



## **121/2005 BUDGET REVIEWS**

### **121.1 Finance and Administration Committee budgets**

It was noted that this is a standing item on the agenda but it was felt that it was too early in the year to analyse the spending trend. There did not appear to be any major problems at this stage.

### **121.2 Overview of all budgets**

It was noted that this is a standing item on the agenda but it was felt that it was too early in the year to analyse the spending trend. There did not appear to be any major problems at this stage.

## **122/2005 CO ORDINATION WITH E & P C'TTEE ON THE RISK ASSESSMENTS**

The Clerk explained that the Environment and Property Committee would be undertaking Risk Assessments on the Council owned or occupied property and felt that it would assist if two members of the Finance and Administration Committee were also involved as any mitigating action may involve the Council in expenditure. There is also a need to update the financial aspects of the Risk Assessments in light of the additional function of burials that the Council has taken on. Members discussed the memorial test that would need to be undertaken under the Council duty of care, the format of which had already been agreed by the E & P Committee. It was **AGREED** that the Events Committee should assist with the Risk Assessments and write up and update the assessments for all the Council run or sponsored events. For events such as the Charter Fair and Christmas Parade which have outside organisers and are sponsored by the Town Council the Assessment needs to cover our involvement.

**ACTION CLLR. STUCHBURY**

## **123/2005 MECHANISM TO PRODUCE A STRESS POLICY AND ASSOCIATED RISK ASSESSMENT RELATING TO STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE**

Following the LCAS report by the Clerk to the Council Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> August Members discussed the formation of a stress policy; it was **AGREED** to ask the Council's HR officer, Cllr. Newell, to provide a draft.

**ACTION CLLR. NEWELL**

## **124/2005 RECEIVE AND RECOMMEND ACCEPTANCE OF THE GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

A copy of the Discipline Procedure produced by Cllr. Newell was circulated to members at the meeting. Following a lengthy and detailed discussion the following amendments were made:

### **2. Principles**

It was agreed to add in to n<sup>o</sup>. 2a – "...fully investigated. A Councillor or Employee may make a written representation to the Mayor concerning the conduct of an employee, following that representation the investigating officer....."

This is to show how the discipline process would be started; an allegation against a Councillor would follow either the Grievance Procedure or the Standards Board complaint.

It was agreed to add in to n<sup>o</sup>. 2b - "At the start of the Investigation and at every stage in the procedure...."; it had been noted that the procedure does not start till you get to stage 1 but the Employee must be told there is an investigation.

#### Stage 1 Oral Warning

It was agreed to amend this to show that the Oral Warning would be given by the Investigating Officer and that appeal is made to the Mayor.

Members discussed whether the appeal should be to the Mayor for all stages and in particular at stage 4 - the Dismissal. The Clerk reminded Members that the Council as a corporate body was the employer and as such only they can dismiss an employee.

They may as a body pass a resolution designating authority to a committee of no less than 3 Councillors to make that decision under LGA 1972 s 101 (a) but can not designate authority to a single Councillor (R v Secretary of State ex parte Hillingdon London Borough Council [1986]). Members were concerned that at all stages the Council was seen to act responsibly and felt that the stage 4 appeal committee should be independent of the earlier stages. If there are not enough Councillors who have not been involved with the procedure from within the Town Council then independent councillors from adjacent authorities will be asked to join the appeal panel; as from 2007 the Town Council will have 17 members.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Discipline and Appeals panels that sit for stages 2 and 3 should consist of those Councillors who are not Chairman, Vice Chairman, Mayor or Deputy Mayor; eligible Members to be listed alphabetically - first three being Discipline Committee, the second three being the Appeals Committee, with remaining Members acting as reserves. Stage 4 Appeal Committee may, in order to preserve the integrity of the Council's employment procedure, include independent Councillors from other authorities.

(Clerk's Note: the following would be eligible to serve on the Committees – Cllr. Barnett, Cllr. Cadd, Cllr. Isham, Cllr. Loftus, Cllr. Saul, Cllr. Stevens, and Cllr. C. Strain-Clark. Thus Discipline would be Cllrs. Barnett, Cadd, and Isham; Appeals Cllrs. Loftus, Saul, and Stevens; with Cllr C Strain-Clark in reserve)

### **125/2005      REQUEST FROM VALE OF AYLESBURY NHS FOR SUPPORT FUNDING OF "BABY CAFÉ"**

Members discussed the letter of appeal which had been circulated prior to the meeting; Members were keen to support the project.

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Lehmann, and **AGREED** by 6 votes to 1 that this Council refers the organisation to the normal grant procedure.

Cllr. Stuchbury wished his objection to be recorded

An amendment proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Cadd, that this Council writes and refers them to the normal grant procedure stating that we would at that time support a grant application of £450, failed by 5 votes to 4.

**126/2005      REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FOR THE “LI’L BIG ADVENTURE” FROM  
JAMES COOPER**

Members discussed the application for support and assistance from Mr James Cooper who is undertaking a “Li’l Big Adventure” project in Nepal. Members felt they couldn’t support him financially at this point but asked the Clerk to respond to his letter in respect of the suggestions he raised. It was **AGREED** to ask the Events Committee to consider allowing him to use the Charity pitch on the Market.

**ACTION THE EVENTS COMMITTEE**

**127/2005      CREATING OF A SPECIFIC BUDGET TO SUPPORT MUSIC AND THE  
ARTS IN BUCKINGHAM TO CONSIDER A STRAP LINE IN ALL  
PUBLICATIONS**

Members discussed the idea of increasing the support and promotion of events in Buckingham celebrating the Town’s musical and artistic talents. Members were very keen to underpin the work being done by organisations in the town to promote music and arts, appreciating that a lot could be done without financial outlay by the Council such as allowing the use of the Council’s Logo and promoting the event within the town via notice boards and the web sites. It was **AGREED** to make organisations aware of the Council’s grant scheme and web sites for promotion.

**128/2005      TO UNDERTAKE ANNUAL REVIEW OF OFFICE PROCEDURE.**

It was **AGREED** that the Chairman and Vice Chairman would review the office procedures and report back at the next meeting.

**ACTION CLLRS. LEHMANN, COLLINS**

**129/2005      CREATION OF AN EMERGENCY PLAN FOR THE PARISH**

Members noted the draft emergency plan procedures produced by the County Council and that the Emergency plan previously produced by the Town Council was out of date. It was **AGREED** to update the contact list in the current plan then undertake the creation of the emergency plan once the final criteria had been agreed by the County Council as Members were informed by a County Councillor that the draft would change considerably.

**ACTION THE CLERK**

**130/2005      EVALUATION OF THE TOWN CLERKS JOB NEW RESPONSIBILITIES**

It was **AGREED** that the Chairman and Vice Chairman would undertake the Terms and Conditions Evaluation, taking into consideration the new responsibilities by the Clerk and the increase in staff numbers. They would report back to the next meeting their conclusions.

**ACTION CLLRS. LEHMANN, COLLINS**

It was **AGREED** that staff assessments and evaluations would need to be carried out on all members of staff. The Chairman would carry out the assessment for the Clerk; the Clerk prior to her assessment would carry those of other members of staff out.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK, CLLR. LEHMANN**

Members discussed the staffing levels of the council: with the increasing workload and pressure, but with the limited work space, the Council was reaching its employment capacity in the current building.

**131/2005 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**Decision Making by Email**

The Chairman expressed concern that the recent licensing applications had been circulated by email for Councillors' consideration and comment. This he felt was an undemocratic way of making a decision and was outside the remit of Standing Orders. Members appreciated that the timescale on these licences was such that they could not wait until the next meeting. Members discussed the problems being created by the new licensing act and the lack of information available from AVDC (the web site has not been updated for 3 weeks) and as the response time is 28 days the Council has a limited time to make a decision or canvass views from those residents closely affected. Members then went on to discuss in general decisions that have to be made but for which there is not the timescale to call a meeting; these have historically been made by the Chairman and ratified at the next appropriate meeting. Members **AGREED** that a schedule of meetings to be sent to both the County and District Councils identifying when the Town Council can make decisions.

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

**132/2005 TO DISCUSS THE PENDING COURT CASE WITH MR B PAGE**

Meeting Closed at 8.55 pm.

CHAIRMAN ..... DATE .....