

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 12th March 2009, 7.30pm AT THE SPORTS PAVILION

PRESENT: Cllr Kiverstein (Chairman), Cllrs. Mrs Barnett, Mrs Black, Mrs Botting, Ellis, Jolliffe and Mrs Roberts.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Clarke, Peter Jones and Lesley Hoff (Clerk)

The meeting opened at 7.32pm

90. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Qusted.

91. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on any agenda item.

92. MINUTES

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th February 2009 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and the Chairman signed them.

93. THE CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that Martin Ireson would be installing the smoke alarms at the Pavilion on 5th May 2009 and had arranged to meet the Clerk there at 8am.

Members were informed that the allotment measurements had been taken that day and the Deputy Clerk was to provide a report in time for either the next Recreation and Open Spaces Committee meeting or the next Finance and Policy Committee meeting.

The Clerk advised the Committee that the street lighting maintenance contract would arrive in the Parish Office from WSCC before the end of the month. The Streetlighting Department was hoping to receive funding to upgrade the streetlights in the footpath between the railway station and Church Place.

94. COMMUNITY COHESION WORKING GROUP

The Chairman proposed that agenda item 11 should be brought forward to allow Peter Jones to explain the concept of the Community Cohesion Working Group at this point and members agreed.

RESOLVED: to move agenda item 11 to this part of the meeting.

Mr Jones explained the way he envisaged the Community Cohesion Working Group would perform its tasks and said it would follow the model used by Southwater parish. Its remit was to bring various agencies together to try to overcome the problems caused by alcohol, drugs, housing and enforcement issues. Nick Herbert, MP wanted to attend the first meeting and Mr Jones was awaiting news of when he was free.

Mr Jones was asked to attend the Annual Parish Meeting to give a presentation to the public and hopefully, find some volunteers.

A question and answer session followed. Cllr Kiverstein informed Mr Jones that the Parish Council were very enthusiastic and felt the Group would certainly make a difference. Members offered the Parish Council Meeting Room as a venue for meetings of the Group and also the Clerk's services as minute taker and administrator.

Cllr Mrs Botting, as Chairman of the Parish Council, thanked Mr Jones for giving up his time to speak to the Committee.

Mr Jones left the meeting at 8.10pm

95. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no members of the public who had given notice of wishing to speak.

96. ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS

The Committee had previously received a report from Cllr Quedstedt, who had visited two parishes for a demonstration of their accounting systems. It was agreed it was an excellent report.

Following a brief discussion, it was RESOLVED the Council would choose the RBS Alpha system and the Clerk was instructed to contact the company to arrange a training day.

97. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Chairman gave the members a brief history as to why he had been the Responsible Financial Officer for the last few years. Following a lengthy discussion, it was AGREED to recommend to full Council that the Clerk should become the Responsible Financial Officer with effect from 1st April 2009. Cllr Kiverstein would ask Cllr Quedstedt to share the role of internal controller.

Cllr Mrs Black asked that the thanks of the Finance and Policy Committee to Cllr Kiverstein for doing such an excellent job in the role be minuted.

98. PARISH OFFICE HARDWARE

Members had received details of various laptops to peruse. Following a lengthy discussion, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk should approach Dean Smith to install a laptop with a docking mechanism and report back to the Committee on completion.

99. NATWEST BANK ACCOUNT

The Chairman informed members of a meeting he had attended with Robin Skilton, the Regional Business Manager of NatWest Bank. He had found the meeting to be most useful and had been given a contact number for the Parish Office to use if there were any problems with the bank accounts.

The Clerk was instructed to compose a letter for signing by two of the signatories, to authorise that the Parish Office staff should be able to obtain information on the accounts by telephone and online.

Mr Skilton was unable to offer very good interest accounts on savings but Cllr Kiverstein had found 30 day notice accounts with Leeds Building Society and the Cheshire Building Society. The Clerk was instructed to obtain details and application forms.

It was also agreed the earmarking of funds and savings rates should be reviewed quarterly.

100. EARMARKED FUNDS

The Councillors received a report on the potential surplus on expenditure 2008/2009, which showed there was no surplus to earmark and no deficit.

101. ELECTRICITY

Members received details of electricity charges from EON. The Clerk was instructed to check comparison websites for the best rates. A Councillor suggested enquiring about HDC's bulk purchasing scheme and the Clerk was instructed to follow this up.

102. INTERNET ACCESS FOR INFORMATION

This item had already been covered under Minute number 99.

103. INTERNAL AUDIT

The Committee received the report from the Internal Auditor and noted the three items on the action plan had been dealt with by the Parish Office. The Clerk was instructed to write to the Internal Auditor to inform him this had been done.

The update of the Governance and Management Risk Register would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

104. INCREASE IN THE RENT PAID BY THE SPORTS CLUBS AND ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

Due to the fact the leases for the sports clubs were still with the solicitor, this item was postponed and would become an agenda item for the next meeting.

105. CORRESPONDENCE

Pulborough & District Community Care Association

Members received an invitation for a representative of the Parish Council to attend the Association's Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 18th March 2009 at 2.30pm in the Arun Hall at the Village Hall.

Cllr Mrs Black stated she would attend as the Parish Council's representative.

106. MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

There were no matters raised by Councillors for inclusion on the next agenda.

107. PAYMENTS

RESOLVED: that the following payments be made and cheques drawn:

L Hoff	£184.76
WSCC	£5050.30
WSCC	£294.77
R Quested	£1.24
EP Clark & Co Ltd	£11948.50
JR Sports Turf Maintenance	£462.47
Roof Improvements	£150.00
SALC	£5.75

The meeting closed at 9.22pm.

.....CHAIRMAN

.....DATE