

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of the public present.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 17 September 2008 at 7.00pm

Apologies

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Woodfield and Cllr Rippon-Swaine.

Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

PRESENT: Cllr J D Heron (Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr N R G Clarke
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr B Terry
Cllr J Urwin

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Claire Perrens, Meetings Administrator
Bryannie Thurston, Student Advisor

F/4307

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2008, having been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

F/4308

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Members considered the Monthly Financial Reports attached to these minutes as *Annex 'A'*. The Town Clerk provided details of two 'test' items of expenditure, which had been chosen at random by the Chairman.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the list of cheque payments on the Imprest account be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Chard signed the report.
- 2) That the list of Petty Cash payments be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Chard signed the report.
- 3) That the Statement of Town Council Balances be received and noted.
- 4) That the Inter Account Transfer be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Chard signed the report.
- 5) That the Finance Manager's report and Summary Budget Reports be received and noted.

ACTION Martin Townsend

F/4309

GRANT AID

Members considered one application for grant aid from New Forest Disability Information Service, which provides free impartial information and guidance on disability related issues through outreach services, home visits and library visits in Ringwood.

RESOLVED: That, under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £150 be made to New Forest Disability Information Service.

ACTION Alyson Greenfield

F/4310

FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT POLICY

The Town Clerk advised that it is necessary for the Town Council to have a Flexible Retirement Policy. It is required by changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme, with the introduction of a new retirement category of 'Flexible Retirement' for non-teaching staff. Adopting the same policy as New Forest District Council will save the Town Council the expense of obtaining expert advice to create its own policy 'from scratch'. Members discussed the New Forest District Council policy and agreed that it appeared acceptable, with one alteration as detailed below.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) That the Flexible Retirement Policy be adopted, as set out in section 7 of the report to New Forest District Council's General Purposes and Licensing Committee, (*attached as Annex 'B'*); and
- 2) That the text in Paragraph 7.1.7 be deleted and replaced with the following: Flexible retirements will be approved by: the Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee, with the exception of any request by the Town Clerk, which should be considered by Council.

ACTION Jo Stannard

F/4311

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME – DISCRETIONARY POLICIES

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report (*attached as Annex 'C'*) on Local Government Pension Scheme – Discretionary Policies. New Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulations, which came into effect on 1 April 2008, give employing authorities certain discretions over the exercise of their functions in the LGPS.

The Town Council must therefore put in place its own discretionary policies or adopt Hampshire County Council's revised Pension Policy Statement.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council adopt a revised Pension Policy Statement, in line with that adopted by Hampshire County Council.

ACTION Jo Stannard

F/4312

HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS AGM

Members considered two resolutions to be put to the Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) AGM on 27th September 2008, as follows:

- 1) That this Assembly resolves to request the Chief Constable reconsider the withdrawal of Hampshire Constabulary Police Officers attendance at carnival processions and similar community events.
- 2) That this Assembly resolves to lobby the government department of Communities and Local Government to amend legislation to reflect modern banking practices, with regard to properly authorised payments using electronic methods including variable direct debits.

Members also considered proposals for membership fees under Agenda Item 7.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Council's delegate be authorised to support the two resolutions under Agenda Item 13 for the HALC AGM; and
- 2) That proposals under Agenda Item 7 for membership fees for 2009/10, which would result in an increase from £665 paid in 2007/08 to £748 for 2009/10, be supported.

ACTION Cllr Mark Steele

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.35pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

**RECEIVED AND ADOPTED
24 September 2008**

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN