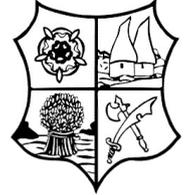


# ALTON Town Council



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Town Hall  
Market Square  
Alton  
Hampshire  
GU34 1HD

Town Clerk: Mrs Leah Coney

12<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** on **Wednesday 19<sup>TH</sup> January 2022 at 7.00pm** when the under mentioned business will be transacted.

Whilst in accordance with legislative requirements this meeting must be held in person for Council Members, due to the continued spread of Covid-19, any members of the public wishing to attend are requested to do so remotely using video conferencing wherever possible.

The public may also submit written representations in advance of the meeting.

The meeting code and password to log in will be sent to members of the public wishing to attend by contacting [townclerk@alton.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@alton.gov.uk)

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 – 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022

### AGENDA

- 1 Chairman's announcements
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of the meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 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)
- 7 Community Grant applications
- 8 Draft Budget and Precept request 2022/23
- 9 Creation of a reserve for maintenance/improvement works to King's Pond.
- 10 Transfer of Funds to CCLA Property Fund
- 11 Renewal of Town Centre WIFI provision.
- 12 Financial Reports to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021
- 13 Assembly Rooms Contract renewal with Alton Community Association

### CONFIDENTIAL

- 14 Staffing Update

## ALTON TOWN COUNCIL

### POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022

#### REPORTS BY THE TOWN CLERK

##### ITEM 7 COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS

**FOR DECISION**

For 2022/23 a total of 13 applications have been received (the summary sheet is reproduced in Members bundles). Councillors were invited to review the applications which had been previously circulated by e-mail and ask any questions of clarification. These were submitted back to the applicants for responses prior to a councillor workshop session on the 13<sup>th</sup> January where Members debated the applications before them in advance of this meeting and gave in indication of their views on each application.

Councillors are reminded that a draft Community Grants Budget of £25,000 has been set for 2022/23 following the Budget Workshop held on 12<sup>th</sup> January, which although has yet to be confirmed, gives an indication of the funds available to support the applications. With the total value of the applications received exceeding the budget which has been provisionally set and in seeking to determine the outcome of each application councillors may wish to bear in mind the following factors in determining whether to approve a grant request and the amount of grant to be awarded to ensure a fair and equitable outcome.

- 1) Does the work carried out by the group or organisation demonstrably and directly impact the people of Alton wholly or just in part?
- 2) Do any applications duplicate work is already being funded by the Town Council?
- 3) Do any applications which “pre-discriminate” certain members of the community?
- 4) The Town Council also cannot fund activities that it considers to be the responsibility of a Statutory Authority.

Members are reminded that the Council is not currently constrained by the S137 grant rules as the Council adopted the General Power of Competence in 2017. However, the ethos that the amount given should be commensurate to the number of people in the locality who are to benefit should still be of consideration to Members.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee is invited to:

- (i) Determine which applicants are to be awarded a grant
- (ii) Determine the amount each successful applicant is to be awarded

##### ITEM 8 DRAFT BUDGET AND PRECEPT

**FOR DECISION**

Enclosed in Members bundles is the draft budget and precept request for 2022/23 updated following the budget workshop last week. The only figures updated on the spreadsheet following the workshop reflect the inclusion of the projects which members confirmed they would like delivered in year (items 1 – 9 on the explanations list). These additions do not alter the precept request figure as the monies to fund these are coming from existing reserves. Also included within the spreadsheet is the mid-year revised budget for 2021/22 and an indicative budget for 2023/24 and 2024/25 along with an explanations sheet and a copy of the current balance sheet.

Following the Budget Workshop on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 a single option which amounts to a 4.5% increase in precept is being presented for approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Members are requested to:

- (i) Approve the budget and precept request for 2022/23. This decision will be ratified by Full Council.

(ii) Approve the revised budget for 2021/22 to enable the appropriate virements to be actioned.

**ITEM 9 CREATION OF AN EARMARKED RESERVE FOR KING'S POND FOR DECISION**

This item has been requested by Councillor Cristofoli who will speak on the need for the creation of such a fund to cover future works including dredging. It is proposed that the monies to start this fund are taken from the Molson Coors Option Fee, secured by the Council in 2015, of £40,000, which is currently on the balance sheet and not allocated to any specific project.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Members are requested to approve the use of the £40,000 option fee to start an Ear Marked Reserve for King's Pond.

**ITEM 10 CCLA PROPERTY FUND FOR DECISION**

Members are asked to approve the investment of £33,583 to the CCLA Property Fund. This represents the latest annual rent payment made by Alton Football Club (£22,116) in December 2021 which is earmarked for the replacement surface on the 3G pitch, together with the interest accrued in 2020/2021 of £11,467 which is currently sitting as an earmarked reserve. The minimum investment to the fund is £25,000.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Members are requested to consider approval of the request to invest £33,583 in the CCLA Property Fund

**ITEM 11 TOWN CENTRE WIFI CONTRACT RENEWAL FOR DECISION**

At the Policy and Resources meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 the Council resolved to approve the installation of town wide free Wi-Fi for the High Street, Market Square and the Public Gardens, along with a three-year agreement for maintenance. The system went live in early February 2019. The agreement is due to expire next month and members are requested to consider the continuation of the free WiFi.

At the outset of the service it proved popular and over the last three years 5,310 people have registered during this time. However, this figure stood at 4,563 12 months ago, so the last 12 months has only seen 747 people register. Daily usage has also dropped significantly with between 1 and 3 people on average accessing the service each day over the last month as opposed to an average of 15 users 12 months ago.

Despite renewed marketing through activities such as the MarmART Trail and signage within the town, the decrease in usage is primarily where more people have smart phones and higher data allowances on their devices that they do not see the need to log on.

The cost of renewal to continue the service for an additional three years is £12,821.31 and the quotation is included in Members bundles.

Should Members decide not to renew the service, the infrastructure will remain in place so it can be reconnected in the future should Members wish to revisit the decision in due course.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Members are requested to discontinue the Town Centre free WiFi provision for 2022, with a view to revisiting it in the future should a future council so wish to reinstate it.

**ITEM 12 FINANCIAL REPORTS TO 31st DECEMBER FOR DECISION**

## **Balance Sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 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). Please note this includes the recently received second tranche of precept.

## **Income & Expenditure**

Attached is the Income and Expenditure Report for the second quarter of this financial year; this illustrates the Operating Income and Expenditure for the council to 31<sup>st</sup> December against the budget set by the Council.

## **Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021**

The Bank Reconciliation Statements are as presented with a closing balance of £677,660.24 (Unity) £401,139.49 (CCLA) and £409.65 (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 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 in respect of invoices.

## **Second interim internal auditors report**

Enclosed in Members bundles is the second interim internal audit report covering the period from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**RECOMMENDATION:** Members are requested to approve:

- 1) The Income and Expenditure account to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021
- 2) The balance sheet dated 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021
- 3) The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit Account
- 4) The Payments over £500 covering 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021
- 5) The interim report from the Internal Auditor

## **ITEM 13 ASSEMBLY ROOMS CONTRACT RENEWAL WITH ALTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

**FOR DECISION**

At Policy and Resource on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Members resolved to approve the continuation of the agreement with ACA for a further 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

The contract fee payable to ACA was reduced to £525 per month during covid plus £10 per hour for caretaking and this pricing structure remains in place until at least the end of this current financial year. The building currently has 6 regular hirers and has seen a small number of one-off bookings over the last 6 months since reopening after the 2021 lockdown (Art Society, Pumpkins Pantos etc.)

Alton Community Association have indicated that in principle they are happy to continue with the existing arrangement which remains in place for the building. The recommendation at this time is that this agreement is only extended for a further 6 months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 whilst a review takes place to understand both the short as well as medium and longer-term use of the building for which Members will be invited to a workshop session next month.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Members are invited to approve the continuation of the agreement with the Alton Community Association for a further 6 months from 1st April 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022