

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held at The Bishop Mascall Centre, Ludlow, on Wednesday 23 July 2008 at 7.00 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Perks (Chairman), Aitken, Davies, Glaze, Kidd, Newbold, Pound and Smithers.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Linda Thomas, Town Clerk

PF78/08 APOLOGIES – Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bradley, Hunt and Wilcox

PF79/08 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Agenda Item	Councillor's Name	Personal	Prejudicial	Reason
11	G Perks	✓		Director of Skillbuilders
11	G Kidd	✓		Bank account holder

PF80/08 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION – There were three members of the public present.

Councillor Martin Taylor-Smith asked questions relating to the financial records produced. The Town Clerk outlined the situation regarding the setting up of the accounts package used and the reports produced. Councillor Taylor-Smith offered assistance from the District Council if it was considered necessary.

Councillor Rosanna Taylor-Smith requested that detail of the expenditure in relation to Pride of Place be made available.

PF81/08 MINUTES – The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2008 were approved and signed as a correct record.

PF82/08 ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE – The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2008 were received and noted.

PF83/08 STAFFING SUB COMMITTEE – A meeting of the Staffing Sub-Committee will be convened in the near future.

PF84/08 TOWN COUNCIL POLICIES – A number of draft Policies had been presented to the meeting for consideration. It was **Resolved** that:

- a) Disciplinary and Grievance Policies: be considered by a Working Group comprising Councillors Aitken, Newbold, Pound and Perks. The recommended final versions to be brought back to the Policy & Finance Committee.
- b) Financial Regulations: be approved.

- c) Vehicle Policy & Procedure: be approved. It was agreed that the implementation of the policy be reviewed annually and that issues relating to smoking, drink and drug use be addressed in the appropriate Health & Safety Policy when drafted.
- d) Press Protocol: be reaffirmed. Members fully supported the position that the Town Clerk be designated the official Press Officer of the Council.

PF85/08 ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL AUDIT-

- a) Year End Accounts and Annual Return: Copies of the Year End Accounts and details of the Annual Return, which included the report of the internal auditor, had been circulated. The need for ongoing monitoring was affirmed and the Accounts Sub-Committee was delegated to carry out scrutiny of income and expenditure details on a regular basis. The Town Clerk confirmed that for the current year all relevant budgets would be entered on the accounting system. **Resolved** that the Year End accounts be accepted and submission of the Annual Return be approved.
- b) Report of the Internal Auditor: The Annual Report had been circulated and it was **Resolved** that the report be noted and accepted.
- c) Town Council's Risk Assessment: The Town Clerk had circulated a summary of the Risk Assessment. A more detailed explanation of the identification and recording of risks using a purpose built software package was given and members noted that the relevant Action Plan was being drawn up. Details of measures required would be brought to the attention of the relevant Committee. **Resolved** that the Risk Assessment Report be accepted.

PF86/08 THE BUTTERCROSS – Details of the structural problems identified on the clock tower and cupola had been detailed in the Agenda. The Town Clerk updated members with the current position regarding the implementation of repairs and also reported on a Health and Safety situation that had arisen in relation to the erection of scaffolding. **Resolved:**

- a) The costs of scaffolding (£1200) and the structural survey (£460 plus VAT) be approved.
- b) Authority be delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee and the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor to consider and, if appropriate, approve expenditure on the cost of repair.

PF87/08 STAFFING REVIEW – **Resolved** that approval be given for a review of Staff Roles & Responsibilities to be carried out. The Staffing Sub Committee to oversee this review with a view to making recommendations if necessary to the Policy and Finance Committee.

PF88/08 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND BACS PAYMENTS – **Resolved:**

- a) The Town Clerk negotiate investment of funds using of Treasury Deposits for an initial one month period to be reviewed at the end of that period for additional investment.
- b) The future payment of salaries and on-costs be organised with Barclays through the BACS system.



PF89/08 MAYORAL HONOUR BOARD – The report of the Assistant Town Clerk was noted. **Resolved:**

- a) Arrangements for obtaining the faculty and costs of signwriting for updating the current board be implemented.
- b) Costings for a new board be obtained and these, together with the cost of the faculty be considered in the preparation of the budget for next year.

PF90/08 TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE – The Website & Newsletter Group had considered a number of proposals for the production of the Town Council website. Details of the services provided by two companies were brought to the Policy & Finance Committee for a decision. **Resolved** that Vision ICT be appointed to support the setting up of the website. It was suggested that the Website & Newsletter Group investigate personalising the website design, possibly using local companies if appropriate.

PF91/08 UNITARY GOVERNMENT – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SHROPSHIRE – Details of a series of Topic Papers put out for consultation by the LDF Project Team were noted by Councillors. The Town Clerk agreed to have a set of these papers available for any member interested in contributing comments on the following topics – Spatial Overview; Housing; Economy; Environmental Resource Management; Transport & Accessibility; Climate Change; Infrastructure & Implementation; Monitoring; and Sustainability Appraisal.

PF92/08 DATA PROTECTION - Resolved that the Town Clerk proceed with the appropriate Registration.

PF93/08 QUALITY PARISH COUNCILS – The revised Guide to becoming a Quality Council had been circulated. **Resolved** that a Working Group be set up to review the requirements and draw up an Action Plan. Group to comprise Councillors Perks, Smithers, Newbold, Glaze and Aitken.

PF94/08 EMPOWERMENT WHITE PAPER – COMMUNITIES IN CONTROL – Copies of the Government White Paper and related NALC Briefing Paper had been circulated. The information was received and noted.

PF95/08 COMMISSION INTO SMALL SHOPS – Copies of the Commission Report dated July 2008 had been circulated. The information was received and noted.

PF96/08 WEST MIDLANDS MARKET TOWN FORUM – Copies of a Forum Report dated Summer 2008 had been circulated. The information was received and noted.

PF97/08 DEVELOPING HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE – Copies of Briefing Paper 5 had been circulated. The information was received and noted.

PF98/08 TRAINING/SEMINARS –

- a) Neighbourhoods in Action Conference – Interested members to notify Town Clerk



- b) First Aid at Work Certificate Training – Approval given for two members of staff to attend.
- c) SLCC National Conference – Approval given for Town Clerk to attend.

PF99/08 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- a) **Website & Newsletter** – Website arrangements having been approved, attention would focus on the Newsletter and next issue of the Calendar of Events.
- b) **Remembrance Sunday** – No further meetings had been held.

PF100/08 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- a) **Ludlow Area Committee** – Councillor Kidd reported that a Planning Meeting had been held and had resulted in the production of the paper attached in relation to Agenda No 15. A public meeting had also been held at which issues of speeding on major roads, bus routes and the Broadgate had featured for discussion.
- b) **Ludlow Marches Partnership** – Councillor Perks reported that following recent discussions a meeting would take place on 29 July to consider further the options for succession.
- c) **SALC** – Discussion at a recent South Shropshire Area meeting had focussed on Boundary Changes and the operation of the Unitary Authority.
- d) **Six Market Towns** – Nothing to report.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

Chairman

Date