

Minutes of a meeting of the **Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 26th July 2010** in Room MB1 in the Masons Building, University of Buckingham, Hunter Street, Buckingham at 7.30pm.

**Present:** Cllr. T. Bloomfield  
Cllr. H. Cadd  
Cllr. Mrs. G. Collins Chairman  
Cllr. P. Collins  
Cllr. P. Hirons  
Cllr. D. Isham  
Cllr. H. Mordue  
Cllr. M. Smith Mayor  
Cllr. R. Stuchbury  
Cllr. M. Try

**Also present:** Mrs. A Simonds Deputy Town Clerk

**268/10 Apologies for Absence**

**RESOLVED** to receive apologies from Councillors Newell and Mrs. Stevens.

**269/10 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**270/10 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010 and ratified by Full Council on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010. **FAP/01/10**

**271/10 Personnel Sub Committee Minutes**

Cllr. Hirons reported that the Personnel Sub Committee had discussed two issues:  
1. It had reviewed a draft appraisal system prepared by the Town Clerk. Members felt that a simpler version would be more appropriate and would instruct the Town Clerk to amend the draft appraisal system to suit.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

2. It had discussed the staffing levels of the Town Council and specifically the two suggested methods to clarify this.

- A diary system had been discussed but it had been decided that this would be time-consuming and circumstances during the working day would result in inaccurate recording of events as they would be filled in retrospectively and a distortion of data would occur.

- An interview system had been suggested and discussed. The Sub Committee felt that this would be a better system to use as interviews could be held as a one off event and staff could bring up issues that they felt relevant to their job. Although Members expressed reservations that this may be difficult, as staff may forget some tasks they would like to bring up in discussion, it was suggested that a log could be used by staff to prompt the information from them for the purpose of the interview.  
Members heard that interviews would be conducted by Cllr. Hiron; Members were invited to express any interest they had in taking part.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **AGREED** unanimously that a series of interviews would be held with staff to verify tasks carried out and decide whether the level of staff is appropriate for the workload.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**272/10 Action Report**

139/10 and 143/10.

Members heard that although a meeting had been sought by the Town Clerk to discuss these issues, attempts had been unsuccessful. Further attempts would be made.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

132/10

The Mace had still not been valued, but Members heard that the Mace had been over-insured to the value of £2,000,000, which would increase by 2% each year. Member thought this to be excessive and the maximum cost of replacement would be £85,000. Members suggested that a more realistic figure would be £20,000 to £40,000; this would be the estimated cost of a replacement.

Members requested that the Town Clerk be approached on his return from leave for information on the progress of obtaining a valuation.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

**273/10 Accounts and Budgets**

Members restricted questions on Accounts and Budgets in the absence of the Town Clerk.

Several queries were raised:

901/9027 Green Buckingham. Members queried why this amount was in Earmarked reserves.

Members expressed concerns as to the amount of Monies that were currently in Earmarked Reserves and discussed the fact that the monies should be moved back into General Reserves if they are not spent soon. Members also felt that not enough money is being spent currently and at least 33% should have been spent at this point in the year. Services need to be looked at and provided to the town. Councillors heard that monies from 901/9012, 9013, 9014 would be spent soon.

**274/10 Invoices passed for payment, Income and details of Councillor's Expenses**

Members noted the information provided. Members raised concerns that the Analysis details could be more consistently descriptive in content.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

**275/10 Co-opted Members of the Public**

Members discussed their understanding of the powers of Co-opted members on Committees.

Councillors were concerned the Co-opted members of committees were confused about the powers they had when taking part in a committee meeting. Members heard that although Standing Orders contain details regarding the issue, a book held at the Town Council Offices, Local Council Administration ("Charles Arnold Baker"), held all the information on guidance for co-opted members on committees and this would be the place to start.

Members felt that a clear document outlining the legal position of the Council regarding the matter be issued to all Town Council Members and Co-opted Members, electronically if possible. The document should contain details from both the book and BALC, with careful attention to the matter of copyright.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

**276/10 Internet, telephone and mobile phones**

**Recommendations**

That the Committee confirms the decision to change the internet provider and the telephone package.

That the Committee agrees to purchase the mobile phone package for 2 handsets for use by the Outside Maintenance staff and the Green Spaces Manager at a cost of £36.25 per month with the Samsung Extreme handset.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. P. Collins, and **AGREED** that the Town Clerk's recommendation as per report **TC/19/10** to confirm the decision to change internet provider to BT be carried out.

Councillors discussed the possibility of a reimbursement scheme for staff using their personal mobile phones for work. This option had problems such as the possible damage of handsets during the working day and the issue of liability in such events. Members heard that it would be prudent to have a further two handsets, providing BT would have a package to suit, so that the maintenance staff could have one each and the Deputy Town Clerk could have one when she was collecting market rent or at events. This would be at the discretion of the Town Clerk to look at the deals that are available from BT.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that an amendment to the recommendation be made to obtain two further handsets, to a total of 4 handsets. This then became the Recommendation.

Proposed by Cllr. P. Collins seconded by Cllr. Hirons and **AGREED** that the Council obtain 4 handsets for staff use.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

**277/10 Internal Audit Report**

To receive the report from the internal auditor for 2009/10 and agree any action. The contents of the report were noted.

**278/10 Meeting Dates**

Members expressed concern that AVDC were setting the precept deadline on December purely for their own convenience and requested that the legalities of this should be checked.

Members questioned the validity of some of the dates for the rescheduled meetings as the 3<sup>rd</sup> December would be a Friday.

Members heard that AVDC had been approached by the Town Clerk and had agreed that it could be extended but the Town Clerk was still waiting to hear how far.

The date of the precept meeting was set at 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011 by the Town Clerk.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

**279/10 Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

**280/10 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

**Meeting closed at 20.51**

Signed.....

Date.....

**Chairman**