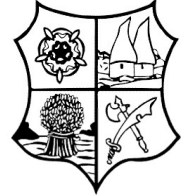


ALTON Town Council



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Town Hall
Market Square
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

Town Clerk: Mrs Leah Coney

14th July 2021

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** on **Wednesday 21st July at 7.00pm** when the under mentioned business will be transacted.

Yours sincerely

LConey

Mrs Leah Coney
Town Clerk

To: Members of the Policy and Resources Committee

Councillor Graham Titterington (Chair)
Councillor Suzie Burns (Vice Chair)
Councillor Matthew Bayliss
Councillor Pam Jones
Councillor Gideon Cristofoli
Councillor Graham Hill
Councillor Christopher Lawrence

Copied to: All other Councillors for information

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21st JULY 2021

AGENDA

- 1 Chairman's announcements
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of the meeting held on the 5th May 2021
- 4 Declarations of Interests - Councillors are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest. You must withdraw from the room when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.
- 5 To consider any requests for Dispensations to allow Councillors with pecuniary interests to speak and vote
- 6 Questions to the Committee (including those received in writing) – Community Business Hub
- 7 Document Retention Policy
- 8 Composition of Task Groups, Working Parties and Representatives on Outside Bodies
- 9 King's Pond Group
- 10 Event Grant – Lions Party in the Park
- 11 Financial Regulations update
- 12 Financial Reports and Internal Auditors Report Q1 to 30th June 2021
- 13 Assembly Rooms report
- 14 King's Arms 2022/23 Service Level Agreement
- 15 Climate Change Task and Finish Group update

CONFIDENTIAL

- 16 Lease at Energique.
- 17 Lease at Finnimore.
- 18 Lease for the Community Building, Brewery Site
- 19 Staffing Update
- 20 Crownby Estate
- 21 Alton Creatives Emporium

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21st JULY 2021

REPORTS BY THE TOWN CLERK

ITEM 6 QUESTIONS TO THE COMMITTEE

FOR INFORMATION

The following have been received in writing:

1) *Hello Pam*

As you know, people have changed their working habits during the Pandemic, and few are likely to return to their pre-pandemic routine of commuting long distances to work - particularly those in Alton where the commute to London is slow and expensive. However, there are some people who have found working from home difficult and would welcome somewhere close by to work.

The head of Regus, the office rental company, spoke recently on the radio about their plans to open 'regional hubs', where people who cannot easily work from home can rent office space on a temporary basis. This gave me the idea of contacting you to see if it would be worth considering such an initiative for Alton.

If you look up Alton on the Regus site, the nearest location is Basingstoke, so there could be an opportunity to invite them into Alton, or for the council to find another partner to set up such an arrangement.

<https://www.regus.com/en-gb/dynamic?search=Alton>

There must be plenty of space in the town centre, which could be converted to offices and made available as a drop-in centre. Buildings such as the old post office, or even the upstairs of the Library could be adapted to create an income. I am sure this would create a buzz of activity in the town centre and encourage lunchtime trade. These centres could combine longer-term company rentals with an ad-hoc, book-by-the-day service offered via a web site.

I don't have any further knowledge of this sector, but I'm sure it would not take long to find local landlords who may be interested in the idea. Perhaps the council would need funding to convert local offices. It would appear that many of them combine their services with a cafe or business centre with printing services, both of which already feature in Alton, and these local businesses could be invited to take part.

Hope this has given you a few ideas.

2) *Hi Leah*

I hope you're well. I was just wondering if there are any plans to open up some of the council-owned buildings as shared office spaces, in a similar way to what you're doing with the Alton Creatives Emporium? I'm on the hunt for office space but as a lone worker I'm finding it hard to find what I need for an affordable price. Going in with other lone workers would be a good option for me, so I just thought I'd ask the question!

3) *Thanks for getting back to me. Since I wrote to you I've spoken to quite a few people who would be interested in a co-working space so I do think it's an idea with legs, although possibly it is a more commercial venture than something that could be managed by the council.*

I am a copywriter, so I literally need a desk, a chair, and an internet connection. Obviously there are some nice-to-haves like a kitchen and things, but I don't know what the space in the Assembly Rooms is like. I was leasing a room on a very flexible basis with Charwell House, where I would go in two days a week. Their

rates include furnishings and all costs like power, heat, internet, etc. and as a guide I was paying £180 a month for a room with two desks (I shared with a friend), for two days a week. The downside was that we could only access the room on specific days at specific times and we couldn't leave anything there, couldn't decorate, or put up inspirational quotes or anything like that :) Really I'm looking for something I can make a bit more my own, with more flexibility to use it in the evenings and at weekends if needed, since I am often working around family.

Does this help? It may rule the Assembly Rooms out as a potential venue. But if it's an idea you like, maybe we can figure out a way to make it happen in one of the empty office buildings around town. There's so much space going to waste, and all these people who - I'm sure - don't want to go back to their old commute, and equally don't want to keep working out of their bedrooms!

The Town Clerk has raised both of these correspondence with the Committee Chair and Vice Chair. The Town Council does not have any available space of its own at the current time but there was thought as to whether this should be one of the options tabled as a potential future use for the Assembly Rooms or any other Alton Town Council owned space should it arise.

ITEM 7 DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

FOR DECISION

RECOMMENATION: Members are requested to approve the amended Document Retention Policy (enclosed separately) to account for the virtual meetings held during 2020 and 2021 and any future meeting recordings. The relevant wording is highlighted in red.

ITEM 8 COMPOSITION OF TASK GROUPS, WORKING PARTIES AND REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

FOR DECISION

Members are requested to review and recommend to Full Council the composition of current groups and representatives to outside bodies. The spreadsheet enclosed in Members bundles lists the current position and Members are requested to advise if there are any particular groups they wish to join.

There have been two changes which have been informally discussed and in summary are as follows:

- Upgrade the terms of reference of the Climate Change Task Group to make it a subcommittee of the Council with delegated authority for its budget code and reporting in to Full Council at each meeting. The group to consist of councillors and key stakeholders including ACAN and Energy Alton. Group to meet 3 times a year.
- Disband the River Wey (inc. Flood Meadows and King's Pond) Steering Group to replace with two liaison panel groups, one for King's Pond and one for Flood Meadows. To be resident and stakeholder led with initial Terms of Reference provided by the Town Council. These groups would not have any delegated authority or direct funding but would provide feedback and recommendations to the Open Spaces Committee at each meeting and consider current and future works required on each site, engagement with key authorities such as the Environment Agency, undertaking public engagement and reviewing management plans and other relevant documentation.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve:

- 1) The spreadsheet listing the group, and outside bodies attended by Councillors:
- 2) The proposed changes to the Climate Change Task Group and River Wey Steering Group as detailed above.

**ITEM 9 KING'S POND MOTION
REPORT BY COUNCILLOR CRISTOFOLI**

FOR DECISION

This council recognises that:

1. Kings Pond is a valuable asset owned by the town.
2. There was a comprehensive report made in 2017 with objectives outlined within a suggested timeline.
3. Residents care passionately about the welfare of the pond and the animals that live in it, and there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise amongst these residents.
4. The open spaces committee and working group do not focus solely on Kings Pond and meet quarterly and have a large number of town assets to consider.

This council resolves to:

1. Create a sub/working group solely dedicated to Kings Pond to meet on a monthly basis.
2. To invite residents who live near the pond and care for it to be part of the working group to ensure that they feel valued and listened to.
3. To review the report from 2017, alongside the recent Bio Blitz discoveries, to create an action plan for ongoing management and maintenance.
4. To work with the Environment Agency where possible to use their knowledge and expertise.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve the motion as detailed above.

ITEM 10 EVENT GRANT APPLICATION

FOR DECISION

Please find enclosed an event grant application for Alton Lions for their Party in the Park to be held in the Public Gardens this August. The request is for £500 towards the staging of the event

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve a grant of £500 to Alton Lions.

ITEM 11 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS UPDATE

FOR DECISION

Included in Members bundles are the updated Financial Regulations. Members are requested to approve the amendments (in red) to account for both the use of the office credit card (max £500 transaction limit) and the now default method of payment being by BACS.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve the updated Financial Regulations as tabled.

**ITEM 12 FINANCIAL REPORTS, FINANCIAL RSIK ASSESSMENT AND INTERNAL
AUDITORS REPORT TO 30th JUNE 2021**

FOR DECISION

Balance Sheet as at 30th June 2021

The balance sheet is presented for sign off by the Chairman of the Council and the RFO (Responsible Financial Officer, Mrs Leah Coney – Town Clerk).

Income & Expenditure

Attached is the Income and Expenditure Report for the first quarter of this financial year; this illustrates the Operating Income and Expenditure for the council to 30th June against the budget set by the Council.

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 30th June 2021

The Bank Reconciliation Statements are as presented with a closing balance of £492,883.39 (Unity) £401,097.22 (CCLA) and £160.39 (Petty cash). This requires signing off on behalf of the council that the figures presented reconcile with the original bank statement which will be given to the Chairman on the night.

Payments over £500

The attached report includes all payments over £500, issued between 1st April 2021 and 30th June 2021 in respect of invoices.

Financial Risk Assessment 2021/22

Enclosed in Member's Bundles is the updated Financial Risk Assessment for 2021/22 for approval.

Internal Audit Report to 30th June 2021

The Internal Auditor's report for the first quarter is enclosed within Members bundles and is tabled for approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve:

- 1) The Income and Expenditure account to 30th June 2021
- 2) The balance sheet dated 30th June 2021
- 3) The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit Account
- 4) The Payments over £500 covering 1st April to 30th June 2021
- 5) The updated Financial Risk Assessment for 202/22
- 6) The Internal Auditors Report for the period 1st April to 30th June 2021

ITEM 13 ASSEMBLY ROOMS REPORT

FOR INFORMATION

Members are advised that the Assembly Rooms reopened towards the end of April for limited activities and is now fully open. As members are aware there was no financial support for the Assembly Rooms from the government during lockdown; the only occupier during this time being Wey Valley Radio, who use the facilities free of charge. They have recently given a one-off donation to ATC of £120 to assist with the electricity bills during this closure period.

The two main licensees have resumed their classes and are building back up to pre-covid hours. AODS will resume in September

A small number of larger scale such as comic-con and wrestling have booked for the summer.

The fee charged by the Community Centre remains at covid levels (i.e 50%) which will also be reviewed at the end of the summer, when ACA will also be asked if they wish to extend the current agreement by a further year.

RECOMMENDATION: This report is for information only.

ITEM 14 KINGS ARMS 2022 – 2023 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

FOR DECISION

In 2019 a three-year agreement was put in place with the King's Arms to cover the provision of youth services for the town from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2022 at a cost of £20,000 per annum.

The indicative budget beyond 1st April 2022, approved by Members at Full Council has continued to include a cost code of £20,000 for Youth Services but this has not been formally approved, nor the King's Arms appointed to provide such a service.

The King's Arms are currently looking to prepare their forward budget for 2022 and beyond and have asked for an indication as to whether Members would be minded to renew this agreement for a further period to be determined.

Enclosed in members bundles is a copy of the current agreement.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to consider their approval of a renewed Service Legal Agreement with the King's Arms for a further period. Any approval to be ratified by Full Council

ITEM 15 CLIMATE CHANGE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

FOR INFORMATION

Further to the June Meeting of the Climate Change Task Group, the notes from that meeting are tabled for Members' information