

Minutes of a meeting of the **Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September** in Room MB1 in the Masons Building, University of Buckingham, Hunter Street, Buckingham.

**Present:** Cllr. R. Lehmann – Chairman  
Cllr. G. Collins  
Cllr. P. Collins  
Cllr. Mrs. P. Desorgher  
Cllr. P. Hirons  
Cllr. D. Isham  
Cllr. Ms. R. Newell  
Cllr. M. Smith  
Cllr. P. Stevens  
Cllr. R. Stuchbury

**Also present:** Anne Wilson – Town Clerk

#### **447/09 Apologies for Absence**

**RESOLVED** to receive apologies from Councillor H. Cadd, Councillor H. Mordue, Councillor M. Try and Councillor W Whyte.

#### **448/09 Declarations of Interest**

**RESOLVED** that there were no declarations of any personal or prejudicial interest under consideration on this agenda.

#### **449/09 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee **FAP/03/09**

Cllr. Stuchbury expressed concern that the item regarding a review of the Accounts Assistant post had not taken place. The Town Clerk confirmed that she had explained to the member of staff the reasons for the decision at the last meeting and had arranged to meet with her on the 28th September.

#### **450/09 Action Report**

**RESOLVED** to receive the report and note the update information.

Further information on the following items was mentioned:

*481/312/09* The Town Clerk confirmed that another letter had been received from BCC that day which confirmed that further advice was being sought.

*454* Cllr. Ms Newell had circulated a draft handbook for members which would be an item on the next agenda.

437.4 The Town Clerk would bring a report on the buying in of services to the next meeting.

437.6 Cllr. Ms Newell confirmed that she was meeting with the Town Clerk the following week to look at the Personnel policies.

316/09 Lloyds Charge card – The Town Clerk was seeking advice on the use of a charge card by the Council.

321/09 The Clerk was awaiting costs for a local company to carry out the boiler service at Cemetery Lodge.

#### **451/09 Committee System and the Decision Making Process**

**RESOLVED** that Members noted that the Town Clerk had been asked to place this item on the agenda following the issue over membership of committees at the Annual meeting. Members agreed that this had been covered sufficiently at previous meetings and there was no need for further discussion.

#### **452/09 Accounts and Budgets**

**RESOLVED** that Members received and considered the attached Income and Expenditure reports.

The Clerk confirmed that she would be looking at the budgets codes and cost centres on the Income and Expenditure report before the next meeting and making it more committee friendly.

Cllr. P. Collins asked why there was £90,000 in earmarked reserves as a Capital Reserve when he was under the impression that this money would drop back into the general reserves each year. The Town Clerk explained that Earmarked Reserves was the new way of ring fencing money that was budgeted for something specific and not spent though out the year in which it was budgeted. Cllr. Hirons expressed concern about the money in Earmarked Reserves not being spent but the Town Clerk confirmed that the War Memorial, Electric Feeder, barriers for Events and repair of footpaths had projects underway which meant money would be spent within the financial year. Members asked what the £2650 spent was for in circular walk and the Town Clerk agreed to find out and report back to members.

Cllr. Smith expressed concern that the Buckingham Bag money had not been earmarked at the end of the 2008/2009 financial year. The Town Clerk said that this was easily rectifiable. This was now going to be known as Green Buckingham and the heading would reflect this.

Cllr. Stuchbury asked why an advert had been placed in the local paper advertising the End of Year Accounts inspection period without it coming to Council first. The Town Clerk responded by saying that we are statutorily required to advertise that our End of Year Accounts in the local press. Some members could not recall this happening in previous years but other members could.

#### **453/09 Invoices passed for payment**

**RESOLVED** that Members received the schedule of invoices paid.

Members asked that more information be supplied about the goods purchased from each company in the list of invoices. The Town Clerk agreed that she would look into this.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Chairman and the Town Clerk would review the Financial Regulations and prepare a report for the next meeting. Cllr. Smith said he and Cllr. P. Collins had reviewed them and he was not sure that the most up to date version had been agreed and re-issued to members. Members thought that there may be two editions of the Financial Regulations in circulation. The Town Clerk would look into this.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Council agreed to re-imburse the Town Clerk for the leaflet rack that she had purchased for the office. There was a debate about the permissions needed about such a purchase which could not be resolved at the meeting as Members were not sure of the financial limits above which the Town Clerk needed to bring such request to obtain the permission of members.

#### **454/09 Pay Claim 2009/2010**

**RESOLVED that** Members are asked to note the national pay claim agreed from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 for Town Council staff.

##### *Pay*

An increase of 1.25% on SCPs 4 -10 inclusive

An increase of 1.00% on SCPs 11 - 49 inclusive

##### *Annual leave*

The minimum annual leave would increase from 20 to 21 days for employees with less than 5 years service

#### **455/09 Institute of Local Council Management**

**RESOLVED** that Members did not see the professional value and the value to the residents of Buckingham of membership of the Institute of Local Council Managers (ILCM) for the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk expressed concern about this as she was a founder member and it was through the ILCM that your professional development was measured. She had been asked to place this item on the agenda by Cllr. Hirons and Cllr. Lehmann to enable the Deputy Town Clerk to join.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk would bring back a report on the benefits of the ILCM to the Town and the Town Council to the next meeting.

#### **456/09 Society of Local Council Clerks**

Proposed by Cllr. Isham and seconded by Cllr. Lehmann that the Town Council pay the membership subscription of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), the professional body for Clerks, for the Town Clerk. No members were in favour of this proposal.

Cllr. Newell said BALC recommended that Councils did not pay their Clerks subscriptions to the SLCC. The Town Clerk said that she thought this was because BALC and the SLCC had fallen out.

Cllr. Hirons stated that as the Council belonged to BALC and they could get all the information needed from them then we did not need to have membership of the SLCC. The Town Clerk explained that BALC was a council's organisation and that the Society was an officer organisation.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that they had paid the subscription of the Deputy Town Clerk. Cllr. Smith said that he did think that the Council should treat both members of staff equally.

**RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk would bring a report to the next meeting of the Committee outlining the benefits of the Society of Local Council Clerks to the Council.

Cllr Mrs Stevens asked that any re-imbursement in relation to membership of both the ILCM and the SLCC be backdated as appropriate. **RESOLVED** that members agreed to this.

#### **457/09 A Foundation Degree in Community Engagement and Governance**

**RESOLVED** that the Town Council support the Deputy Town Clerk, Christopher Wayman in taking the Foundation Degree at the University of Gloucester.

This would include:

- Paying his fees for the course - £3320 per level (can be paid spread over more than one year). *Cost centre 132/4500 Contingency*
- Paying his accommodation and travel for the residential schools –up to three per annum
- Allowing two days per unit of home study
- Offering up to £100 per level for books and stationery subject to the provision of receipts
- Putting into place a percentage payback clause should he move from Buckingham Town Council within so many years of completion of the Degree or part of it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that Cllr. Mrs Newell would look at a suitable pay back clause and bring a paper to the next meeting of this Committee for consideration.

#### **458/09 Christmas Closure**

Following lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council offices would close at 12 noon on the 24th December and re-open open on Tuesday 29th December. The offices should be manned between the hours of 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Tuesday 29th, Wednesday 30th and Thursday 31st December re-opening to the public at 10 a.m. on the 4th January 2010. The Town Clerk would negotiate similar hours with the maintenance staff for the 29th, 30th and 31st December.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that each three hours period worked in the office would constitute half a day. Holiday should be taken for remainder of each day and any days when staff do not work except the afternoon of the 24th December which staff would be given off by the Town Council.

#### **459/09 Town Clerk's Office**

**RESOLVED** that Members noted that the Town Clerk had been asked to bring a report to this committee giving reasons why she would like to re-locate back to the Town Clerks office and agreed that the decision should be made by her.

#### **460/09 2010 Meeting Dates**

Due to some anomalies in the list being considered it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should revisit the list of dates for 2010 and bring an amended version to the next meeting.

#### **461/09 Baby Café**

**RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk informed Members that the Town Council has now received an acknowledgement from Councillor Pushman with regard to the Baby Café in Buckingham and he has informed us that he will look into the issues raised however as it isn't a lease and hiring arrangement the reply will not be immediate. This was also discussed under minute no.: **450/09**

**462/09 Chairman's Announcements:** There were none.

**463/09 Date of Next Meeting:** Monday 9th November 2009

#### **464/09 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION**

#### **465/09 Exclusion of Public and Press**

**RESOLVED** In terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

**COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION**

**BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**466/09 Confidential Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to receive the confidential minutes of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee **FAP/03/09**