



MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SERVICES MEETING HELD
ON THE 11TH NOVEMBER 2021
AT 7.30pm AT THE RUFUS CENTRE

Present:

Cllr A Snape (Chairman)
Cllr A Lutley
Cllr K Badham
Cllr M Williams
Cllr P Earles
Cllr I Blazeby (attended virtually)

Stephanie Stanley – Corporate Services Manager (CSM)
Helen Glover - Senior Finance Officer (SFO)
Lisa Cousins – Administration and Bookings Officer (ABO)
Sarah Burges – Functions & Events Coordinator - attended virtually (FEC)
Tracy Lester - Catering & Facilities Lead - attended virtually (CFL)

Member of the public – 0

1324. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted for Councillors Mackey (unwell) and Gleave (work commitments).

1325. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.
- (b) Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.

1326. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

1327. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

1328. INVITED SPEAKER

There was no invited speaker.

1329. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no questions.

1330. MINUTES

- a. For Members to receive and adopt the Minutes of the Business Services Committee held on 14th October 2021

The Minutes of the Business Services Committee held on 14th October 2021 were adopted.

1331. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Business Services Committee 14th October 2021.

There were no matters arising.

1332. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Environmental Policy – Environmental Action Plan & the Delivery Plan**

Members commented that the “food hub” mentioned in the policy was not included in the strategy so this needed to be removed. The chairman commented there were other ways that the carbon footprint could be reduced, such as replacing the boilers, although other options should be considered. It was worth waiting before replacing the boilers due to updated Government funding being anticipated.

Members felt that it was too soon to state performance indicators and targets given as percentages, until after the audit was done to establish first how the council is currently performing.

It was **resolved** to accept the policy circulated however targets and percentages would be avoided at this stage (removed from pages 11-12). Targets were to be set once the audit had been completed.

Action: Town Clerk/CSM

- b. **Kitchen Hire**

Members noted the report circulated.

Members asked if the cost of a deep clean was known, to review the current kitchen hire charge. Officers were currently waiting for a quotation for this from the new cleaning company and then an additional cost would be added to the fee.

Action: CFL / FEC

Members asked if we now had a list of preferred suppliers for external catering. The FEC advised she has begun approaching suppliers that we had previously worked with, and the list was in progress. Members asked for this information to be circulated for the January Business Services meeting.

Action: FEC

c. Migration of Telephones to Microsoft Teams

Members noted the potential saving and asked Officers to present a report 12 months after migration to show the actual savings made. Members also stated in addition to the cost savings, it would be of great benefit allowing staff greater flexibility to receive calls whilst working from home.

It was **resolved** to proceed with the migration of telephones to Microsoft Teams at a cost of £1,035 with a monthly fee of £200 for licensing. It was agreed for Officers to report back to Committee to show the savings this had made, which were estimated at £700 annually.

Action: CSM

d. AV Equipment - Microphones

Members discussed various options to reduce trailing microphone cables whilst ensuring there was still excellent sound quality.

The Chairman suggested the least expensive route would be to mount the current microphones in the ceiling. Cllr Badham suggested that from his previous experience, the quality may not be very good as the microphones were designed for tabletop mounting. The Chairman suggested that Councillors could test the quality of the microphones at a raised level. Councillor Badham suggested using more cable management would make the current set up more workable.

Members requested that Officers investigate the cost of cable managing the microphones from the rear of the room.

Action: CFL

1333. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Marketing & Communications Plan 2021-22

Members raised concerns that as the Flitwick Business Group was no longer in operation there was currently no support for local businesses, other than promoting them through the website. The Community Services Manager had contacted those that had previously taken over running the Flitwick Business Group but they were not looking at resuming it at this time. Councillor Badham advised that in the meantime, small local businesses could be directed to the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLAP) who support businesses and offer government funded training and networking opportunities. Members asked for a proposal to be presented at the next meeting to look at the best way to engage with local businesses.

*Action:
Community Services Manager*

Councillor Blazeby asked if any progress had been made regarding looking at online booking systems. Officers present were not aware but would look into this and advise. Members requested a timeline when they could expect proposals.

*Action:
CSM/CMM*

The Chairman commented that the Rufus website did not have up-to-date photos on the website of meeting rooms and asked Officers to investigate the possibility of having professional photos taken. Officers were asked to seek quotations for this.

Action: Communications & Marketing Manager / ABO

Councillor Blazeby queried the label 'timing to be confirmed' on the Approved Contractor List and asked that a more specific date be applied. The CSM explained it had only just become apparent this list was not already in place and that Officers would give a timeline for when this would be actioned.

Members agreed it was beneficial to have an approved suppliers list to ensure quality of work and support local companies. This was to be prioritised.

Action: CSM

b. Marketing & Communications Forward Plan

Councillor Blazeby felt it would be useful to know which items are planned for video. He was surprised that the installation of the Christmas tree was not included or the crematorium proposal going to planning next week. The Chairman advised the Christmas tree was being put in place on Monday and that he was arranging a timelapse video of this. It was agreed the crematorium proposal should also be included in the plan.

Action: Communications & Marketing Manager

1334. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

1335. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

12a Officers Update – noted

12b Financial Reports – noted

12c Occupancy Stats and Forecasts – noted

12d Tenants

It was **resolved** for the Town Clerk to have delegated responsibility to oversee rents and for reviews within lease agreements to be actioned.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

Meeting closed: 20:50