



RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL
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**Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee
held on Monday 11th March 2024
at The Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Bull Lane, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 8JD**

PF94/24 Those present and apologies for absence.

Chair Cllr R Dray
Members Cllrs, E Brewer, J Burton, E Callis, R Lambourne, D Mercer, S-J Page,
C Stanley
Apologies Cllrs J Lumley, I Ward, C Pavelin
Substitutes Cllr J Jacobs for Cllr C Pavelin
Also present Town Clerk and two members of the public.
Resolved. The Council recorded and accepted apologies for absence.

PF95/24 Declarations of interests.

All members of District and County Councils that were present, declared their interests. Councillor E Brewer declared her interests in agenda item PF106/24.

PF96/24 Code of Conduct

This meeting will be carried out under the terms of the Local Government Association and Rayleigh Town Council's Code of Conduct policy with all participants expected to behave in a professional and constructive manner.

PF97/24 Public forum

Two members of the public were present however did not wish to speak.

PF98/24 Minutes of last meeting.

Resolved. The minutes of the Policy & Finance committee meeting held on 8th January 2024 were approved as true record. Proposed by Cllr R Dray and carried unanimously.

PF99/24 Rochford District Council Tax Bands

It was noted that Rochford District Council Tax Bands comparing 2023-24 and 2024-25, with most parishes increasing, some as much as 28%. Rayleigh Town Council having maintained the same precept as 2023-24, resulting in very little change to the band D equivalent.

PF100/24 Election Costs

It was noted that election costs for May 2024 from Rochford District Council were again queried.

PF101/24 Finance

The list of all payments for the period January and February 2024 and list of budgetary information on all accounts were received.

Bank balances as of 29th February 2024 :

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| RTC Savings Account | £166,477.60 |
| RTC Current Account | £ 98,700.76 |
| RTC Deposit Account | £ 71,194.02 |
| KGV Current Account | £ 29,200.31 |
| Public Works Loan Board | - £100,000 |

Resolved. The Council noted the budgetary information and confirms the account balances of Rayleigh Town Council as of 29th February 2024.

PF102/24 IT Working Group

It was noted that a meeting took place on 22nd January followed by an interview of two IT support companies on 29th February. Both IT companies have been invited to conduct an IT audit and forward their recommendations. The IT Working Group have given a recommendation to purchase the highest specification Owl Labs Audio Video facility, having a 30 day refund option, for use at Council meetings at an approximate cost of £2000.

Resolved. Further details to be researched to Owl Labs Audio Video facility to establish whether there is a requirement to work in conjunction with the hearing loop. Proposed by Cllr D Mercer, seconded by Cllr S-J Page and carried unanimously.

PF103/24 UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Grants via Rochford District Council

Resolved. To make applications to Rochford District Council for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for:

- Renovation of further High Street furniture.
- Renovations of the King George V public conveniences.

by the closing date for applications 25th March 2024. Proposed by Cllr R Dray and carried unanimously.

PF104/24 Snack Bar

It was noted that local solicitors have been approached, with the approximate fee to review the head lease being £300-£750, and £1,500-£2,000 for a full lease giving the protection required.

Motion. To authorise a spend up to £2,000 for the production of a new lease for the rent of the snack bar. Proposed by Cllr R Dray, seconded by Cllr J Jacobs with a recorded vote being requested.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Vote for the motion: | Cllrs R Dray, D Mercer, J Jacobs, J Burton, E Callis |
| Vote against the motion: | Cllrs C Stanley, S-J Page |
| Abstention: | Cllrs R Lambourne, E Brewer |
| Resolution : | Carried |

PF105/24 Floral Contracts

It was noted that letters of acceptance to be sent to chosen providers for the hanging basket and flower beds tender as per Communities Committee reference **COM9/24**.

PF106/24 Dementia Friendly Town

Cllr E Brewer gave a report and proposal for :

- Dementia Friendly Bus
- Music 4 The Brain
- Winter Café
- Mushroom Theatre

Resolved. To forward a motion to the next Full Council meeting in April 2024 that the balance of the 2023-24 grant budget is rolled over for use in the next financial year if not used beforehand. Proposed by Cllr J Burton and seconded by Cllr J Jacobs and carried unanimously.

PF107/24 Special Educational Needs School Consultation

It was noted that Essex County Council is holding a public consultation between Friday 23 February 2024 and Friday 5 April 2024, on a proposal to establish whether a new Special Needs School on the Wolsey Park development, Rayleigh is required. The school will be for children aged 3-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties and would open from Spring 2026.

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/school-organisation-and-place-planning/consultations-and-statutory>

Closing date for submissions is 4th April 2024 with submissions by individuals.

PF108/24 Barclays Bank Closure

The reply from Barclays Bank regarding the closure of its Rayleigh High Street branch was noted. Cllr J Burton expressed his disappointment that Barclays Bank quoted a public consultation that did not occur in Rayleigh. Cllr S-J Page informed the Committee that negotiations were taking place regarding the possibility of Barclays Bank using Rayleigh Library as a monthly hub.

PF109/24 Items for next agenda.

Write to banks in Rayleigh High Street as to whether they have an intention to close.

Meeting Closed 8.29pm