

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 21st JULY 2021 AT 7.00 PM
Held in the Town Hall, Market Square

Present: **Councillor** **Graham Titterington - Chair**
 Matthew Bayliss
 Suzie Burns
 Gideon Cristofoli
 Graham Hill
 Pam Jones

In attendance in person:

Leah Coney - **Town Clerk**
 Pat Harris - **Finance & Administration Manager**

In virtual attendance:

Councillor Paula Langley - EHDC District Councillor
 4 members of the Public until 7.40 p.m.
 (All virtual attendees left after Agenda item 9 - Minute 60 refers)

52 **Chairman’s Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

1. Advised that members of the public were joining the meeting via zoom and councillors would be invited to speak by the Chair with councillors raising their hand if they wished to speak.
2. Those attending the meeting in the Town Hall were observing social distancing and sitting 2 metres apart
3. A review of the Council’s Standing Orders will be on the agenda of the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

53 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Christopher Lawrence.

54 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th May 2021**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th May 2021 were approved and will be signed by the Chair.

55 **Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman reminded members of their obligation to disclose any pecuniary interest in items on the agenda. None were declared.

56 **To consider Requests for Dispensations**

None were requested.

57 Questions to the Council. Members of the public are invited to make representations

1. There were no questions raised by members of the public who were attending the meeting via zoom; however, there was disquiet as concern was expressed that they could not hear although councillors were able to hear them. Minor adjustments were made to the position of the iPad which appeared to resolve the issue adequately enough for those on zoom to hear the discussions taking place in the Town Hall.
2. The Town Clerk had received correspondence in relation to whether the Council had given any consideration to providing a business hub raised both of these correspondence with the Committee Chair and Vice Chair.

The Committee agreed that further consideration should be given to this although felt that the Town Council did 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. Councillor Pam Jones also suggested that the library or the community centre could have space and that consideration should not be limited to town council buildings and The Altonian published on line could be an opportunity to advertise the initiative.

Councillor Gideon Cristofoli further advised that his wife (District Councillor Paula Langley) was in discussion with EHDC looking to utilise one of the offices at their practice in the High Street.

58 Document Retention Policy

Members were requested to approve the amended Document Retention Policy to account for the virtual meetings held during 2020 and 2021 and any future meeting recordings. This amendment had been advised by the council's internal auditors. On the proposal of Councillor Graham Titterington, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

**RESOLVED to
Approve the amended Policy to read:**

From April 2020 – May 2021 all remote Full Council and Committee Meetings were recorded for auditing purposes. These records can be deleted after the conclusion of the period for the exercise of public rights for the relevant auditing year. This period is legally defined as 14th June to 23rd July for 2021. Any future meetings recorded by the Council will also adhere to this retention policy as listed above.

All councillors voted in favour

59 Composition of Task Groups, Working Parties and Representatives on Outside Bodies

Members are requested to approve the composition of the groups as per the supplementary Agenda papers 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 community groups, one for King's Pond and one for the Rive Wey. 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.

The Committee agreed that in respect of the two Friends of groups that whilst their membership is to be determined by the group, written reports must be submitted to the Committee at least two weeks before the meeting date. The Terms of Reference are also to include a reference that volunteers are covered under the Town Council's insurance policy, but names of all volunteers must be submitted to the Town Hall in writing and that the groups must draw up Risk Assessments for activities being undertaken, again to be lodged with the Town Hall.

On the proposal of Councillor Pam Jones, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to approve the

- 1. The spreadsheet listing the group, and outside bodies attended by Councillors as appended to the Minutes**
- 2. The proposed changes to the Climate Change Task Group and Kings Pond and River Wey Friends Groups as detailed above.**

All councillors voted in favour

60 Kings Pond Motion – Councillor Cristofoli

The Chair proposed an amendment to this motion in order to proceed to the next business as he had considered that Agenda item 9 had been covered under Agenda Item 8, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill.

Councillor Gideon Cristofoli opposed the amendment re-affirming that his motion is intended to make a statement about Kings Pond as detailed in the Member's bundles and in furtherance of democracy, his motion should be debated. Councillor Matthew Bayliss also wished to speak against the Chair's proposed amendment to the motion stating that the Council should not put process over people and that the agenda item should not be "skipped over" but should be debated.

The Committee proceeded to debate the agenda item. Following the debate, Councillor Hill withdrew his seconding of the proposed amendment and Members proceeded to vote on the original motion.

On the proposal of Councillor Gideon Cristofoli, seconded by Councillor Matthew Bayliss it was

RESOLVED that :

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 be involved in the review of 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.

Three councillors voted in favour, with three abstentions and in his role as Chair, Councillor Titterington made a casting vote in favour of the motion.

61 Event Grant – Lions Party in the Park

On the proposal of Councillor Pam Jones, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to approve a grant of £500 to Alton Lions.

All councillors voted in favour

62 Financial Regulations Update

Updated Financial Regulations were tabled requesting that approval be given for amendments to include: the use of the office credit card (max £500 transaction limit) and the now default method of payment being by BACS.

On the proposal of Councillor Pam Jones, seconded by Councillor Matthew Bayliss it was

**RESOLVED to approve the amendments to include:
the use of the office credit card (max £500 transaction limit) and the now default method of payment being by BACS.**

All councillors voted in favour

63 Financial Reports and Internal Auditors Report Q1 to 30th June 2021

The following reports were tabled:

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 £ (Unity) (CCLA) and £ (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.

On the proposal of Councillor Pam Jones, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED 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**
- 5. The Payments over £500 covering 1st April to 30th June 2021**
- 6. Financial Risk Assessment**
- 7. Internal Auditors Report to 30th June 2021**

All councillors voted in favour and commended officers for the detailed reports provided to Committee.

64 Assembly Rooms Report

The Assembly Rooms Report was tabled. Councillors were pleased to learn that the Assembly Rooms are now open for business.

NOTED

65 Kings Arms 2022/23 Service Level Agreement

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Titterington, seconded by Councillor Pam Jones, it was

RESOLVED

To renew the Service Level Agreement with the King's Arms for the period 1st April 2022-31st March 2024 with the funding to be approved as part of the Council budgeting setting process.

The Committee asked that the Town Clerk request from the Kings Arms more detailed information in their next report on the usage and impact of their service in the community with the numbers of people being assisted through the programs on offer.

All councillors voted in favour

66 Climate Change Task and Finish Group update

The Committee noted the update provided. Councillor Bayliss said he was disappointed at the level of detail provided by the group in respect of the plan to prioritise the decarbonisation works which had been requested. Councillor Hill said he would like to see the group evaluate success going forward by detailing the level of CO2 emissions being saved from the recommendations put forward by the group.

NOTED**67 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

On the proposal of Councillor Pam Jones, seconded by Councillor Suzie Burns, it was

RESOLVED

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded

68 Lease at Energique

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

69 Lease at Finnimore

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

70 **Lease for the Community Building, Brewery Site**

On 3rd February 2021 this Council resolved to approve its intention to take possession of the community facility on the brewery site, either directly or as EHDCs nominated representative. As a result of this and following the completion of the S106 agreement Legal and General now wish ATC to formally instruct EHDC to inform CALA and Legal and General that the ground floor space for the Community building is to be taken by ATC directly as EHDCs nominated representative so that the lease can be prepared in the name of ATC on the basis of the outline Heads of Term listed as detailed below:

Tenure Leasehold (Fully Repairing)

Term of Lease 999year

Rent Peppercorn

Permitted Use of Building: Community Use

Permitted Hours 8am to 9pm (except for deliveries) Monday to Sunday

Permitted Users ATC and its tenants/licensees.

Assignment/sub-lease Yes subject to landlord consent (not to be unreasonably withheld)

Management Fees Applicable on a fair and reasonable basis for communal area.

On the proposal of Councillor Pam Jones, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To formally direct EHDC to instruct CALA/Legal and General that ATC will be their nominated representative so the agreement to lease can be issued to ATC directly. This is to be ratified by Full Council on the 18th August

All councillors voted in favour

71 **Staffing Update**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

NOTED

72 Crownby Estate

[REDACTED]

NOTED

73 Alton Creatives Emporium

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The meeting finished at 8.50 p.m.