

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON TUESDAY 29TH MARCH 2005 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT 7 PM.**

PRESENT Councillors J. Barnett
 P. Collins (Chairman)
 Mrs. P. Desorgher
 D. Isham
 R. Lehmann
 H. Mordue
 Ms. R. Newell
 R. Stuchbury (Mayor)
 Ms. P. J. Heath

 Town Clerk

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors H. Cadd, H. Lewis, Mrs. P. Stevens and Mrs. C. Strain-Clark.

73/2005 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr. Isham declared a personal interest in item 8, Buckingham Heritage Trust Grant and item 15, the One Stop Shop.

74/2005 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Members accepted the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th February 2005 which were ratified on the 7th March 2005

75/2005 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES

There were no action reports or updates on items that were not already on the agenda.

76/2005 QUALITY PARISH COUNCIL HEALTH CHECK

Letter from the Countryside Agency

Members noted that Buckingham Town Council had received 50% of the grant requested under minute number 57/2004. The Members agreed to use the budgeted amount allocated for the purchase of the Photocopier to fund the remaining 50% and that the items should be purchased once the funding had been received from the Countryside Agency. Due to difficulties with the funding the Countryside Agency had amended the deadline for the grant to be spent to the end of May 2005.

77/2005 BUDGET REVIEWS

77.1 Finance and Administration Committee

4025 Legal Fees

Members agreed that an interim bill should be requested from the Town Council Solicitors for the work on Verney Close to be paid from 2004/2005 financial year.

ACTION THE CLERK

77.2 All Budgets

1030 Bowls Club – Chandos Park

The Clerk explained the problems being experienced in obtaining correct figures for the rent due on the Bowling Green and Pavilion. Members agreed that an invoice for £1800 per year should be submitted to the Chandos Park Bowls Club.

78/2005 LETTERS RE ALTERATION IN GRANT APPLICATION CIRCUMSTANCES

The Clerk informed members that 2 organisations had written to say they are unable to now accept the grant allocations made by the Town Council. Neighbourhood Watch who had not actually asked for a grant in 2005/2006 informed the Council that they were ceasing to operate. Buckingham Community Racing had requested £250 but due to external pressures the club was dissolving. Members **AGREED** that the money should go into Grant Reserves 4070.

79/2005 APPLICATION FROM BUCKINGHAM HERITAGE TRUST FOR INCREASE IN THEIR ALLOCATED GRANT

Members were reminded that this item had been placed on the agenda following the public session held prior to the Town Council meeting on 7th March. Buckingham Heritage Trust had obtained the offer of funding from the Landfill Tax (Shanks McEwen) of £4560 for the repair of the Old Gaol roof, but to secure that money they needed 10% to be put up by a non beneficiary third party. Mrs. Brooks at the Public Session had asked the Council to increase its grant allocation in 2005/2006 from £250 to £456. Members discussed the principal of revisiting grant allocation but felt that the current system was fair for all applicants and post precept alterations would undermine that system. Members noted that the Council does have a Grants Reserve which it could use to provide any additional amount. Members asked that the Clerk establish the Landfill Tax criteria for third party funding, in particular could it be more than one organisation or individual and that information be available at the time the Council discusses the following recommendation.

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Council allocates a further £256 to Buckingham Heritage Trust from the Grant Reserve Budget 4070.

ACTION THE CLERK

80/2005 LETTER FROM MISS FROHOCK

The Clerk read the letter received from Miss Frohock thanking the Council for its £100 donation, but as she had been fortunate enough to obtain 100% sponsorship for her trip she was returning the cheque.

81/2005 DISCUSS THE FALL BACK POSITION TO HOUSE 17 COUNCILLORS FROM APRIL 2007.

The Chairman informed Members that following the decision taken by the Council at its last meeting there would be 17 Town Councillors from the 2007 elections. The Table currently seated 15 but it would be extremely difficult for 17 Members to sit at the table in any degree of comfort.

A suggestion had been made to turn the Chamber into the Clerk's office and Committee room with the Council block-booking the Small Hall in the Community Centre to use for the main meetings. Members did not think this was a viable option at this time as the Large Hall is rented to a dance class on Monday nights, the noise of which would be disruptive and could prevent members from hearing all the discussion; also any items held 'in committee' could be heard from the Large Hall. It was agreed to monitor the situation along with any plans should the Council extend the current building and need to relocate temporarily.

82/2005 DISCUSS THE COUNCIL'S DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE AND RECOMMEND ANY ALTERATIONS.

Members had been circulated the Council's current Discipline and Grievance Procedure with the agenda. It had been noted that there was no format for the instigation of the discipline procedure. It was felt that the initial complaint and request to instigate the procedure should be heard by 3 independent Councillors who would then conduct any investigation as laid down in the current document. Any appeal would then be heard by a separate panel of 3 Councillors. Members discussed at length the makeup of both the Discipline and Appeals Panel. Members were informed that the Discipline Panel could not be involved in any way with the Appeals Panel and that the Appeals Panel must be independent of the discipline investigation and hearing. It was **AGREED** to request Cllr. Newell as the Council's Human Resources Officer to draw up new procedures to be discussed at the next F & A Committee meeting.

ACTION CLLR. NEWELL

83/2005 BUCKINGHAM LAWN TENNIS CLUB RE CHANDOS TENNIS COURT IMPROVEMENTS

A copy of the letter from Buckingham Lawn Tennis Club outlining the current position re funding of the flood lights at Chandos Park Tennis Courts had been circulated with the agenda. Members expressed concern that the Lawn Tennis Association had not provided a grant towards the floodlights despite indicating that this would be forthcoming if the Club had a 25 year lease from the Town Council. Members **AGREED** to express support to the Buckingham Lawn Tennis Club in getting the necessary funding to put up floodlights and thereby improving the facilities on offer in Buckingham.

Members had a short discussion on the possibility of using section 106 monies in the future to improve facilities in Buckingham.

84/2005 APPLICATIONS FOR THE ACCOUNTS AND ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

The Clerk informed Members that the deadline had originally been set for 29th March but due to the interest this had been extended to the 30th; the Council had 12 applications so far with several more bringing their forms in tomorrow.

85/2005 ALTERING OF THE COUNCIL MEETING DATE

Proposed by Cllr. Lehmann, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to alter the Full Council meeting currently scheduled for 27th December 2005 to 3rd January 2006

86/2005 BTC'S POLICY WITH REGARD TO BUCKINGHAM 'ONE STOP SHOP'

Members had noted the plans for the County Council led "One Stop Shop" which will be built on the site of the Old Magistrates Court. The Mayor confirmed that Buckingham Town Council had not been involved with any discussions prior to the planning application being submitted. Members **AGREED** that the Town Council should be involved and that a letter expressing our wish to be included in future discussions be sent to the County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council.

ACTION THE CLERK

87/2005 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Moreton Road Toilets

The Clerk informed Members that she had been called out by the Police prior to Easter and over the Easter Holidays because of problems with the Moreton Road toilet doors and emergency alarm; the Clerk was the only contact the Police had and knew that a key to the facility was held in the Council office. Members did not feel that the Clerk should have to be on call and requested that a 24hr emergency number be obtained from AVDC for the Police. Members did not feel the Council could invoice AVDC for the Clerk's callout but felt that she should be paid for the time.

The following items were heard under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s 1(2) due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

88/2005 RESPONSE FROM THE CLERK IN RESPECT OF COMMENTS MADE AT THE 17TH JANUARY MEETING.

89/2005 CORRESPONDENCE FROM MR PAGE

CHAIRMAN DATE