

MINUTES of a MEETING of the PROPERTY AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on MONDAY 3rd DECEMBER 2018 at 6.30PM

Present: Cllrs: Purchase (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Ayres, C Blanchard-Cooper and Squires. Cllr Chester substituted for Cllr Baker.

2018/2019

34. EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The evacuation procedures were noted.

35. FILMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE PHONES

The procedures were noted.

36. APOLOGIES

There were apologies from Councillor Baker.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted, and no further declarations were made at this stage.

38. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22nd October 2018 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

39. PUBLIC FORUM

There was one member of the public present.

- 39.1** Mr Ellis addressed the Committee on several points. Highlighting the revised terms and conditions for the Manor House and observing that hirers were required check that attendees could be safely evacuated with 2.5 to 3 minutes, he suggested the inclusion of room capacities to aid hirers in meeting this requirement. Regarding car parking, he also suggested that the Committee consider including a note that parking in the Manor House public car park was free after six in the evening to encourage evening bookings. Mr Ellis also asked for clarification on the acronym 'MODES' which was referenced in the Museum Report.

Regarding the Town Centre Manager's post, Mr Ellis asked for clarification on the job title and the cost of the post. Finally, he asked if the museum had considered targeting secondary and private schools for additional interns and volunteers and sought clarification regarding the apparent reduction in Museum staff costs.

Councillor Chester declared a personal interest in the discussion around the Town Centre Regeneration Manager post as he had submitted a statement supporting a Judicial Review of the decision to grant planning permission for the retail development that would, if fulfilled, provide the funding for this post.

39.2 Manor House hire, terms and conditions

It was noted as part of the hiring agreement, hirers were responsible for attendee's safety for the duration of the hire and the inclusion of this request aimed to ensure that they were satisfied that attendees could be evacuated in an emergency. There was support for the suggestion that a statement highlighting the availability of free parking in the evening be added to the terms and conditions and this was noted for consideration later in the meeting.

39.3 The Museum

It was agreed that the definition of the acronym MODES be circulated after the meeting. It was noted that interns and volunteers were sought from secondary schools and agreed that inclusion of private schools be considered alongside other initiatives to broaden the range of volunteers. Regarding the decrease in museum staffing costs proposed in the 2019/20 draft budget, the Town Clerk explained that the current years costs were slightly inflated due the burden of meeting additional costs associated with maternity leave in the Team.

39.4 Town Centre Regeneration Manager (TCRM) Post

The Town Clerk confirmed that the budget provision, which was shared with Arun District Council, aimed to meet the costs of the TCRM post should the anticipated S106 funding not materialise.

40. CHAIR'S REPORT AND URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

41. OFFICERS REPORT

41.1 Standing Order / Urgent Action

The Committee received and noted an urgent action (previously circulated) regarding the disposal of the old Amenity Team van. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Urgent Action be noted.

41.2 Staff Sickness

The Committee received the latest periodic report (previously circulated) detailing staff sickness covering the year 2009/10 – 2017/18

and Quarter 2 of 2018/19. Members were pleased to note the continued low level of self-certified sickness and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The report be noted.

The Town Clerk and Major Projects and Democratic Services Manager declared personal interests in the following matter as members of the LGPS.

41.3 Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which proposed the adoption by the Town Council of an Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure be RECOMMENDED to Full Council for approval.

41.4 Manor House Room Hire Fees and Car Park Charges Proposals 2019/20

41.4.1 The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which contained a review of the Manor House room hire fees, tariffs for Weddings and Ceremonies and car park charges including proposals for changes to the fees for 2019/20. The Terms and Conditions for Room Hire and Wedding Ceremonies had also been reviewed and changes were proposed to provide clarity and bring them into line with commercial hiring practice. Following a review of the car parking fees charged by neighbouring local authorities, it was also proposed that the Manor House car park fees for 2019/20 remain unchanged. A similar review of wedding ceremony fees had shown that even with the proposed increase, the Manor House remained good value and competitively priced. This was also considered to be the case when it came to the venue in general. It was suggested that the availability of the Manor House as a commercial venue be more widely promoted among local businesses. It was agreed that the Business Development Manager at the District Council should be approached and asked to highlight the facilities to local businesses. It was noted that marketing the Manor House as whole was proactively undertaken by staff balanced by the judicious use of advertising. Members therefore agreed the increase in fees for ceremonies as proposed and considered it prudent to apply a 1% increase for room hires in the Manor House, with car parking fees remaining unchanged for 2019/20.

41.4.2 The Committee proceeded to consider the revised Terms and Conditions for Room Hire and Wedding Ceremonies. It was noted that the Manor House and the New Millennium Chamber were not generally regarded as reception venues. The wording in Section 8, regarding Liquor Licence / Alcohol had therefore been revised to provide clarity

on for hirers regarding permissions. It was observed that staff were able to advise potential hirers on the use of the premises, its capacity and the responsibility of the hirer in respect of use and damage should the use of alcohol be permitted. Referring to the suggestions made during the public forum, Members also judged it would be beneficial that a statement highlighting the availability of free parking in the evenings be included in the terms and conditions as appropriate. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **The Manor House room hire fees be increased by 1% for 2019/20.**
- 2) **The increase in tariffs for Weddings and Ceremonies be approved.**
- 3) **The car parking charges for 2019/20 remain unchanged from 2018/19.**
- 4) **The revised Terms and Conditions for the Manor House Venue Facilities and Wedding Ceremonies, including the availability of free parking in the Manor House public car park after 6pm, be approved.**

41.5 Manor House Grounds

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) that set out possible works to the former toilet block at the front of the Manor House to tidy up the access. It was noted that whilst plans for these improvements had not progressed due to constraints on resources, they were not forgotten. The Committee was however pleased to note that the garden walling on the far side of the driveway would be repaired and that there were resources available to carry out the necessary repair work within the Amenity Team. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

In-house repairs to the garden wall at the front of the Manor House be approved and progressed as soon as practicable.

41.6 Museum Working Group

41.6.1 The Committee received a report (previously circulated) that set out the work undertaken by the Working Group established to investigate the backlog in the Collection Documentation Project. Introducing the report, the Town Clerk explained the background to the formation and composition of the Group, the nature of the investigative work undertaken and the recommendations that had been made.

41.6.2 The Committee proceeded to review the report in more detail. Observing that the majority of the recommendations would be for the

Community Resources Committee (CRC) to determine, discussion ranged across the report but also focussed on staff matters, working practices and the potential resources implications. It was noted that progress in delivering the priorities identified by the Working Group would be monitored as part of staff performance management and reviewed regularly by CRC with reference to other Committees as appropriate.

41.6.3 At this point the Committee **RESOLVED** that: **The public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded from the Meeting under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.**

The following items were confidential for Members of the Council only in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

41.6.4 The Committee sought reassurance regarding the measures that had been put in place to address the issues that had been highlighted by the Working Group. Town Clerk explained in more detail how these issues had been addressed and the decision of the Working Group not to further investigate issues which dated back many years and across many staffing teams and Committees.

41.6.5 The exempt discussion concluded, and it was **RESOLVED** that: **the public and accredited representatives of the press be re-admitted to the Meeting**

41.6.6 Members returned to consideration of the recommendations and it was noted that the full extent of the work required to complete the backlog of work remained unclear. The steps that had already been taken in terms of redirecting resources, retraining and refocussing work were acknowledged. To keep the momentum going in respect of the accessioning of artefacts, the Working Group strongly recommended that the exhibitions programme should also be minimised. The Schools Visits Programme would continue and should a need to expand these arise as a result of discussions regarding the Look and Sea Centre at the Community Resources Committee on 6th December, it was hoped that this could be met using existing staff and new volunteers. Referring to the earlier comments during the public forum session regarding the recruitment of interns and volunteers from the private school sector, the plans to broaden the spectrum of volunteer recruitment were noted.

41.6.7 It was recognised that as the Documentation Project continued, there was the potential to resolve some of the issues that had been highlighted by the Working Group. This was particularly relevant in

connection to the allocation of resources, housekeeping and storage, especially in relation to capacity to house the Collection. There was a further discussion around monitoring progress and it was noted that the introduction of more stringent reporting should address this, although the Community Resources Committee might wish to reconvene the Working Group at a later date if the anticipated progress was not being achieved. The oversight afforded to Members as a result of the proposed introduction of a tour of the Town Council's properties by the Chairs and Vice Chairs of both Committees would enable earlier identification of issues across the Town Council's properties. The Committee was supportive of the way forward and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) ***1) The use of the Gladden Room to provide additional storage and working space to support the work to address the Collection Documentation Project be approved.***
- 2) ***2) The Community Resources Committee be strongly recommended to confirm the continuation of resources to support the School Visits Programme.***
- 3) ***3) The Community Resources Committee be asked to consider the creation of a Friends of Littlehampton Museum at a later date.***
- 4) ***4) If the anticipated progress was not being achieved, the Community Resources Committee considers reconvening the Working Group.***
- 5) ***5) The other recommendations of the report be supported and that this be reported to the Community Resources and Policy and Finance Committees.***

41.7 Keystone Centre

Arun District Council had formally confirmed its commitment to the creation of a new youth facility on the land opposite the existing Keystone Centre. This would be discussed further at the forthcoming liaison meeting and progress would be reported to the relevant Committees during the next cycle of meetings. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The update be noted.

42. FINANCE

42.1 Committee Finance Report 2018/19

The Committee considered the periodic Finance Report (previously circulated) highlighting any significant variances from budget in terms

of income and expenditure relating to this Committee's Budget. It was reported that although the renewal of the lease on the Lineside premises had still not been renewed although the rental owing for 2018/19 was expected to be settled by the end of the year. Members were pleased to note that the new Amenity Team job ticketing system was currently being tested with a view to launching the final product in the new year. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report be noted.

42.2 Committee Budget Proposals 2019 – 2022

42.2.1 The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which set out a draft budget for 2019/20 and projected budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Town Clerk briefly outlined the budget process and stated that the overall budget had been prepared to reflect a 1% increase in 2019/20 and currently a 1% increase for 2020/21 and 2021/22. He also provided clarification on a number of points and it was noted that an explanation of the website hosting fees would be circulated to Members after the meeting.

42.2.2 Whilst considering the proposed budget in more detail, it was noted that whilst no significant cut backs were proposed, the draft budget was tight. It was also observed that the proposed 1% increase on top of similar rises in previous years had not kept pace with inflation. This coupled with the ongoing actions of higher tier authorities to scale back discretionary services would severely limit the Town Council's ability to respond to future challenges. Aware of the significant projects that the Town Council was committed to progressing. The Committee also called on the Policy and Finance Committee to be mindful of the future challenges that the Town Council faced. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **The draft budget for 2019/20 and the projected Budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 be agreed and RECOMMENDED to the Policy and Finance Committee for approval.**
- 2) **The 2018/19 underspend of £10,000 for Lineside rent be moved to EMR and then using EMR to offset the costs of the increased rent over the next three years be approved.**
- 3) **The Committee's Earmarked Reserve Position be noted.**
- 4) **The Policy and Finance Committee be asked to be mindful of the future challenges that the Town Council faced**

**when considering the overall increase
in the Precept.**

43. EXEMPT BUSINESS

There was no further exempt business.

The meeting closed at 8:13pm.

CHAIR