

**Minutes of the
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
held remotely on Wednesday 9th September 2020 at 2:02pm
using the online Zoom meeting Platform**

Cllrs Present: R Gardner, Ms A Rees-Jones, S May, R Patient & Mrs M Weir

1. Elect a Chairman

Cllr R Gardner nominated Cllr R Patient. This was seconded by Cllr S May with all Members in agreement.

2. Elect a Vice Chairman

Cllr R Patient nominated Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones. This was seconded by Cllr R Gardner with all Members in agreement.

Chairman R Patient reminded Members that the meeting would be recorded for the benefit of the Minutes and that once those Minutes were approved the recording would be deleted. Chairman R Patient further reminded Members to raise their hands during the meeting when they wanted to speak.

3. Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:

Apologies were received from Cllr T Manyika.
Members received the apologies tendered.

4. Declarations of any:

- a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;
- b) Other Pecuniary Interest; or
- c) Non-Pecuniary Interest

on any matter on the agenda for 9th September 2020:

None were declared.

5. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11th February 2019:

The Minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record and Members approved the destruction of notes in respect of that meeting.

6. To consider new policies required:

a) Co-option Policy (CP):

Chairman R Patient felt that it would be beneficial to outline more of what would be expected from potential candidates. He noted historically some people had joined Council and had not stayed for long and expressed his view some had not contributed very much.

The Clerk explained that the Policy incorporated most of what was already done during the Co-option process and that the main changes were the timing of informing the candidate of Council's decision and the nature of how Members made their decisions; the Policy proposed that candidates would be interviewed, invited to stay for the duration of the meeting and that a decision on whether or not to co-opt a candidate would be made under a private & confidential (P&C) discussion at the end of the meeting. The candidate would be informed of Council's decision the following day by the Clerk. It was agreed that process

would be more professional. Members also noted that the Policy proposed that the decision on whether or not to co-opt a candidate would be made by a signed/private ballot so not to put pressure on Members and/or make them feel uncomfortable about revealing their decision to others.

Cllr R Gardner raised concerns regarding training of new Members, noting that some people had undertaken training at cost to Council and had then left Council relatively soon. Members discussed the idea that a portion of the training cost should be returned to Council if a new Member were to leave. Members agreed that 50% of costs should be returned to Council if a Member had undertaken training within a year of joining and had since left Council. However, it was agreed that the conditions/reasons for leaving should be considered and discretion should be applied when recovering costs, especially if reasons for leaving included ill health. It was agreed the Clerk would look further into the matter and that a caveat on training costs would be added to the application form, but not added to the Policy document. Members further agreed that a period of 3 months should pass before new Members would be permitted on training courses to give them adequate time to settle into Council and to give them opportunity to show Members the level of their contribution and commitment.

There were no further comments and Members unanimously **agreed** to recommend the CP to Full Council for approval.

b) Social Media Policy (SMP):

It was noted the Social Media Working Group (SMWG) had not met and had not drawn up a Policy and the Clerk had therefore undertaken writing one for proposal. The Clerk explained she had looked at other Parish Council Social Media Policies and had amalgamated them to produce one she felt was sensible and covered a range of aspects. It was noted the Policy was comprehensive and highlighted the need to be careful when using the medium. Cllr R Gardner felt that the Facebook page should list the terms and conditions of use and highlight to people that there would be no tolerance for swearing and abuse etc, along with no advertising. The Clerk suggested that if the Policy were to be agreed then it would be beneficial for the SMWG to meet in order to work out the mechanics of how they would want the Council's Facebook page to be set out.

Members unanimously **agreed** to recommend the SMP to Full Council for approval.

c) COVID-19 Re-opening of Council Offices Policy & Risk Assessment (CRCOPRA):

Members noted that the report was comprehensive and agreed it was beneficial to capture as many areas/issues as possible during the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Clerk explained that she had used the template for the Risk Assessment from an insurance company and that all measures were now in place, where possible. Cllr R Gardner enquired about how the office would deal with parcels/packages and if gloves were available. Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones pointed out that page 13, item 7 covered that aspect. The Clerk noted that the office did not receive that many parcels.

Members unanimously **agreed** to recommend the CRCOPRA to Full Council for approval and that the Clerk would keep things under review noting that Government guidelines were often changing during the pandemic.

7. Summary of decisions:

- Cllr R Patient elected Chairman.
- Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones elected Vice-Chair.
- Co-option Policy approved for recommendation to Full Council; application form to include caveat about training costs.
- Social Media Policy approved for recommendation to Full Council; SMWG to look to meet to work out mechanics of Facebook page.
- COVID-19 Re-opening of Council Offices Policy & Risk Assessment approved for recommendation to Full Council; Clerk to keep under review in line with changing Government guidelines.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 2:19pm

Chairman