

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON MONDAY 19th JANUARY 2009 AT MB1 MASONS BUILDING, HUNTER STREET
AT 7pm**

PRESENT Councillor T. Bloomfield
P. Collins (Chairman)
H. Cadd
P. Hirons
H. Mordue
R. Newell
R. Lehmann
M. Smith (Vice Chairman)
Mrs. P. Stevens
R. Stuchbury
W. Whyte

Deputy Town Clerk Mr. C. Wayman
Clerical Assistant Mrs. McElligott

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Mrs. Collins, Isham and Try.

476/2009 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

It was agreed that Members would declare any interest on the grant applications at that point of the meeting. There were no other declarations of interest.

477/2009 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Members accepted the minutes of the last meeting held on 1st December 2008, which were ratified at the Council meeting held on 15th December 2008.

478/2009 TO RECEIVE ACTION REPORTS & UPDATES AS PER ATTACHED LIST

Members noted the action list which had been circulated with the agenda.

Cllr. Newell arrived and then Cllr. Lehmann arrived during the next item.

**479/2009 TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF TIME IN LIEU OUTSTANDING AND
OVERTIME CLAIMS**

Copies of staff timesheets had been circulated with the agenda.
Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Smith, and **AGREED** to pay the Deputy Town Clerk the extra hours worked up to the end of December as overtime.

480/2009 BUDGET REVIEWS

480.1 To review Finance and Administration Committee budgets

Cllr. Smith informed Members that he had noticed some omissions from the Buckingham Bag budget, which the Accounts Assistant was in the process of pulling together; however, it would still be within budget.

480.2 To review all Committee budgets

Cllr. Lehmann raised concerns over the low income from the markets. He was informed that the Market Toby had only supplied banking details up to September and therefore the income shown was only for the half-year. Projection of the total showed that the end of year total would be on track.

481/2009 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL OF THE 2009/2010 GRANT ALLOCATIONS

Members considered each application on its own merit and agreed the following amounts to be recommended to the Precept Meeting for the grant allocation 2009/2010.

Organisation	Amount	Declaration of Interest/Notes
Aylesbury & Buckingham Alzheimer's Society	£500	
Aylesbury Vale Dial-a-Ride	£500	
Bourton Road Allotment Association	£0	Members felt that because the Association had such large reserves and large membership that a grant would not be appropriate
Buck/Winslow Community Care Forum	£500	
Buck/Winslow Community Care Forum - Youth	£250	
Buckingham & District Horticultural Soc.	£0	Cllr. Bloomfield declared a prejudicial interest and left the room during the discussion; Cllr. Newell declared a personal interest as a member. Members felt that in the current economic climate that the generous nature of the prizes should be cut back.
Buckingham Age Concern	£0	Members felt that due to the large reserves of the organisation a grant would be inappropriate.
Buckingham Athletic FC	£1,500	
Buckingham Baby Café	£200	It was also AGREED to write to Bucks. County Council to ask them to waive the rent for the Baby Café. ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK
Buckingham Canal Society	£100	

Buckingham Centre for the Arts (The Film Place)	£1,000	<p>Cllr. Hirons declared a personal interest as a volunteer.</p> <p>Members were concerned about the possible loss of funding to the Film Place and wished to clarify AVDC's funding position.</p> <p>ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK</p> <p>It was AGREED to give a grant of £1,000 if AVDC were intending to cut the funding. If AVDC funding was to be maintained the grant would be £0 as the Council already contributes from its Major Projects Budget</p>
Buckingham Festival of Music & Drama	£300	
Buckingham Holiday Club	£500	
3 rd Buckingham Scouts	£500	
Buckingham Society	£0	<p>Cllr. Whyte declared a prejudicial interest, and left the room during the discussion; Cllrs. Collins, Mordue, Newell and Smith declared personal interests as members.</p> <p>Members felt that due to the large reserves of the organisation a grant would be inappropriate.</p>
Buckingham Summer Festival	£1,000	
Buckingham Tea Dance	£150	
Buckingham Twinning Association	£0	<p>Cllr. Mordue declared a prejudicial interest, and left the room during the discussion; Cllrs. Collins, Hirons and Newell declared personal interests as members.</p> <p>Members felt that they could not support a grant to fund the inclusion of the Mouvaux Giants in the Christmas Parade.</p>
Buckingham West End Bowls Club	£250	
C A B	£5,000	<p>Cllrs. Cadd and Lehmann declared a prejudicial interest, and left the room during the discussion; Cllr. Mordue also declared a prejudicial interest.</p> <p>Members felt that due to the current economic situation the CAB would receive more enquiries this year and would need a one-off increase in grant. It was also AGREED to enquire if AVDC would be maintaining its funding level this year.</p> <p>ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK</p>
Friends of the Old Gaol	£300	<p>Cllrs. Smith and Whyte declared a personal interest as Trustees of the Heritage Trust.</p>

Buckingham Fair Trade	£100	Cllr. Newell declared a prejudicial interest and left the room during the discussion
Friends of Maids Moreton Pre school	£100	
Friends of Grenville School	£250	
Grenville Combined School	£0	Members felt that employing a professional artist for the mural project was inappropriate in the current economic circumstances
Maids Moreton Friend-at-Hand Scheme	£50	
North Bucks Care for Carers	£250	
Project Street Life	£1,000	
Relate	£250	
St Peter & St Paul's	£1,000	Cllrs. Collins & Hirons declared prejudicial interests and left the room during the discussion; the Mayor took over the Chair for this item
The Old Gaolers	£200	
Vitalise	£0	In Members' view the national organisation seemed well-funded and thus that a grant was inappropriate.
Total	£15,750	

Cllr. Stuchbury enquired if Stowe Sub Aqua had made a Grant Application as the paperwork suggested, as there was no accompanying application.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

[Deputy Town Clerk's note, Stowe Sub Aqua had not made a grant application and there had been an error on the listing of grants received in previous years]

482/2009 TO DISCUSS THE DRAFT FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION PRECEPT BID

The Mayor announced that the Council had appointed a new Clerk and that due to the new Clerk's qualifications more money would need to be budgeted for the Clerk's salary.

It was **AGREED** to change the following precept amounts:

- 4001 Town Clerk Increase by £2500
- 4005 ERS National INS Increase by £250
- 4006 ERS Pension Increase by £500
- 4072 NAGS would be changed from £0 to £100

Members discussed the possibility of delaying employing the Green and Open Spaces Manager until September 2009.

It was **AGREED** by 8 votes to 3 to reduce the amount for the Green and Open Spaces Manager to half and make appropriate adjustment to 4005 ERS National INS and 4006 ERS Pension.

It was **AGREED** to change the following precept amounts:

4028 Councillors' Mileage from £1,500 to £750

4025 Legal Fees from £2500 to £0

4020 Grants to enter in £15,750

To create a heading under Section 137 Friend of/Freedom Awards with £150

A discussion took place over funding for the extension. The Deputy Clerk had looked into the possibility of a Public Works Loans Board loan, which would cost approximately £52,000 per year; however, this took no account of any other possible sources of funding. Members discussed the possibility of selling Cemetery Lodge.

It was **AGREED** to create a new heading under Major Projects for the PWLB with £40,000 budget.

Members discussed the following and agreed no changes:

4032 Rates Leaflet Annual Report

4045 Councillors Allowance

Cllr. Stuchbury remarked that in previous years the Committee had looked at all precept requests before the precept meeting. The Chairman apologised for missing this off the agenda.

483/2009 TO RECEIVE A WRITTEN REPORT ON THE WEBSITE AND OFFICE MOVE

Cllr. Try had provided a written report, which was circulated with the agenda.

Members wished to express their thanks to Cllr. Try for the hard work he had put in during the office change over. At the meeting correspondence from the company who previously supplied the Town Council website asking if we wished to continue with advertisements on the site and their hosting was discussed.

Proposed by Cllr Whyte, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **AGREED** to not renew the advertising or the hosting.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

484/2009 TO RECEIVE THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

Members discussed the current auditing process in light of the comments made by the external auditor.

Proposed by Cllr. Hirons, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** to accept the External Auditors Report.

It was **AGREED** to look at the points raised on the next agenda.

It was **AGREED** for the Deputy Town Clerk to post the audit notice for the statutory period.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

485/2009 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE WHETHER TO MAKE A REGULAR BOOKING OF A ROOM AT VERNEY CLOSE TO HOLD MEETINGS

Members discussed possible meeting rooms in the town; however, they felt that a regular slot would not be flexible enough. It was **AGREED** for the Clerk to seek a room to meet in as and when needed.

486/2009 TO RECEIVE NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY GROUP MEETING HELD 07.01.09

The notes of the meeting were circulated with the agenda; Members thanked the group for their recommendations. Members discussed in great detail the current format of the newsletters, possible means of distribution and other ways of making sure the information is received by the public.

Proposed by Cllr Hiron, seconded by Cllr. Smith, and **REJECTED** by 4 votes to 6 to increase the budget for the Rates Leaflet Annual Report from £2,000 to £10,000. Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr Mordue, and **AGREED** by 9 votes to 0 to increase the budget for the Rates Leaflet Annual Report from £2,000 to £8,000. Members **AGREED** to change the budget heading from Rates Leaflet Annual Report to Publicity.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Members **AGREED** that an editorial board of the five Chairmen be set up for drafting the newsletters and annual report.

487/2009 TO RECEIVE DRAFT 2009 ANNUAL REPORT AND AGREE TIMESCALE FOR THE REPORT AND THE RATES LEAFLET FOR PUBLISHING AND DISTRIBUTION

Members discussed in detail the layout of the annual report.

It was **AGREED** to arrange for the Royal Mail to deliver the annual report to all the houses in the town in April and to work the deadlines for information backwards from that date.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK AND EDITORIAL GROUP

Proposed by Cllr. Lehmann, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **REJECTED** by 4 votes to 5 to include the percentage increase in precept.

Members **AGREED** that a pie-chart representation of the split of spending would be included and also that the final draft of the Annual Report should be agreed by Full Council.

488/2009 TO DISCUSS THE ADMINISTRATION OF WAGES FOR THE BUCKINGHAM & GAWCOTT CHARITABLE TRUST IN RESPECT OF THEIR NEW CLERK, A TOWN COUNCIL EMPLOYEE

Members discussed the letter received from the Buckingham & Gawcott Charitable Trust which had been circulated with the agenda.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Cadd, and **AGREED** by 8 votes to 3 that, following previous practice, a donation be made to the Town Council for the services of the member of staff appointed to be Clerk to the Trust.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

489/2009 TO REVIEW THE OPENING HOURS OF THE OFFICE

Members **AGREED** that the office could close to the public for one hour per day for lunch if needed.

Cllr. Mordue left the meeting

Members agreed to take agenda items 18 and 17 next.

490/2009 TO RECEIVE DETAILS AND AGREE IF THE DEPUTY TOWN CLERK SHOULD ATTEND THE 2009 PRACTITIONERS' CONFERENCE ON FRIDAY 27TH AND SATURDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2009

Members **AGREED** to pay the cost and expenses for the Deputy Town Clerk to attend the Practitioners' Conference.

491/2009 TO RECEIVE A RESPONSE FROM BALC REGARDING THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

The response from BALC had been circulated with the agenda. Members noted the response and **AGREED** to contact BALC with the Council's correct contact details.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

492/2009 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE WHETHER THE COUNCIL SHOULD RECRUIT PRISONERS FROM HMP SPRING HILL

Cllr. Smith gave a brief background to this item, having discussed in the Environment and Property Committee the use of prisoners to carry out works to the cemetery. Cllr. Smith also raised possible problems including supervision of the work party; if the Town Council maintenance staff were required to do this, they could not also carry out their own assignments.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Cadd and **RECOMMENDED** that subject to satisfactory supervision assurances the Council would recruit inmates from HMP Springhill Prison to work in the cemetery.

493/2009 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items for information.

Meeting closed at 9.55pm.

CHAIRMAN DATE