

MINUTES OF THE POLICY, RESOURCES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD at 7.00 PM ON MONDAY 17th OCTOBER 2011 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EAST STREET, WAREHAM, DORSET BH20 4NS.

Present: Councillors K Critchley (Chairman), Mrs S Elmes, K Green (from 7.20 pm), Mrs L Kenyon, M Russell, Mrs J Spooner, Mrs C Turner, Mrs N Wiggins

Also present: Councillor Mrs D Cleaton (Mayor – non-voting)

Officers Present: Mr R M Curtis, Town Clerk
Mr R Jones, Finance Administrator/Office Manager

39. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr M Howlett and Mr G Talbot of Wareham Chamber of Trade referred to the Council's intention to bring in a scheme for the control of A-frame advertising boards and other potential obstructions to members of the public in the town centre. Mr Howlett requested a meeting with a representative of the Town Council so that full consultation could be achieved before any scheme was brought in. The Chairman commented that regulation was needed so that there was a uniform policy for all business premises in Wareham.

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor D Budd gave apologies due to a commitment to attend a County Council Day Care Services meeting. Councillor K Green gave apologies for absence at the start of the meeting due to his wife's illness and joined the meeting at 7.20 p.m.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Personal declarations of interest were declared by Councillors K Critchley, Mr K Green, Mrs J Spooner and Mrs N Wiggins owing to their membership of the Wareham Burials Joint Committee (item 8 on the agenda).

42. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE POLICY, RESOURCES & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 5th SEPTEMBER 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2011 were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

43. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5th September 2011**

- Visit to Council properties – Town Clerk had not been able to arrange the visit owing to current workload/daytime meetings. To be progressed in the spring owing to the need for a daytime visit to view properties.
- Lengthsman's handcart – agreed for purchase by Wareham in Bloom Committee and had been ordered.
- Fixed deposits, Lloyds TSB Bank – the Finance Administrator reported that a rate of 2.5% had been obtained, rather than the 3% hoped for, and £50,000 had been deposited.

44. **REPORT OF UP TO DATE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME AGAINST BUDGET. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS (INCLUDING URGENT PAYMENTS), ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY MEMBERS AND INSTRUCTION TO SIGNATORIES TO SIGN CHEQUES**

The Finance Administrator referred to the Budget Report dated 13 October 2011 and a page by page scrutiny was undertaken. Following various points of discussion on minor points, it was proposed by Councillor M Russell, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Elmes and:

RESOLVED that the Budget Report be noted and accepted, accounts for payment in the sum of £14,487.38 be approved and signatories instructed to sign cheques in payment of this sum.

45. **A-FRAMES – WAREHAM TOWN CENTRE**

There had been no response in writing from the Wareham Chamber of Trade, following a letter from the Town Clerk, however owing to the presence of two Chamber members at the meeting it was agreed that a joint meeting would be held to discuss the issues involved in full consultation. Councillor Mrs S Elmes volunteered to attend a meeting together with the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk together with Councillor Mrs S Elmes attend a joint meeting with representatives of Wareham Chamber of Trade to discuss a plan to regulate A-frame advertising boards in the town centre and a report be submitted to the next meeting.

46. **WAREHAM BURIALS JOINT COMMITTEE – EMPLOYMENT OF CLERK BY WAREHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

The Town Clerk gave an update on this matter and referred to his consultation with the NALC Financial Advisor, Mr Peter Lacey who had said that the Burials Joint Committee was not a corporate body and could not therefore be an ‘employer’ of its Clerk. He had confirmed that the Joint Committee could make such arrangements as it (and its constituent bodies) agreed were necessary for the carrying out of its functions, employment being but one. It was not necessary for all arrangements to be channelled through the largest of the corporate bodies and local arrangements that worked were the best.

Mr Lacey had emphasised however that it was necessary to ensure that evidence was minuted at the other constituent bodies of the Committee – in this case Arne and Wareham St Martin Parish Councils – and at the Joint Committee itself. The way was now clear to accept the Burial Committee Clerk’s suggestion that Wareham St Martin Parish Council act as the lead council and take her onto the payroll as an employee, in addition to her other role as Clerk to that parish council.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk would report his findings to the Burials Joint Committee Clerk for the next agenda of the Burials Committee.

RECOMMENDATION: that Wareham Town Council accept the advice of the NALC Financial Advisor in this matter and that Wareham St Martins Parish Council be advised through the Wareham Burials Joint Committee that they may act as lead council in the employment of the Clerk to that committee.

47. **COMMITTEE BUDGET LINES FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/2013**

The Committee considered the setting of its budget lines for the next financial year. Councillor K Critchley declared a personal interest in Council owned land at Bestwall Road leased by his son, Mr D Critchley, for boat /trailer storage. Councillor K Green declared a personal interest in Northmoor allotments as an allotment tenant at that site. On completion of the setting of its budget lines it was:

RESOLVED that the attached Budget for the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee be referred to the budget setting meeting of the committee on 5th December 2011 - when all committee budgets would be considered in order to recommend a final budget/precept to the Town Council at its meeting on 12th December 2011.

48. **SAFE STORAGE OF TOWN COUNCIL VALUABLE ITEMS/RE-VALUATION OF ITEMS**

The Finance Administrator gave an update on this matter, having looked at several options since the last meeting. Reference was made to one option that seemed to fit the criteria for maximum security. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED (a) that it be delegated to the Town Clerk and Finance Administrator acting in consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of the Committee to make a decision on the cost of a new safe and its location and (b) that the Mayor's chain of office and the deputy Mayor's chain be re-valued for insurance purposes.

49. **REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Committee received the report of the Financial Regulations Working Party together with a draft copy of Financial Regulations following their recent review of this document. Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor K Green, seconded by Councillor Mrs N Wiggins and:

RECOMMENDED that the revised Financial Regulations be accepted and agreed by Wareham Town Council at its next meeting.

50. **EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT**

The Committee received the Annual Return and report of the External Auditor for the financial year ending 31st March 2011. Two minor issues arising had been highlighted – restatement value of fixed assets where a figure had been amended at Section 1.9 (balances not affected) and the need for Chairmen to initial loose leaf pages of minutes and for them to be consecutively numbered, in addition to signing them as a true and accurate record.

RECOMMENDATION that the Annual Return be approved and accepted and the External Auditor's report on issues arising be submitted to Wareham Town Council at its next meeting on 2nd November 2011.

51. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 8 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

52. **CCTV MAINTENANCE – RENEWAL OF CONTRACT**

Following discussion, and the recommendation of the Town Clerk, it was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Elmes, seconded by Councillor Mrs L Kenyon an:

RESOLVED that in accordance with Financial Regulations 11.i.a. (2) the Silver Service contract for annual CCTV maintenance with RUSecure Systems of Wareham be renewed for the year commencing 1st November 2011 in the sum of £490.00 per annum.

53. **RENEWAL OF TOWN HALL ELECTRICITY CONTRACT**

Following a report from the Finance Administrator, and further details of current prices, it was:

RESOLVED that it be delegated to the Finance Administrator to achieve the best possible contract with electricity suppliers by the deadline of the end of October 2011 in consultation with the Chairman and Town Clerk.

54. **SWANAGE AND WAREHAM RUGBY CLUB – RENT REVIEW**

The Town Clerk gave an update on this matter and it was noted that the rent was now in arrears due to the Rugby Club needing to resolve an internal financial issue before attending to the Council's rent review. The Rugby Club President wished to attend a meeting with a representative of the Town Council to discuss the way ahead.

RESOLVED that it be delegated to the Town Clerk to attend a meeting with the President of the Rugby Club with a view to finalising the matter of the Rent Review at the earliest possible date.

55. **ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN (for report or for the next meeting)**

Councillor Mrs L Kenyon referred to the urgent accommodation issues currently faced by the Purbeck Citizens Advice Bureau who were tenants at the Council's Mill Lane premises on the ground floor in very cramped conditions. She would shortly be attending a meeting with representatives of the Wareham Town Band, who were also tenants of that property, together with the Town Clerk with a view to discussing alternative arrangements that may suit both the Band and the Bureau.

56. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Noted that the date of the next meeting was scheduled for 7.00 pm on **Monday 28th November 2011** in the Council Chamber, Town Hall.

..... Chairman