

**7 September 2020**

**Agenda Item: 12**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES / MONITORING OFFICER**

**UPDATE ON USE OF RESOURCES BY COUNCILLORS**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To present Committee with an update on the use of resources by Councillors.

**Information**

**Background**

2. At the meeting of Full Council on 10 May 2018, a revised Code of Conduct for Councillors and Co-opted Members was agreed. The new Code included a range of protocols, including the Councillor and Co-opted Member Protocol for use of Resources (attached for the Committee's reference at **Appendix A**). This Protocol's guiding principles include the need to be mindful of costs and not using resources for political purposes.
3. Governance and Ethics Committee is responsible for taking an overview of this issue and this is the latest update for the Committee.

**Room Hire for Councillor Surgeries**

4. Councillors are expected to use County Council premises for surgeries and are encouraged to use local libraries particularly.
5. In line with the revised Code of Conduct and Use of Resources Protocol, the use of other venues requires the approval of Governance and Ethics Committee.
6. One of the two Councillors for Stapleford and Broxtowe Central Division booked a meeting room at Stapleford Town Council on 25 January 2020 to hold a public consultation meeting about highways maintenance and improvements. The room hire cost £30. Once it is possible to hold public meetings safely again in the future, the Councillor would like to hold such meetings on a quarterly basis. He uses this venue as it is a convenient location for Town Council Members as well as the public.

7. The Councillor for Nuthall and Kimberley Division has previously booked a meeting room at Nuthall Parish Council to hold case surgeries and would like to continue to use this venue due to its convenient location for both Nuthall and Kimberley residents and its car parking facilities.
8. The Councillor uses this venue as there are no suitable County Council premises in this Division (Kimberley Library has no disabled parking and no other parking outside). The cost for these monthly bookings is £12.50 each, exclusive of VAT. The County Council has received invoices for 11 bookings in 2019 at a total cost of £137.50 and for the three meetings held in 2020 up to March at a cost of £37.50. The Council has also received an invoice for £100 to cover the costs of the remaining eight bookings from April to December 2020.

### **Printing and Photocopying Costs**

9. A breakdown of printing and photocopying costs for the period October 2019 to March 2020 is included at **Appendix B**.
10. The Committee's views are sought on the expenditure and whether any further information or actions are required on specific items of expenditure.

### **Other Issues**

11. As agreed by the Committee in January 2019, the Team Manager – Democratic Services, from his monitoring of the relevant Democratic Services budgets, will highlight any areas of concern on an ongoing basis. Currently there are no specific wider issues raising concerns.

### **Reporting Frequency**

12. In light of the lack of wider concerns currently it is proposed that these update reports should be submitted on an annual basis going forward. This can be reviewed in the future should concerns subsequently arise.
13. Where there are resource issues requiring the Committee's approval prior to the next update then separate reports will be submitted to cover those specific issues.

### **Other Options Considered**

14. None – the report provides an update on expenditure as required in the revised Code of Conduct and the revised Councillor and Co-opted Member Protocol for use of Resources and seeks relevant approvals where required.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

15. To update the Committee and seek relevant approvals in line with the requirements of the revised Code of Conduct and the revised Councillor and Co-opted Member Protocol for use of Resources.
16. The move to annual reporting on this issue reflects the current level of concerns but the frequency could be reviewed if felt necessary in the future.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

17. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:-

- 1) Considers the continued use of a meeting room at Stapleford Town Council as a venue for public consultation meetings on a quarterly basis at a cost of £30 per booking.
- 2) Considers the continued use of a meeting room at Nuthall Parish Council Focus Point as a venue for Councillor Surgeries at a cost of £12.50 per surgery, with eleven surgeries booked per year.
- 3) Considers the relevant resources expenditure for the period October 2019 to March 2020 and decides whether there is any further information required or any actions required on specific items of expenditure.
- 4) Agrees to move to an annual reporting cycle on this issue, with any Committee approvals required on specific resource issues to be covered through individual reports to the Committee.

**Marjorie Toward**

**Service Director, Customers, Governance and Employees**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Keith Ford, Team Manager, Democratic Services Tel. 0115 9772590

E-mail: [keith.ford@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:keith.ford@nottscc.gov.uk)

### **Financial Comments (RWK 12/08/20)**

18. Governance and Ethics Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report. If Committee resolves that any actions are required it must be satisfied that such actions are within the Committee's terms of reference.

### **Financial Comments (RWK – 10/08/2020)**

19. All of the expenditure detailed in the report will be met from the existing revenue budget provision for Members Allowances and Expenses for which a sum of £1,860,068 is included in the 2020/21 revenue budget.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All