

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON MONDAY 13th OCTOBER 2008 at 7.20 PM following a public session**

PRESENT

Councillors T. Bloomfield
Mrs. G. Collins
P. Collins (Chairman)
P. Hirons
R. Lehmann
H. Mordue (Mayor)
Ms R. Newell
M. Smith
P Stevens
R. Stuchbury
M. Try
W. Whyte
Town Clerk Mrs P. J. Heath

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors. H. Cadd and D. Isham

440/2008 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were received
Cllr. Whyte item 5 on the agenda in respect of budgets as Trustee of the Old Goal
Cllr. Smith item 5 on the agenda in respect of budgets as Trustee of the Old Goal
Cllr. Lehmann item 12 as elected Member of the Youth Centre Management
Committee

441/2008 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Members accepted the minutes of the last meeting held on 26th August 2008,
which were ratified by Full Council on 8th September 2008.

442/2008 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES AS PER ATTACHED LIST

437.1 Employment Law - Cllr. Newell reported on the elements of employment law
which had changed, these would be incorporated in the Town Council's policies
where appropriate.

437.2 Holiday policy - Cllr. Newell sought clarification from the Committee, it was
agreed that the Town Clerk and Cllr. Newell would produce a draft based on the
SLCC model to be presented to the Committee for agreement.

ACTION CLLR. NEWELL/THE TOWN CLERK

386 Newsletter – it was expected that the newsletter would be received from the
printers by the end of the month and distributed to pre-agreed locations.

ACTION CLLR. SMITH/CLLR. MORDUE/CLLR. TRY

363,384, 399 Web site and Emails –Cllr. Try confirmed that the domain name Buckingham-tc.gov.uk had finally been authorised by the relevant government department. A meeting of the Web site group would be held within the next few weeks to resolve the contents of the web site and transference of the web master.

ACTION CLLR. TRY

442.1 To receive list of responses for QPS re-Accreditation, action list, and draft training policy statement

A draft copy of the responses had been circulated with the agenda to all Members; this was discussed with clarification obtained on some of the answers and suggestions made as to possible background explanation papers to be included in the application. Members noted the importance of the annual report and amendments to future layouts were suggested.

Members agreed the responses and asked that the application for re-accreditation be made as soon as possible.

ACTION THE TOWN CLERK

443/2008/ BUDGET REVIEWS

443.1 To review Finance and Administration Committee budgets

A copy of the budget papers had been circulated with the agenda. The Town Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer answered Members' questions on the budgets.

It was noted that 4010 Stationery was destined to be over budget due to the increased costs in stationery and the higher amounts of photocopies now being required by Members.

4045 Members Allowance – a query was raised as to why this was not paid in instalments. The Town Clerk reminded Members that their resolution taken to pay the Members Allowance stated that it would be paid on 31st March and that any alteration would have to be by resolution.

Youth Centre – following a discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Newell and **AGREED** by 8 votes to 1 to split contingency budget 4500/132 between the headings of Contingency and Youth Centre, £15,000 and £5,000 respectively. In response to a question the Town Clerk explained that the reassignment within a Finance & Administration Committee budget codes was within the terms of reference but the spending of Contingency budget required Council approval.

443.2 To review all Committee budgets

Members discussed the overall budgets of the Council including those allocated under Planning, Environment & Property, and Events.

Concern was expressed that the street market income did not appear to be meeting the budget allocated income. Following a lengthy discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Lehmann, seconded by Cllr. Collins, and **AGREED** that this Committee expresses concern to the Events Committee on the potential shortfall of market rent which they believed will result in a deficit in the budget at the year end.

It was **AGREED** that the Street and Flea Market should be listed separately on the spreadsheets.

ACTION EVENTS CHAIRMAN

Members discussed the areas within Environment and Property where projects are taking longer to achieve than anticipated. A proposal to ask the Environment and Property committee to identify its key projects was defeated by 5 votes to 4 with the Chairman casting vote.

Code 202 Roundabouts - It was proposed by Cllr. Whyte, seconded by Cllr. Try and **AGREED** by 10 votes to 0 to ask the Environment and Property Committee to look at the contracts for the roundabout sponsorship.

ACTION ENVIRON & PROPERTY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Code 4115/301 River rinse – it was proposed by Cllr. Whyte, seconded by Cllr. Smith, and **AGREED** by 9 votes to 1 that the Events Committee should be asked to request AVDC to honour the verbal promises given at the Partnership Meeting.

ACTION EVENTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Code 701 Community Plan money – the Town Clerk explained again that these amounts were ring fenced against specific codes and were not in the general accounts of the Council, but kept in a separate bank account.

443.3 To discuss a draft F & A Committee precept bid

This item was deferred pending discussions later in the meeting which would have an effect on the proposed budget.

The Chairman stated that as the items on the agenda had taken so long it was his intention with Member's agreement to revise the order of the agenda taking, in his opinion, the highest priority item first.

*Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **AGREED** to move to agenda item 8*

444/2008 TO REVIEW THE OFFICE "OPEN TO PUBLIC" HOURS

The Chairman had requested this item and asked for Members opinions on closing the office to the public on 2 ½ days a week Monday, Wednesday afternoon and Friday. In response to a question the Town Clerk explained that the Chairman had not discussed the item with the office in advance of the meeting, but felt that closing would not be advantageous to the standing of the Council on the Monday as the AVDC/BCC area office was also closed on Mondays, but Friday would help as there was currently only one Member of staff on duty on that day.

Proposed by Cllr. P. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **AGREED** by 11 votes to 0 that the Town Council Office would be closed to the public on Mondays and Friday starting on 17th October; This would be reviewed at the next Committee Meeting.

*Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **AGREED** to move to agenda item 7*

445/2008 TO DISCUSS THE TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT OF ACCOUNTS ADMINISTRATOR AND AGREE TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

Members discussed the appointment of a temporary accounts administrator, Mrs J. Baughan, who had agreed to assist the office with the accounts; Mrs Baughan had undertaken temporary contracts for the Council in the past and was familiar with the accounts systems.

Proposed by Cllr. P. Collins, seconded by Cllr. G. Collins, and **AGREED** by 6 votes to 5 that the Council offers Mrs Baughan a 6 months temporary contract for 10 hours per week at spine code 10.

*Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **AGREED** to move to agenda item 13*

446/2008 TO RECEIVE REQUEST FROM 'THE FILM PLACE' FOR 3 YEARS FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

Members noted the comments which had been made in the public session. Members felt that the grant process of the Council was becoming distorted with applications being received during the year and with the requests for more than 1 years funding.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. G. Collins, and **RECOMMENDED** by 11 votes to 0 that a grant allocation to the Buckingham Centre for the Arts be considered at precept at an amount of £1000 for the 3 financial years of 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, the grant to be designated for the film place project only.

It was **AGREED** that a grants format policy be agreed at the next Committee Meeting; a draft to be drawn up by the Town Clerk

ACTION THE TOWN CLERK

*Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **AGREED** to move to agenda item 14*

447/2008 TO RECEIVE FOR AGREEMENT DATES FOR 2009 MEETINGS

Proposed by Cllr. Lehmann, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **AGREED** that the Council should adopt the diary dates, as circulated with the agenda to all Members, for 2009 meetings and events.

*Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **AGREED** to move to agenda item 9*

**448/2008 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS ON STAFF LEVEL
REVIEWS – THE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr. Smith reported on the staffing levels of authorities of a similar size and responsibilities as Buckingham stating that the Council was understaffed for the level of work required by the Council from its staff.

There was an extensive discussion on the level of staffing, the facilities required, the inability of the office to service all the Committee requirements particularly with the Deputy Town Clerk leaving, and the time needed to train the incoming applicant.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Mrs G Collins, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Council increases its staff by an additional full time position of Administration Officer and to increase the hours of the part time grounds man to that of a full time position.

An amendment was proposed by Cllr. Whyte, seconded by Cllr. Lehmann, that the words "Administration Officer" be changed to "Green Spaces and/or Management Officer".

This was **AGREED** by 11 votes to 0 and as the substantive motion by 11 votes to 0

Proposed by Cllr. Try, seconded by Cllr. Whyte, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Green Spaces and/or Management Officer will not be employed until the Town Council has adequate office facilities for its staff.

This was **AGREED** by 6 votes to 5 and as the substantive motion by 11 votes to 0

**449/2008 {MIN 435} TO RECEIVE FINANCE DETAILS FROM BUCKINGHAM YOUTH
CENTRE**

It was agreed that this would be placed on the Town Council agenda on 27th October.

The following agenda items would be deferred to the next Finance and Administration meeting.

/ To review staff hand book, example issued by BALC, and agree way forward.

/ To discuss and agree a policy in line with Bucks County Council Pension Scheme request – policies as per attached paperwork

Plus the item to be heard under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Review of the Town Clerk's salary spine point as per terms & conditions"- The Chairman

450/2008 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

Flood Fair

Members were reminded that the flood fair organised by Buckingham Town Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council and the Environment Agency will take place on 30th October in the Community Centre.

BRAG Meeting in Gt Missenden

The Chairman informed Members of a meeting of Buckinghamshire Rural Affairs Group in Gt Missenden, as this would be before a meeting of the Council that could authorise travel allowance payment, Members agreed to support the attendance of Members in principal.

Meeting closed at 10 pm.

CHAIRMAN DATE