

Holme Valley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 06 MARCH 2006 -

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr P Robinson

Vice-Chairman : Cllr Mrs H P Smith

Councillors : Cllr M Bower, Cllr Mrs M Bower, Cllr R P Dixon, Cllr R N Haynes, Cllr G Macpherson, Cllr R Oldfield, Cllr R Rogers

Officers : Mrs MA Bewick

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Chilton, Christofi, Collins, Firth, Garrood, Kaye, Oldham and Otterburn.

05 99 Disclosure of Interests

Cllr. Mrs. Bower declared a personal interest in item 10 of the agenda, Holme Valley Minibus Services, in that she serves on West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority.

Cllr. Rogers declared a personal interest in item 8(1) Holme Valley Business Association, in that he is a member of the Association.

05 100 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that no items needed to be taken in private session.

05 101 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2006 numbered 05 84 - 05 98 inclusive be received and adopted as a true record of the meeting.

05 102 Correspondence arising from the Minutes

Members noted thanks expressed by grant recipients, and their acceptance of conditions set by the Council for such grants.

West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive had contacted the Parish Council in relation to the proposed changes to Service 20. These changes had already been considered by the Council at its last meeting. The proposed timetable confirmed the option put forward by South Yorkshire PTE. Although noting that there were local traffic problems on Dunford Road, Holmfirth, Members reaffirmed their support for these changes.

05 103 Investment of Income

RESOLVED: That the Clerk's action in the investment and withdrawal of the Council's funds be approved and the current rates of interest applying to the Council's account be noted.

05 104 Financial Statement

RESOLVED: That the Financial Summary, Comparison and Income as at 27 February 2006 be approved.

05 105 Applications for Grant

(1) Holme Valley Business Association - This application had been referred back for further consideration by the Council, given extra information available. Members considered this additional information; it was proposed and seconded that a grant of £100 be awarded. It was further proposed and seconded that a grant of £250 be awarded to cover the cost of providing fencing along the river at the campsite to be used for the Festival. The first motion was put to the vote and was passed; the second motion was, therefore, abandoned.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £100 be awarded to Holme Valley Business Association towards the

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organisation of the Folk Festival.

(2) 1st Holmfirth Guides - International Guiding Trip - Canada - July 2006 - one local guide has been selected to represent County Guiding Association on this trip.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £100 be awarded to 1st Holmfirth Guides towards this trip; the Guide involved to attend a meeting of the Council on her return to address Members and to contribute an article to the Council's newsletter.

(3) Holme Valley Brass Band Contest - Members considered this application for assistance with the award of prizes for this annual event; this year would be the 80th such event. Members agreed that they wished to support the strong tradition of music and brass bands in the Valley which the Band Contest encouraged and promoted.

RESOLVED: That a donation of £400 be granted, to be apportioned as follows: £100 towards the general prizes, £300 to be split equally as prizes to the Best Band from the Holme Valley in each section, including the Youth Section.

05 106 Administrative Matters

(1) Under Financial Regulation 15, it was necessary to undertake annual reviews:

(a) Insurance Review - Members reviewed the Council's insurance policy and cover. The Clerk had made necessary alterations during the year in respect of additional equipment.

RESOLVED: That the insurance policy and cover as at present be retained, and the Clerk authorised to make any necessary changes during the next year in respect of deleted, replacement or additional equipment.

(b) Risk Assessment - Members reviewed present procedures and noted that a review and re-organisation of the Council's filing system was under way. It was suggested that adoption of a retention policy for records and other documents would be helpful. Some basic guidance was given to the Clerk:

Correspondence, other than legal or contractual matters, and other ancillary records - 2 years
Statutory documents and other such matters - 6 or 7 years
Legal, contractual, accounts, etc - in perpetuity

RESOLVED: (1) That the Clerk formulates a record retention policy for adoption by the Council, following these basic guidelines, and other advice from NALC, SLCC and other sources

(2) That the filing review currently under way should follow this policy as formulated

(3) That the Risk Assessment, as amended for the Retention Policy, and as attached, be approved and the actions so recommended, approved.

(2) Freedom of Information Act - A request for information under this Act had been forwarded to the Council by Kirklees MC. This requested information about salary scales, contractual hours, and attendance at conferences, and the costs thereof. As no information was requested which was specific to an individual, this was not classed as exempt information under the terms of the Act. A response to this request must be made within a certain number of working days.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be authorised to supply the information in response to the questions posed.

(3) 2006/07 National Salary Award for Local Council Clerks - as previously reported in minute number 04 29, the cost of living award for 2006-07 was agreed as part of a three year award. Members were now informed of the percentage rate applicable for 2006-07.

RESOLVED: That the Salaries Agreement for 2006-07, as recommended by NALC and SLCC, be approved and adopted with effect from 1 April 2006.

(4) Fairtrade Zone - the Council was being asked to support the principles of Fairtrade and to welcome the initiative to achieve Fairtrade status for the Holme Valley. A Councillor reported that a programme about the Fairtrade initiative was to be televised at the end of the week, and he suggested deferral of any recommendation until Councillors had had the opportunity to view this programme. A member of the local Fairtrade Group had offered to come to a Council meeting to explain how the Council could support their efforts.

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RESOLVED: That the offer to address the Council be accepted and that any recommendation to support be deferred until the Council meeting.

(5) Lupton Fawcett - Transfer of Business to Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) - The Council's Legal Advisers were adopting a corporate structure and business was, therefore, being transferred to a Limited Liability Partnership. Members noted this information, and

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to accept this change in the status of the Partnership, and that the Clerk be authorised to sign the necessary consent.

05 107 Holme Valley Minibus Service

- Possible changes to route H1/H2 - the Clerk reported that several letters and a petition had been handed to the Council in connection with the proposed change to route H1/H2 which, it had transpired, would necessitate the omission of a loop of the route in Scholes. Members were informed that Metro did not believe that the route change was achievable without this omission. Such a change would inconvenience people using the bus to deliver children to the local school and the local playgroup, but the change to provide a more frequent service to Cliffe had been requested by local residents of that area. This proposed change has been put on hold until the Council considers any other options.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk discusses with Metro whether there is any option of varying the route during a day, in an attempt to satisfy residents of both areas, and reports back to the Committee in due course.

05 108 Consultations

(1) ODPM - Standards of Conduct in English Local Government - minute number 05 92 asked Chairmen of Committees and the Council to consider this document and report back to the Committee. The Chairman outlined his initial views on the document but felt that it was a complicated issue which needed greater consideration. It was suggested that all Councillors be made aware of the report and of its availability in the office.

RESOLVED: That further consideration of this document be deferred until the next meeting, when some of the other Chairmen might have had the opportunity to respond.

(2) Daniel Broadhead's Charity - Information had been received about this charity and the need to appoint new trustees in order to reactivate the Charity.

RESOLVED: (1) That the information regarding this charity be noted
(2) That the three Trustees to be nominated by the Parish Council be the two Ward members for Upperthong Ward and the Clerk.

(3) The Standards Board - Town and Parish Councils 06 -

RESOLVED: That the publication be noted, and the Clerk asked to circulate a copy to all Members.

05 109 Representation

(1) YLCA seminars - Councillor Skills -

RESOLVED: That representation at these seminars be considered at the full Council meeting.

(2) SLCC Regional Conference - Harrogate - 29 March 2006 - The Clerk asked the Committee to authorise a further representative at this event. Cllr. Mrs. Court had indicated an interest in attending; there was also a special offer for three delegates from the same Council.

RESOLVED: That Cllr. Mrs. Court be authorised to attend this Conference to take advantage of this special offer.

(3) End of Year Seminars - Edge Designs Ltd - These seminars related to the specialised software used by the officers for recording planning comments, financial work, etc. The Clerk indicated that unless there were significant changes in the software, she did not feel that there was a requirement to attend these seminars.

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RESOLVED: That, unless the Clerk advises otherwise at a later date, no representation be appointed for this seminar.

05 110 Council Policy and Future Planning

(1) The Chairman asked Members to consider adopting a policy of four-year budget planning; with the achievement of Quality Council status, and the potential for taking on more services, and being involved in other initiatives, it would be important for the Council to consider longer-term planning and provision for projects.

There was some concern that the timing for such a change was not right in that Parish elections would take place in 2007, but it was felt that current Councillors had the experience to formulate policies and objectives which would be helpful to an incoming Council.

RESOLVED: That the Finance and Management Committee recommends that the Council adopts a policy of longer-term planning, and that it asks the Council to authorise the Committee to develop this idea further.

(2) The Chairman also suggested that budget proposals should be discussed one cycle earlier in the financial year, to allow Finance and Management Committee Members to review budget provision separately from the precept decision. It was felt that this would allow considered discussion of the implications of different budget provisions and the impact of those provisions on the precept.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the Council that this practice be adopted for the next financial year.

(3) Civic matters - The Clerk sought clarification from Members on a number of issues relating to civic functions and the Chairman's Allowance. Following full and constructive discussion, guidelines, as attached to the minutes, were agreed and recommended to the Council for adoption and guidance for future Chairmen.

RESOLVED: That the guidelines, as attached, be adopted by the Council in relation to civic matters.

Cllr. Rogers left during this agenda item.

05 111 Holme Allotments

Members considered a letter received from one of the tenants of Holme allotments about the use of monies held on behalf of the allotment holders. Whilst noting the comments made by the tenant, Members confirmed the Clerk's response to his letter, and agreed that they could not support the issue of personal gift vouchers.

RESOLVED: That the quotations for repair of the wall at the allotments be awaited, and no decision made about the use of this money be made, until costs of such repairs be known.

05 112 Awarded Quarries

The Clerk had no further information to date on progress with the voluntary registration of the awarded quarry sites.

She also informed Members that Kirklees MC was preparing an Enforcement Notice in relation to the shelter on Hollowgate and asked for permission to put pressure on the tenant to remedy the repairs and works which were necessary to meet the conditions of the planning permission.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be asked to contact the tenant directly regarding the work necessary to meet planning conditions.

05 113 Freedom of Information Act 2000

RESOLVED: That, under the Council's Publication Scheme, supporting papers for any item within the public session of the meeting be made available, if requested.

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Chairman