

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY 19th May 2008**

PRESENT

Councillors

T. Bloomfield
Mrs G. Collins
P. Collins (Chairman)
D. Isham
P. Hirons
H. Mordue
R. Newell
M. Smith
Mrs. P. Stevens
R. Stuchbury
W. Whyte
M. Try

Town Clerk Mrs P. J. Heath

388/2008 TO ELECT CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** that Cllr. P. Collins be elected as Chairman of Finance and Administration Committee.

389/2008 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Collins, and **AGREED** that Cllr. M. Smith be elected as Vice Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee.

390/2008 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors H. Cadd, A. Mahi, and R. Lehmann.

391/2008 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda.

392/2008 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Members accepted the minutes of the last meeting held on 31st March 2008, which were ratified by Full Council on 14th April 2008, including the amendment notified at Full Council under minute no. 3096.3.

393/2008 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES AS PER ATTACHED LIST

Members noted the action reports and updates sent with the agenda. The following points were raised:

379.3 The Town Clerk confirmed that Mr Gadd had not turned up for the meeting. A revised meeting would be scheduled.

352 It was agreed that the log would be completed by the end of June.

394/2008 TO DISCUSS THE FORMAT AND CONTENT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER DUE JUNE 2008

Members discussed at length the contents for the June 2008 newsletter and the format. It was agreed that the newsletter could be an A4 sheet double sided including an article and questionnaire on the parking issue in Buckingham and also bite size news on "what the Council has done for you".

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Smith, and **AGREED** that an editorial board would compile and produce the newsletter.

ACTION CLLR. MORDUE, CLLR. SMITH, CLLR. TRY

Members discussed the cost and funding of the newsletter and noted the comments made by the Town Clerk in the action report relating to minute no. 361.1; no response was made to the items raised.

Members discussed the formation of a Communications Strategy Group; it was agreed to place this on the agenda for the Finance and Administration Meeting on 26th August 2008

ACTION COMMITTEE CLERK

395/2008 BUDGET REVIEWS

395.1 To review Finance and Administration Committee budgets

The Town Clerk explained that the budget sheets in the folders were for the financial year, there were minor differences to the sheets emailed out earlier in the week. The Chairman stated he did not agree with the Town Clerk's figures, but confirmed he had not spoken to the Clerk prior to the meeting to discuss this. It was **AGREED** that the Chairman would present a report to the Council meeting on 2nd June.

ACTION CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

395.2 To review all Committee budgets

Deferred pending above statement.

395.3 To discuss the budget for Councillors' travel in light of increased training being undertaken by Councillors outside the parish boundary

Members were informed that the budgeted amount for Councillor Travel in 2008/2009 would be exceeded within the next month. The increased travel is due to Councillors attending training sessions and meetings outside of the Parish boundary.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **RECOMMENDED** by 10 votes to 0 that the Council transfers £1000 from the contingency budget (4500/132) to Councillors Travel 94028/101).

Cllr. H Mordue left the meeting.

396/2008 TO RECEIVE THE DRAFT END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS 2007 - 2008

The Town Clerk explained to Members that the draft accounts were being presented to them for information and discussion; once the figures were finalised they will be presented to the Finance and Administration Committee meeting on 7th July for ratification by Council on 21st July; this is to comply with audit requirement of the accounts being with the external auditor by 31st July. Members were asked to discuss with the Clerk by the end of June any questions they had concerning the accounts in order that a final set of accounts is presented on the 7th. Members noted a couple of typing errors. Members requested that the notes to the accounts showed the Councillor's Allowance as subject to Tax and National Insurance.

ACTION THE TOWN CLERK

**397/2008 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON REVIEW OF FINANCE STANDING ORDERS –
CLLR. SMITH/CLLR. COLLINS**

This item was deferred to enable Cllr. Collins to discuss the regulations with the Town Clerk and Cllr. Smith.

ACTION THE CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

**398/2008 TO DISCUSS AND REVIEW THE TOWN COUNCIL'S EMAIL ADDRESSES
AND THE SERVER PROVISION.**

AND

399/2008 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM THE WEB SITE WORKING GROUP

It was **AGREED** by the Members to take these two agenda items together. Cllr. Try explained to Members the processes for the change-over of the email addresses and how this becomes linked to and dependant on the web server and host. Members discussed the issues raised; it was decided that Cllr. Try would obtain the Buckingham.gov.uk web address and arrange the necessary change-over. Further discussions would be held on the procurement of a web server and host; this was deferred to the next meeting. Members discussed the need for IT support and advice for the office.

ACTION CLLR. TRY

**400/2008 TO DISCUSS THE INFORMATION INCLUDED ON THE AVDC RATES
INFORMATION BOOKLET AND AGREE ANY CHANGES TO THE
INFORMATION AND FORMAT SUPPLIED.**

Members discussed the amount of information and layout in the AVDC rates leaflet that relates to Buckingham. The Town Clerk informed Members that AVDC had only allowed Buckingham Town Council 2 lines in their leaflet and had dictated the headings for those lines. It was agreed to establish with AVDC if a different format and more space could be made available to Buckingham, similar to that given to Aylesbury Town Council.

ACTION THE TOWN CLERK

401/2008 TO DISCUSS TRAINING SCHEDULES FOR STAFF MEMBERS

The Town Clerk presented a training programme for the Deputy Town Clerk and the Full Time Groundsman to the Council. following a discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Collins, that the Council pays for the 3 horticultural courses [City & Guilds NPTC Level 2 Competence in safe use of Hedge Trimmers, 1 day course, Cost £400 guide price; NPTC Cert Maintenance and Operation Chainsaw, 2 day course, £225 plus assessment (£100); FEPA spraying course PA1 foundation & PA6 hand held, 1 day course, PA1 £90, PA6 £90, plus assessment fee £100]

An amendment was proposed by Cllr. Whyte, seconded by Cllr. Bloomfield, that the Council agrees the 3 courses but subject to best value being achieved for safe use of hedge trimmers. The amendment was carried by 6 votes to 3 and as the substantive as 9 votes to 1.

Members discussed the New Roads and Street Works certificate needed by the Groundsman to work on the public highway; this is a 5 day course. The work on the highways was part of the devolved services and would enable the Groundsman to carry out minor repairs. Members discussed the devolved services regime and whether it was cost-effective. It was agreed to defer decision on this course until the next Finance and Administration Meeting when Members would have had the opportunity of reading the contract and understanding the background to Devolved Services.

ACTION THE TOWN CLERK

The Members discussed the training course for the Deputy Clerk – Working with Your Council - which is the base preparation course for CiLCA (Certificate of Local Council Administration); the obtaining of the CiLCA qualification had formed part of the Conditions of Employment for the Deputy Clerk. As there was no policy in respect of study leave for staff undertaking distance learning, the Town Clerk asked that a policy decision be made to enable the Office to know how much and when study leave would be granted. In response to a question it was explained that CPD (continuous performance development) was part of the Institute of Local Council Management's requirements. The Town Clerk is a Member, and the Deputy Clerk was undertaking CPD on a voluntary basis.

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **AGREED** that the Council would purchase the course Working with Your Council for the Deputy Town Clerk. Members would discuss the Study Leave policy at the next Finance and Administration meeting.

The Chairman would meet with the Town Clerk to carry out an annual appraisal and update the CPD programme.

ACTION THE TOWN CLERK & THE CHAIRMAN

402/2008 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Highways Report

Cllr. Whyte raised a highways report he had been given at a recent meeting when the comment had been made that Buckingham Town Council did not return any. The Town Clerk explained that under devolved services Buckingham ran under a different system so did not use the forms.

Meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN DATE

19th May 2008.doc

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17/12/2008

RATIFIED 2ND JUNE 2008