



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Stable Block Meeting Room, Stone House, Corve Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 30th JULY 2012** at **7.00PM**

PF/25 PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor McCormack

Vice Chairman: Councillor Phillips

Councillors: Aitken; Draper; Newbold; Parry; Perks; Pound; Wilcox

Officers: Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk
Lucy Jones, Secretary

PF/26 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

Councillor Smithers entered the meeting at 7:02pm

PF/27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

Declarations of Personal Interest

Member

J. Smithers

J. Newbold

M. Phillips

J. Wilcox

Item

Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors

Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Ludlow in Bloom

Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors

Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors

Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors

Knows Complainant

G. Perks	Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors Skillbuilders Pride of Place
A.J. Pound J. Aitken	Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors Queen's Diamond Jubilee
V. Parry	Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors Queen's Diamond Jubilee Ludlow in Bloom

PF/28 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were no members of the public or press present.

PF/29 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION FEEDBACK

The Town Clerk stated that all questions had been answered at the previous meeting.

PF/30 QUESTION & ANSWERS – UNITARY COUNCILLORS

There were no Unitary Councillors present at the meeting. The Town Clerk passed on Councillor M and R Taylor-Smith's apologies.

PF/31 MINUTES

RESOLVED (8:0:2)

That the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 18th June 2012, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PF/32 STREET TRADING SUB-COMMITEE

a) Minutes

RESOLVED (4:3:0)

That the minutes of the Street Trading Sub-Committee meeting held on 24th July 2012, be received.

PF/33 b) Recommendations

That:-

- i) Policy and Finance Committee reconsider the decision to refuse Easy Peasy permission to use the Castle Gardens for a children's cookery class.**
- ii) the Town Clerk put a report to Policy and Finance Committee on this policy matter.**
- iii) the Town Clerk consider the use of matting to protect the grass in Castle Gardens.**

The Town Clerk explained to the Committee that on a point of law they could not consider the first recommendation made regarding Easy Peasy as it had not been on the Street Trading Sub-Committee agenda for them to consider and make recommendations and had only been raised at the meeting as an aside.

The Town Clerk stated that it had been a considerable length of time had passed since the Town Council had last considered a policy on the use of Castle Gardens and they the Sub - Committee may consider it time to review that and seek a report. She added that particularly during wet weather there had been evidence of damage to the grass in Castle Gardens and therefore she would present a report, including details of matting, to Council on the 3rd September 2012 if Members so wished but it could only be considered as part of a general policy as it had already been considered specifically for Easy Peasy and the 6 month rule Standing order would need to be waived for that to be re-opened by Council.

RESOLVED (9:0:1)

That the Town Clerk put a report to a future Council meeting on setting a policy for the future use of Castle Gardens including the option/cost of using protective matting.

Councillor Aitken asked if the other decisions made by the Street Trading Sub-Committee on the 24th July 2012 would be recommended to Council for adoption. The Town Clerk stated that they would not as Council had delegated power to make such decisions to the Street Trading Sub-Committee.

PF/34 POLICIES

a) Policy on the Use of Castle Gardens

A report will be brought to a future Council meeting.

PF/35 b) Equal Opportunities Policy

The Chairman stated that this was a very simple policy but the Council definitely needed one.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous)

That the Equal Opportunities Policy be adopted.

PF/36 c) Recruitment and Selection Policy

The Chairman stated that she believed this policy cover most possible eventualities. Councillor Perks referred Members to the section on Shortlisting which limited short listing to six candidates for interview; he asked if this could be seen as pre-judging if there were for example eight good candidates. The Town Clerk explained that short listing was done on a points system which highlighted the six best candidates.

Councillor Perks drew Members attention to the paragraph which set out the number of people on the short listing panel, he suggested in some cases it may be appropriate to have the Direct Labour Force Supervisor present if the post was to report directly to him. Councillor Parry stated that Shropshire Council had a panel of five shortlisters and that three was too few. Councillor Pound agreed and stated that previous short listing panel had more than three members.

The Town Clerk stated that previously the Council had had short listing and interview panels of eight which can be difficult and daunting to the interviewee. Councillor Pound stated that there needed to be a large pool of Members to choose from for such panels in the event of holidays etc. Councillor Phillips said that in her experience usually the optimum number on a panel is five.

Councillor Perks stated that different posts may need different numbers or specific Members with appropriate experience in the skills needed for the post. He added that decision made by any interview panel needed to be fed back to Council prior to the decision being publicised.

Councillor Aitken suggested leaving some flexibility on the numbers on the short listing and interview panel by only setting a maximum number of members. He added that it was good practice to advise candidates that are unsuccessful and give feedback to those unsuccessful candidates interviewed. Councillor Smithers suggested saving staff time by including a cut off date in the advert whereby if candidates have not heard from the Council by that date they have been unsuccessful. The Town Clerk stated that this would significantly increase the cost of the advert, the Chairman suggested including the sentence in the application pack rather than the advert.

Councillor Smithers reminded Members that any notes made during interviews by any member of the panel must be retained by the Council in case any challenge is made to the decision.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous)

That subject to the amendments made in sections 4, 6, 7 and 8 above, the Recruitment and Selection Policy be adopted.

PF/37 QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

Councillor Aitken stated that he had spoken to the Chairman of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Group, Alan Poulton, and the final accounts would be available in September. The Town Clerk added that the accounts provided within the agenda specified how the Town Council's grant had been spent and drew their attention to the speed at which they had been produced for the Council.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the accounts provided be noted, and the Town Council's congratulations and thanks be passed on to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Group.

PF/38 LOCALISM ACT - DECLARATIONS

The Town Clerk stated that item number two on this agenda sets out how she suggested interests might be declared following the changes to the law. Councillor Perks reminded Members that the second Localism Act event by ALC would take place in November and he believed it would be useful for Members to attend.

Councillor Perks asked if a Member declaring a Pecuniary Interest was allowed to address the Council or Committee without taking part in the debate prior to leaving the meeting room. The Town Clerk stated that she would seek clarification on this issue

RECOMMENDED (4:2:1)

That:-

- i) until advised otherwise by the Monitoring Officer interests be declared as set out on the agenda.
- ii) Standing Orders be amended requiring a Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Conflict of Interest or Personal Interest to declare it.
- iii) any Member having Disclosable Pecuniary Interest take no part in the discussion or vote on a matter for the interest was declared.

PF/39 **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

a) **Payments and Income**

The Chairman reminded Members that the Committee had previously resolved to only answer questions received two days prior to the meeting in relation to financial items. The Town Clerk stated that no questions had been received in relation to the accounts presented to this meeting.

Members discussed the accounts information.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the Payments and Income reports for April, May and June 2012 be noted.

PF/40 **b) 1st Quarter Income and Expenditure Report and Exceptions Report**

The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk for providing the Exceptions Report to aid the Committee in understanding the first quarter accounts.

The Committee discussed several items on the Income and Expenditure Report.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the 1st Quarter Income and Expenditure Report and Exceptions Report be noted.

PF/41 **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)

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

The meeting closed at 8.44pm.

Chairman

Date

N.B. Confidential Minutes will be issued.