



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Guildhall, Mill Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 10th JUNE 2013** at **7.00PM**

PF/01 PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor Draper

Councillors: Ginger; Newbold; Parry; Perks; Smithers; Toop

Officers: Gina Wilding, Town Clerk
Naomi Brotherton, Secretary/Admin Assistant

PF/02 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Chairman informed Councillors of the fire exits, fire assembly point and asked that everyone sign the attendance log.

PF/03 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

PF/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
None declared.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
None declared.

Declarations of Personal Interest

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
V. Parry		Ludlow in Bloom
P. Toop	15	Member of the Buttercross Working Group
	9	Member of the Civic Events Working Group
J.Smithers	9	Member of the Civic Events Working Group
P. Draper	9	Member of the Civic Events Working Group
G.Perks	13b	Recently restored two benches – Skill Builders and Pride of Place

PF/05 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were no members of the public present.

PF/06 UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

Councillor Parry informed the Committee that she had been to a meeting of SALC. She stated that concerns regarding the timelines and quality of information provided by NALC had been raised at the meeting and that she would provide the information when it was available.

PF/07 MINUTES**a) Open Session****RESOLVED (6:0:1) JS/VP**

That the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 15th April 2013, be received.

PF/08 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SERVICES COMMITTEE**Re-Instatement of Seat in Bus Shelter, Mill Street**

That:

- i) the seat in the bus shelter on Mill Street be re-instated;**
- ii) that the Town Clerk is authorised to issue a press release once the seat has been fitted.**

There was a discussion regarding replacement of the seat. Councillor Perks requested that once the seat has been fitted, a press release be issued with the emphasis on the cost of vandalism to the tax payer. Councillor Parry requested that the shelter be cleaned after the seat is fitted.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous) VP/PT

That:-

- i) the seat in the bus shelter on Mill Street be re-instated;
- ii) that the Town Clerk is authorised to issue a press release once the seat has been fitted.

PF/09 STANDING ORDERS & POLICY REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Councillor Perks commented that at SOPR/05 the Declaration of Interest should read, "Expressed his concern that the financial return 2009-2010 had not been available 14 months ago, prior to becoming a Councillor."

RESOLVED (6:0:1) PD/JN

That the minutes of the Standing Orders and Policy Review Working Group meeting held on the 24th April 2013, be received.

PF/10 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STANDING ORDERS & POLICY REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Review of Model Standing Orders

That:-

- i) the current Standing Order be adopted at the Annual General Meeting.
- ii) the new Council work with SALC to review Standing Orders.

RESOLVED (6:0:1) GP/PT

That:-

- i) the current Standing Orders be adopted at the Annual General Meeting;
- ii) the new Council work with SALC to review the Standing Orders.

PF/11 Delegated Powers

That delegated powers for Council, Committees and the Town Clerk be defined.

RESOLVED (6:0:1) GP/PT

That delegated powers for Council, Committees and the Town Clerk be defined.

PF/12 Report on Committee Structure 2008

That the report be revisited and the Working Group reconsider the Council's Committee Structure.

RESOLVED (6:0:1) GP/PT

That the report be revisited and the Working Group reconsider the Council's Committee Structure.

PF/13 MINUTES OF THE CIVIC EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Councillor Perks commented that he had sent his apologies for this meeting; however it had not been minuted.

Councillor Parry asked if a written Protocol could be devised before the next Mayor's Sunday.

RESOLVED (6:0:1) PD/JS

That the minutes on the Civic Events Working Group meeting held on the 16th May 2013, be received.

PF/14 ANNUAL CORE BUDGET GRANT APPLICATION – CRUCIAL CREW

The Chairman explained that this worthwhile charity provided life skills such as first-aid, bike safety, fire awareness and hazard training to youngsters. He added that both his children had attended sessions and had benefitted from it.

The Town Clerk stated that the application did not meet the criteria for Project Support Grants which were normally considered at Representational Committee and therefore it had been brought to Policy and Finance Committee.

Councillor Perks stated that he was in support of the project which he felt gave value for money. He asked if a letter could be written to go to the pupils attending the training to ask for feedback. Councillor Parry added that a photograph of the event would be helpful.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous) VP/GP

That the Bridgnorth and South Shropshire Crucial Crew be awarded the requested Annual Core Budget Grant of £413.00.

PF/15 DATA TRANSPARENCY

The Town Clerk introduced the report and explained that whilst it is not a legislative requirement, it is a positive code which has been adopted by most Councils. She explained that this would mean publishing expenditure over £500.00 on the website. She went on to say that policies and Minutes were currently published via the website and that sight of the asset register was available on request.

Councillor Perks stated that he was in support of the reports recommendations.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous) GP/PT

That:-

- i) the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency be adopted;
- ii) a specific section on the website is created and entitled 'Transparent Governance'.

PF/16 **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Councillor Perks commented that while the information provided was interesting he would prefer to see it summarised. When asked for clarification he advised the Town Clerk that he wished to see a monthly total instead of multiple cashbook entries.

Both Councillor Smithers and Parry disagreed with these comments stating that the Town Council had been criticised heavily for not providing enough information and as the Committee had just voted on transparency felt that the format of the accounts should remain the same.

Following a question from Councillor Toop the Town Clerk confirmed that the life jacket had been purchased to allow a safe working practice for the Direct Labour Force when they worked near to the bank at the Linney Riverside Park.

RESOLVED (unanimous) PD/JS

That the Payments and Income reports for April 2013 and Barclay Card Statements be noted.

PF/17 **POLICIES****a) Gritting Policy**

There was a discussion on the risks and financial implications. The Town Clerk confirmed that Risk Assessments would be considered at a future meeting.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous) GP/JS

That the Gritting Policy be re-adopted.

PF/18 **b) Environmental Policy**

Councillor Parry raised the issue of the Ludlow Bio-digester and the involvement of Ludlow Town Council, however the Committee felt that this was an issue that should be considered countywide by Unitary Councillors.

She also added that Shrewsbury were piloting a regular cardboard collection which was likely to be rolled out across Shropshire in the near future.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous) GP/JS

That:-

- i) the Environmental Policy is re-adopted;
- ii) the input of Ludlow's Unitary Councillors is requested on how the Environmental Policy can work locally.

PF/19 c) Employee Handbook

The Committee discussed the handbook and queried how many member of the Direct Labour Force were qualified first-aiders. The Town Clerk confirmed that there were two.

There was a debate on paragraph 2.18 of the handbook regarding bad weather conditions and unequal treatment for members of staff who live in more rural, isolated areas. Councillor Toop stated that no member of staff should put their life or anyone else's at risk to get to work.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous) GP/VP

That subject to the amendment of paragraph 2.18 to read, "If unable to report for work due to adverse weather conditions and public transport is suspended, the time off must be made up, or taken as toil/annual leave", the Employee Handbook be adopted.

PF/20 BUTTERCROSS UPDATE

The Town Clerk stated that she had attended a Town Clerk's meeting at Shirehall this morning and had been informed that all the funds from the Revitalisation monies had been committed. This included the £120k for the Buttercross Interpretation Centre, although Shropshire Council required a little more detail on the proposal.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous) GP/JS

That:-

- i) the report be noted;
- ii) that Councillors Perks and Toop form part of the membership for the Buttercross Working Group;
- iii) that further membership for the Buttercross Working Group is sought at Full Council.

PF/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

The Chairman moved that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business pursuant to section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

RESOLVED (unanimous) PD/JS

That the public be excluded and the meeting continue in closed session.

The meeting closed at 8.12pm

Chairman

Date

N.B. Closed Session Minutes will be issued.