Restoration of Fire Engines Working Group

Tuesday 17 November 2026

10.00am – 10.50am – MS Teams

Present: Councillors Alcock, J Fradgley and Harding. David Austin

Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk

1. Apologies

Councillor Duck was absent.

2. Appointment of Chair

Councillor Harding was proposed and seconded as Chair of the Working Group.

3. Restoration of the Historic Fire Engines

David Austin presented to the Group the proposals for restoring the Council's two historic fire engines. It was agreed that the Shand Mason engine should be prioritised, with an estimated restoration budget of approximately £8,000. The restoration of the second engine, the Hopworth Tilly, would follow as a longer-term project.

The Group supported making an initial grant application to the Worshipful Company of Firefighters, alongside exploring crowdfunding, if permitted, sponsorship and other external funding opportunities.

It was agreed to recommend that £8,000 be included within the Council's budget as a backstop, recognising that grant funding, crowdfunding and sponsorship would be sought in the first instance.

The Town Clerk would also clarify whether the Council could receive and administer crowdfunding income and explore whether CIL or Section 106 funding could appropriately support the project.

Actions:

- Grant application to be progressed.
- Crowdfunding material and promotional ideas to be prepared.
- Eligibility of CIL/S106 funding and arrangements for crowdfunding to be checked

RECOMMENDATION

That an £8,000 budget provision (2027/28) be allocated towards the refurbishment of the historic fire engines, with delegated authority given to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the relevant Committee, to determine whether the provision should be utilised, subject to all reasonable efforts first being made to secure alternative external funding.

4. Telephone Boxes

David and Councillor Harding outlined their suggested ideas for the refurbishment and future use of the redundant telephone boxes around the town, including the possibility of incorporating them into a Heritage Trail.

The Town Clerk provided an update on the condition of the telephone boxes, which were now in the Town Council's ownership, and the planned restoration works. These would include repairs, replacement glazing and repainting, with works now expected to commence in the spring. Members were also advised that individuals had already expressed an interest in making use of the boxes.

It was noted that a Telephone Box (future use) Working Group had previously been established but had not yet met, partly due to delays in securing a contractor to undertake the restoration works.

In considering the Heritage Trail proposal, it was suggested that some of the telephone boxes might need to be relocated. The Town Clerk advised that previous advice had indicated that relocation could be costly and would need further consideration.

ACTION: The Telephone Box Working Group would reconvene in the New Year to explore the options in more detail and engage with interested community representatives.