

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held at 10.00am on Thursday, 24th September 2020 to which Councillors were summoned to attend by video conferencing.

Present: Councillors – Sarah Craig (Chairman), Diana Harvey, Dorothy Harvey, and Chris Farrance

In attendance: Karyn Reid (Executive Clerk)

Cllr Dorothy Harvey requested permission from the Committee to add an additional item to the Agenda. All members **AGREED**.

Cllr Dorothy Harvey reminded all that she agreed to Chair this Committee for a short while until another member was available. She would now like to step down as Chair for Policy and nominated Cllr Sarah Craig in her place.

Cllr Farrance proposed that Cllr Craig reside as Chairman of the Policy Committee going forwards, seconded by Cllr Diana Harvey and all **AGREED**.

Cllr Craig chaired the meeting.

Item No.

19/20PY 31. OPEN FORUM

No members of the public were present.

19/20PY 32. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Steve Airton.

19/20PY 33. DISPENSATION UNDER S33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)

The Chairman requested dispensation to be granted until 31st March 2021.

The Executive Clerk agreed and granted dispensation to all members for business conducted within Full Council meetings.

19/20PY 34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

19/20PY 35. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Cllr Diana Harvey proposed that the previously distributed minutes of 27th July 2020 Policy Committee meeting be signed as an accurate record; seconded by Cllr Chris Farrance and **AGREED** by all. The minutes to be signed by Committee Chairman, when appropriate.

Cllr Dorothy Harvey raised the issue of the missing Action regarding the enquiry into obstructive bollard on the corner of Hartford Road missing from Action Log. The Executive Clerk has contacted the HDC about this matter but is still awaiting a response.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk will follow up with the HDC on the obstructive bollard.

19/20PY 36. ACTION LOG

All completed items were noted by the Committee.

Item 19/20PY 7 and 8 regarding Adult Safeguarding & Health Welfare Policy and Child Protection Policy are still awaiting HDC update which will not be until the New Year.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk will move actions of Item 19/20PY 7 and 8 from Action Log to the schedule.

It was **AGREED** that concerns regarding parking charges were not within the remit of this Committee and would be transferred to the Planning Committee.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk will move actions of Item 19/20PY 29 regarding parking charges solely to Planning Committee.

19/20PY 37. POLICY REVIEWS

i) To review any draft documents produced since last meeting
There were no new draft documents to review.

ii) To review the Policy schedule and note recently approved policies (attached)
Cllr Craig questioned whether all the Policy information has been updated on the website, particularly regarding Communications and Social Media Policy.

ACTION: It was AGREED that before the next meeting, members will check that there is an accurate and up to date Policy schedule review this in the next meeting.

Cllr Craig queried that some review dates on the Policy schedule were in the past and not all Policies seemed to be on the new website The Executive Clerk gave a verbal statement explaining how the review date should provide a prompt to check compliance, however, Policies should be immediately updated if there are any known changes, even if this is prior review date.

The Executive Clerk highlighted three Policy updates that should be prioritized. Firstly, cohesively combining the Staffing Policy. Secondly, improving the Burial Ground Policy due to inconsistencies and frequent queries from the public to the Parish Council office. It was noted that a clear guidance needs to be formulated to be shared with the public. Thirdly, the Grants Policy needs to be reviewed due to inconsistencies and lack of clarity surround the Council's ethos on offering grants.

It was **AGREED** that the Committee must identify where there are overlaps with Finance Committee regarding priority Policies and formulate suggestions moving forward.

The assignment of Policies on the schedule was reviewed. Cllr Craig suggested a review to consider whether any Policies could be grouped together and how procedures are handled..

ACTION: The Executive Clerk will reassign Cash Handling Policy to Staffing Committee.

The Executive Clerk spoke with internal auditing regarding Procurement Policy as to whether it was necessary for the Parish Council to have its own policy given its low procurement level. It was suggested that a recommendation for the Finance Committee regarding Procurement Policy.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk will inform Chairman of the Finance Committee of priority Polices and prepare a recommendation for Councilors to review and discuss during the next Finance Committee meeting.

Cllr Farrance suggested that Policy reviews become a standing item on the Agenda moving forwards and additionally, proposed that the review dates be rearranged to a quarterly basis.

ACTION: Cllr Craig and the Executive Clerk will prepare a proposal regarding the reassessment of review dates.

Cllr Harvey gave a brief verbal statement that Planning Committee owned policies are up to date. It was noted that the Community Bus Charter review will take place next year and the Neighborhood Plan will be reviewed continually.

Cllr Craig noted that the Email Policy has been incorporated into the Communication and Social Media Policy. It was noted that approval updates were missing for Communication and Social Media Policy and Publication Scheme Policy on the schedule. The Executive Clerk highlighted that Health and Safety and Complaint Policies were of particular priority. It was noted that Privacy Notice and Transparency Code need to be addressed to ensure compliance.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk and Cllr Craig to review, tidy and update Policy Schedule accordingly.

Cllr Craig noted that the Council was awaiting updated Government policy information regarding to Code of Conduct for Members, which will need to be appropriately reflected into the Policy when made available.

Cllr Dorothy Harvey queried the Winter Weather Emergency Plan considering community lockdowns and noted that the E&A should be aware of any potential changes HDC will instigate.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk will contact HDC regarding any potential changes to the Winter Weather Emergency Plan.

iii) To ratify the completion of the website accessibility project

Cllr Dorothy Harvey thanked those involved in creating the new website and noted their much-appreciated hard work.

Cllr Craig stressed the importance of establishing procedures to maintain website updates going forwards.

There was brief discussion regarding the distinction between policy, procedure and process raised by Cllr Farrance. It was concluded that the procedures needed to be in place to ensure the implementation of policies.

The Executive Clerk provided a brief update on the website and stressed the importance of promoting the website platform to the public.

19/20PY 38. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS & PARISH COUNCILLOR MATTERS

Cllr Dorothy Harvey noted that the Support Network in the local community is prepared to provide help to vulnerable members of the community should the government instigate another national lockdown. Cllr Dorothy Harvey further highlighted that plans are in place to ensure community shopping help is available even if the Community Bus is not running.

19/20PY 39. CORRESPONDENCE

The next meeting is on 16th November 2020 at 7.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.53am.

..... Chairman

Date

Appendices

- Actions log
- Policy review schedule