered setting the quorum for a meeting of a committee at half of its total number of members.

RESOLVED: That no change be made at this time.

Referring to Standing Order 23, b, Communicating with District and County or Unitary councillors

The Clerk reminded members that in previous versions, the Standing Order on communication with unitary councillors had related to letters sent as a result of formal decisions taken by the Town Council, and not housekeeping/operational matters such as reporting a light out. The current wording was not practical or necessary in the day to day operational dealings with the unitary authority and could be construed as micromanagement.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to make the following

RECOMMENDATION to Full Council: That the wording of Standing Order 23, b, be amended to read:

'Unless the council determines otherwise, a copy of each formal written correspondence sent to Unitary Council shall be copied to all ward councillor(s) representing the area of the council'.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act, a resolution was passed to exclude the public and press during discussion of the following agenda items. The confidential nature being the consideration of employment matters.

Refer EX01/2017

S.6 – 01.17 STAFFING MATTERS

1. Deputy Clerk vacancy - Temporary staffing measures

RESOLVED: That approval be given for existing part-time office staff to work additional hours until such time as a Deputy Clerk is appointed.

2. Lone Working

RESOLVED: That the installation of a new CCTV system with additional coverage and sound be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration.

That the police be invited to advise on security measures for staff including the provision of panic button.

That the Policy and Procedure working group draw up a lone working policy.

3. Town Crier - Retirement

RESOLVED: That the Clerk instigate the recruitment process for a new Town Crier.

S.7 – 01.17 LEGAL ADVICE

The Clerk left the meeting at this point (8.07pm).

The Mayor gave an update on legal advice from the Solicitor and barrister concerning employment matters.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

SIGNED **DATE**