



NANTWICH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 24th JUNE 2021

Present – Councillors: Peter Groves (Chair), Penny Butterill (Vice Chair), Carole Thomas, David Marren, Andrew Martin, John Statham and Phil Staley with Sheryl Birtles Deputy Clerk and Samantha Roberts the Town Clerk.

Also present: Councillors, Arthur Moran, Stuart Bostock, David Greaves

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Pam Kirkham

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest expressed.

3. **MINUTES OF POLICY COMMITTEE OF 11th March 2021**

Committee approved the minutes of the Meeting held on 11th March 2021.

4. **CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY**

Members considered the previously circulated draft Customer Service policy drafted by the Town Clerk. The Clerk advised members that whilst the policy was a draft document it covered most practices already carried out by officers. The Clerk also advised members that the policy had been developed using examples from other local government customer service policies.

Councillor Marren, in supporting the principle of a policy suggested that some of the standards did appear challenging, giving examples of the response times for answering the telephone and responding to social media and emails. Councillor Statham supported the concerns raised by Councillor Marren adding that responding to an email within 24 hours could be a little challenging in some cases.

The Clerk advised that officers already responded to emails generally within 24 hours, although she advised that she would be happy for members to recommend alternative targets.

In response to comments relating to social media, the Deputy Clerk advised that she did respond to private correspondence through social media within 24 hours but agreed that some general posts made by the public were not responded to. Members suggested that the policy should distinguish between social media general posts not requiring a response and private comments from members of the public which do require a response.

Members also discussed the requirements for the use of different languages when corresponding with the public. The Clerk advised that there is little requirement for the use of alternative languages but reminded members that the Civic Hall is also a Tourist Information Centre where on occasion visitors to the country do make enquiries at the Tourist Information Office who do not speak English.

Resolved: It was resolved to recommend the adoption of the Customer Service Policy to Full Council subject to:

- a) Amendments to acknowledge digital correspondence from 24 hours to 3 days and include an autoreply where possible;
- b) Amendments to the target of answering the telephone within 30 seconds to within 2 minutes;

5. CYBER INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

Members considered the previously circulated report and attached draft policy. The Clerk informed members that IT providers had assisted with the development of the policy, which had been prepared as a result of recommendations from a recent internal audit.

Resolved: It was resolved to recommend the adoption of the Cyber Information Security Policy to Full Council.

6. SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Members considered the previously circulated draft policy and covering report. The Deputy Clerk advised members that in developing the policy she had consulted with the Town Council’s Health & Safety advisors, the contractors who supply door security officers and children’s show producers. The Deputy Clerk reminded members that the adoption of a Safeguarding Policy was one of the criteria required to qualify as a Connected Communities Centre through Cheshire East.

Both Councillor Moran and Councillor Marren supported the draft policy. Councillor Bostock asked if it would be possible for members to have training on safeguarding, which the Clerk confirmed was possible.

Councillor Statham suggested that the Town Council could look to include as a requirement for grant funding to voluntary organisations the need to hold a safeguarding policy.

Resolved: It was resolved to recommend the adoption of the Safeguarding Policy to Full Council.

The meeting ended at 7.15pm

Signature of Chair :.....

Date :.....