



Minutes of the **Policy and Resources Committee** Emergency Meeting held "virtually" at 7.15pm on **Tuesday 18 August 2020**

This meeting was held remotely due to the restrictions of the Covid-19 emergency. (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)

Present:

Meeting Chairman – Cllr J Jones; Committee Councillors: R Kyrle, C Mercer, D Weeden.,
Non Committee Councillors:

In attendance:

Parish Clerk – Mrs J Morgan. Members of the Public: 0

112/19/POL Apologies

Apologies for absence for personal or business reasons were received from Cllrs R Clark, Mrs S Grinham, A Trace, K Williamson. Approved

113/19/POL Declaration of Interests

No Declarations of Interest were received.

114/19//POL Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 08 July 2020 were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

The minutes will be signed at a later date when in-person meetings resume.

115/19/POL Matters Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

115.1 104/19 Matters Arising - 104.3 Safeguarding Policy Statement – No further work has been done due to the pressure of other work. - 104.4 Preparation of a draft 2 year Project Plan – No further work has been done due to the pressure of other work.

115.2 110/19/POL 110.1 External Audit – a request was sent to the External Auditor PFK Littlejohn regarding the submission of the 2019/20 Annual Return. A one month extension was granted making the new submission deadline 28 August 2020.

116/19/POL Question Time/Public Session

Due to limitations of the Parish Council's IT arrangements this meeting was not open to the public to join. The agenda asked members of the public who wished to comment on the applications below to write or email to the Parish Council to make a representation before the meeting and their views would be circulated to members of the committee. No comments received.

117/19/POL Preparation for holding virtual council meetings for the remainder of 2020

Emergency legislation introduced in April 2020 permits local authorities to hold meetings remotely until May 2021 to reduce the spread of Coronavirus. (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)

An amendment was issued on 01 August requiring local authorities to publish links/telephone numbers and meeting access information on meeting agendas and for those agendas to be published on a website. This amendment confirms that all meetings of the Council and its committees should be directly accessible to the general public.

Members discussed the pros and cons of holding in-person and virtual meetings at the present time. With the upgrading of the Council's IT system secure meeting software is now available.

Recommendation: that the Council and Committee meetings should be held as 'live events' using the Microsoft Teams software which is now available to the Parish Council.

It was agreed that Test meetings will be arranged and non-councillor members of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee will be asked to join as a test audience.

RESOLVED: to approve a draft Virtual Meeting Protocol circulated by the Clerk.

118/19/POL Upgrading the Council's IT and email arrangements

118.1 Setting up of the new email addresses and the new data storage and backup arrangements was completed on Tuesday and Wednesday the 4th and 5th of July. Notifications of the email address changes are being sent to all regular contacts and suppliers. The Clerk reported that the staff have handled the change over to the new email system very smoothly.

A briefing note has been sent to all members about accessing internal meetings arranged in MS Teams and the procedures needed to hold Teams Live Events for Council and Committee Meetings accessible to the public. When everyone has become familiar with the new arrangements the use of the specialist

software which comes with Office 365 will be investigated. For example, the use of Sharepoint to set up on-line folders for document sharing within identified groups.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her work before and during the IT upgrade process.

118.2 Cllr Jones outlined the Council's current website arrangements which have worked well for many years. Changes are needed to meet new disability access regulations for users of local government websites. The deadline for public sector organisations to make all existing websites launched before September 2018 meet the new accessibility standards is 23 September 2020, and the compliance date for mobile applications is 23 June 2021. All local authority websites must also publish an accessibility statement. Around a third of disabled people in the UK experience difficulties in accessing public, commercial and leisure goods and services. The aim of the legislation is to help make online public services accessible to all users, including people with disabilities in the following six categories: low vision, D/deaf and hard of hearing, dyslexia, motor disabilities, users on the autistic spectrum and users of screen readers.

Cllr Mercer agreed that the Council needed a new website but recommended the use of the current software, Joomla, to make it easier to migrate the existing data to a new site. He will be able to recommend design companies which use his technically preferred platform for website development. Members agreed that having upgraded part of the Council's IT system the changes in the accessibility requirements were an opportunity to set up a refreshed on-line presence.

Action: The Clerk was asked to prepare a draft specification to present to the Council prior to approaching website design companies for quotes to set up a new website focused on the Parish Council and local government data present on the current website and to bring information received to the next committee meeting..

118.3 **RESOLVED:** to approve the signing of a service agreement with Absolute Technology Ltd for the provision of IT support services.

119/19/POL Update on Boorley Park Asset Transfer Preparation

119.1 Update on the legal transfer process following a meeting of the HEWEB LAC Boorley Park Working Group on Monday 17 August.

Although many subjects were discussed there was no information about an expected time period for completion of the transfers. Cllr Mercer said the privacy modification to the gents toilets had not been done. Representatives of the development consortium had verbally agreed to pay for the works but only when an occupation license or legal transfer had been completed. It was felt that this agreement should be confirmed in writing to specify when the work will be done eg during the first month after completion of the legal transfer.

There are other issues which need to be resolved before EBC will accept the asset transfer, including O&M and warranty matters and details of any maintenance undertaken while the buildings have been empty.

119.2 The Boorley Park Consortium is keen to hand over the allotment site as a matter of urgency. The reservation list currently has 68 applications which are expected to be considerably more than the number of plots available on the site. The Parish Council has no in-house expertise professionally capable of evaluating the condition of the site so one option may be to investigate commissioning professional support for the duration of a project to take over the site and get it set up for use. The Clerk was asked to make enquires and to come back to the committee with information.

120/19/POL Written report on preparations to re-open the Council's facilities

The Parish Council's facilities have gradually been re-opened to the public during July and August. A financial report on the impact of the closure has been prepared for presentation at the next full council meeting.

High St Rec Play Area

Re-opened on 13 July. New signage has been installed and a new daily cleaning programme.

Public Toilets

The public toilets reopened 27 July.

The Botley Centre weekend caretaker is cleaning the toilets four mornings a week and the Diamond Jubilee Hall cleaner is cleaning the toilets on the fifth morning throughout August until the contract cleaners return in September. At present the public toilets are only open from Monday-Friday with keys been made available to the manager of Fairoak Cricket Club on Sunday mornings when required.

Botley Centre halls

A risk assessment and questionnaire has been sent to all regular hirers regarding their arrangements for returning later this year together with details of the Covid Security measures which have been put in place within the buildings.

Slimming World, Spinners Dance and one of the yoga groups returned for summer sessions during the week commencing 10 August. Commercial groups are much keener to return quickly than informal community groups.

Council staffing arrangements

Office staff - Working arrangements are being monitored and risk assessed as operational needs change. Social distancing in the office means there is only space for three workstations. The fourth workstation has been moved into the committee room, which will now be out of commission for hire until normal working arrangements can resume.

Groundstaff – full time working is being maintained. It was agreed that additional use of commercial contractors will be investigated and options for hiring an extra groundsman on a short term contract.

Caretakers – covering cleaning requirement during the week during August to enable to halls to re-open on a gradual basis.

121/19/POL Christmas community event and High Street Christmas lights.

121.1 A decision about holding the Carols in the Square event will be dependent upon government advice on the holding of large gatherings however the committee considered that it was important to have some evidence of the traditional Christmas festivities in place as usual.

RESOLVED: to approve ordering a 20ft Christmas tree for delivery to Botley Square in late November. (allocation code: 4310 Christmas)

This year EBC prepared a public tender for a 3 year contact to supply and install Christmas lighting and decorations in Eastleigh. All the Borough's parish councils were invited to join the tender process. A preferred supplier was awarded and their option for the Botley tree and lighting was £3,064 + VAT per year for 3 years which is very close to cost of the company which has done the Botley lights for the last three years. The tender quote was prepared without a site visit due to Covid-19 movement restrictions. As the deadline for accepting the tendered quote was 06 August and without the availability of any Council meetings this option had to be declined.

RESOLVED: to approve a quote from The Christmas Decorators to provide, install and remove decorative lights for the Christmas Tree at a quoted cost of £600 + VAT. (Allocation code: 4310 Christmas)

RESOLVED:: to approve a quote from The Christmas Decorators to install and remove the Parish Council's lighting strings along both sides of Botley Square for a quoted cost of £2,520.00 + VAT. (Allocation code: 4310 Christmas)

There will be an additional cost for the supply of replacement halogen golf ball bulbs by the Parish Council or approximately £250 + VAT. Plus the cost of refunding electricity costs to households providing supply points.

BUDGET NOTE: It was agreed that the Committee will consider including a budget for the purchase of LED lighting for the High Street Christmas lights during 2021.

The Committee would also like to see string lighting installed around the outside of the Boorley Park Community Centre in time for Christmas this year with a tree and decorations in the foyer of the building.

121.2 If the Carols in the Square event can take place a road closure will be needed which must be applied for by the end of September even if it is not used in December.

RESOLVED: to approve the submission of a road closure application for the Carols in the Square Event.

122/19/POL Remembrance Parade November 2020

Arrangements for the annual Remembrance Parade and Church Service may need to change this year. It was agreed that the Rector and Churchwardens will be approached for advice on what the Church may be able to accommodate. It may be necessary to hold an event at a different venue, such as the school field or recreation ground to ensure appropriate social distancing. It was agreed that a road closure should be applied for while arrangements are being discussed.

RESOLVED: to approve the submission of a road closure application for the Remembrance Sunday Parade.

123/19/POL Date of the Next Meeting: Tuesday 22 September 2020 at 7:45pm; Tuesday 20 October 2020.

Members discussed changing meeting schedules to be responsive to changing situations and needs with the use of virtual meetings to help flexibility. The Clerk was asked to approach committee chairs to seek opinions about holding meetings every week to facilitate shorter evening sessions.

The Clerk was asked by the Chairman to prepare the Agenda for the next meeting and issue the Public Notices. The public session closed at 9:45pm

Date: _____ Chairman: _____

These minutes could be the subject of amendments which will be recorded in the minutes of the following meeting