

Holme Valley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 14 AUGUST 2006 -

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr P Robinson

Councillors : Cllr M Bower, Cllr Mrs M Bower, Cllr Mrs M P Court, Cllr R P Dixon, Cllr D M Firth, Cllr A L Gosslin, Cllr R N Haynes, Cllr R Oldfield, Cllr A R Otterburn, Cllr R Rogers, Cllr Mrs J Spencer

Officers : Mrs MA Bewick

Councillors Gosslin and Mrs. Spencer were present in their ex-officio capacities as Chairmen of General Purposes Committee and Planning Committee respectively.

2 members of the public were present.

Cllr. Mrs. Court was present as an observer. As she was attending the meeting in connection with item 12 of the agenda, the Chairman asked the Committee's permission to this item being taken at the beginning of the meeting. This was so agreed.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Christofi, Collins, Garrood, Kaye, Macpherson, Oldham and Mrs. Smith.

06 23 Disclosure of Interests

None were given.

06 24 Admission of the Public

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

06 25 Rural Transport

(1) West Yorkshire Rural Transport Partnership - the next meeting, to be held on 5 September 2006, would discuss South Kirklees Community Transport . The Parish Council had been asked to nominate a representative to this Partnership. Cllr. Mrs. Court had indicated her willingness to act as the Parish's representative.

RESOLVED: That Cllr. Mrs. Court be appointed as the Parish Council's representative to the West Yorkshire Rural Transport Partnership.

Cllr. Mrs. Court reminded Members about the questionnaire which she hoped all Members would distribute in their Wards; it would be particularly useful to give it to groups and local organisations. A Transport Needs Assessment needed to be carried out to identify potential users for the proposed "Ring and Ride" service. Councillors present took ten copies each for distribution.

(2) West Yorkshire Rural Transport Partnership Questionnaire: this was a further questionnaire about about possible future transports projects.

RESOLVED: That Cllr. Mrs. Court and the Clerk be authorised to complete this questionnaire and report back to Finance and Management if this was felt necessary prior to submission.

06 26 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2006 numbered 06 03 - 06 22 inclusive be received and adopted as a true record of the meeting.

Holme Valley Parish Council

06 27 Correspondence arising from the Minutes

RESOLVED: That acknowledgements of grants received from 1st Holmfirth Guides, Holmfirth Festival of Folk and 1st Holme Valley (Holmfirth) Scout Group be noted.

06 28 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 accounts be noted.

06 29 Financial Statement

RESOLVED: That the Financial Summary, Comparison and Income as at 31 July 2006 be approved and the adjustments reported by the Clerk noted.

06 30 Annual Accounts

(1) The Clerk explained that following discussion with both the External and Internal Auditors, it had proved preferable to continue to produce accounts on an income and expenditure basis to preserve continuity for future years.

Cllr. Rogers queried the position in relation to possible funding for future expenditure on CCTV. The Clerk had already been asked to investigate the disposal of the amount remaining from the previous CCTV project. She would report at a later date, but was waiting further information from Kirklees MC about possible improvements to the current scheme.

RESOLVED: That the Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet and Supporting Statements as at 31 March 2006 be approved.

(2) Members considered completion of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2006 which had to be submitted to the External Auditor. The Clerk reminded Members that the Council must give certain assurances in statements about the Council's accounts and the Council's internal controls. Members were happy that the Council could reply affirmatively to all the questions in Section 2 of the Annual Return. This would require approval by the Council before signing by the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Return be recommended for approval by the Council, and for submission to the External Auditor together with any necessary additional information, as collated by the Clerk.

(3) The report of the Internal Auditor was noted, as was the fact that he had no recommendations to make to the Council for actioning.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 March 2006 be received, and payment of his invoice, once received, approved.

06 31 Policy and Quality Council Sub Committee

(1) RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance and Management Policy and Quality Council Sub Committee numbered 06 01 - 06 06 inclusive be approved and adopted.

(2) RESOLVED: That the recommendations of the Sub Committee relating to the adoption of the attached Statement, Aim and Objectives for the Council be approved and the Statement, Aim and Objectives be recommended to the Council for adoption.

(3) It was agreed that the date of the next meeting of the Sub Committee should be agreed by Members of the Sub Committee at the end of the Finance and Management Committee meeting.

06 32 Applications for Grant

The Publications and Communications Committee had requested that the Finance and Management Committee considers an alteration to its criteria for grants. This was that all recipients of grants should be asked to submit a brief article for publication in the Council's newsletter on how a grant had been used; how it had assisted the organisation; what had been achieved with the grant.

Members discussed that all grant recipients should come back to a Council meeting and report on these aspects, and that the minutes taken from that meeting would then form the article for the newsletter. It

Holme Valley Parish Council

was felt, after further discussion, that where an individual or organisation visited a Council meeting to report back, an article for the newsletter could be created from the minutes; organisations not being required to address a meeting, should be asked to provide the Council with a report of how the grant has been utilised.

RESOLVED: That the following alterations be made to the criteria for grants:

- (1) Recipients of grants from the Council may be required to attend a meeting of the Council to inform Members how the grant has been expended; any such report may be published in the Council's newsletter
- (2) All grant recipients are required to provide the Council with a report of how the grant has been utilised, and such report may be published in the Council's newsletter
- (3) Acceptance of a grant will be taken as permission for the Council to publish such articles in its newsletter.

06 33 Administrative Matters

(1) NALC Larger Local Councils Committee - Nominations had been invited for representatives to this Committee, and the Committee was asked if it wished to participate in postal voting for these nominations. It was suggested that in future years the Council should rather seek to make a nomination to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That, in future years, an item be placed on the agenda for the Annual Council to consider putting forward a nomination for the NALC Larger Local Councils Committee.

(2) Yorkshire Rural Community Council - Nominations to Trustee Board - Members considered whether the Council should put forward a nomination to this Trustee Board.

RESOLVED: That the opportunity for a nomination to this Trustee Board be considered at the next Annual Council after the elections in 2007.

(3) Local Works - Campaign for the Sustainable Communities Bill - Support for this bill had been considered previously, but the organisation involved was requesting contact details for all Members.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk directs the organisation to the Council's website which contains contact details for all Councillors.

(4) NALC and YLCA have been campaigning for some time for a change from the power conferred on Parish and Town Councils under the Local Government Act 1972, Section 137, in favour of a general power of well being for Local Councils to assist local groups and projects with no financial limit applied to the amount of aid that a Local Council can give, provided that there are clear benefits to the community. DEFRA is seeking information about cases where the Section 137 financial limitation has caused Local Councils problems.

Members discussed this possible change to legislation. As the Section 137 financial limitation was based on electorate, this Council had never experienced, and was not likely to experience, problems with there being a financial limitation, but it was accepted that a more general power of well being could have potential for the future.

RESOLVED: That this Council must support the possible introduction of the power of well being for Local Councils, provided it is for the benefit of the community.

(5) Members noted that the changes to postal rates could have implications for the Council's budget in terms of postal costs.

RESOLVED: That this information be noted and that it be considered again, once the new rates have been in force for some time.

06 34 Representation

(1) Joint Charter Review Meeting with Kirklees MC and Parish and Town Councils - 14 September 2006 - Council Chamber, Holmfirth - both the Chairman and Vice Chairman have indicated that they are not available on this date.

Holme Valley Parish Council

RESOLVED: That the Council be represented at this Joint Meeting by Councillors Gosslin (Chairman, General Purposes), Robinson (Chairman, Finance and Management), Mrs. Spencer (Chairman, Planning) and Cllr. Rogers; the Chairman of the Council indicated that should there be any change in his business commitments, he would attend the meeting.

(2) Action for Market Towns Convention 2006 - 28-29 September 2006 - Evesham and Pershore:

RESOLVED: That representation at this event be considered at the full Council meeting.

06 35 Miscellaneous Rentals

(1) Hollowgate Shelter - The Clerk reported that the shelter had been reinstated to its previous condition and a new seat placed in it for public use. She informed Members of the costs incurred in taking this action.

RESOLVED: (1) That the action taken in restoring shelter to its previous condition be approved and the costs incurred therein approved

(2) That the Clerk congratulates the Contractor in writing on the excellent standard of the work he had done at this site.

(2) Cliffe - garage site - The Clerk reported that she had been informed that the garage had now been demolished and that arrangements had been made by the ex-tenant for the removal of remains of the garage from the site.

RESOLVED: That this information be noted.

06 36 Awarded Quarries

(1) Voluntary Registration - The Clerk informed Members of action she had taken to meet legal deadlines for submitting information for adjudication in relation to Towns Quarry; the Chairman had been consulted in this respect.

RESOLVED: That the action taken in supplying information for submission to the Adjudicator be noted and approved.

(2) White Wells - Dean Bridge Lane, Scholes - removal of ragwort - The Clerk had been informed by Kirklees MC of a large amount of ragwort at this site. She had taken action under Financial Regulations 3.4 to have it removed before it seeded, as it was a controlled weed.

RESOLVED: That the action taken to remove the ragwort be approved.

In further discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk should be authorised to take action in similar circumstances, as the Council had a responsibility to act swiftly to remove such controlled weeds.

The Clerk informed Members that she had also been notified of instances of illegal fly-tipping on two of the Awarded Quarry sites. Members agreed that, as these sites had now been registered to the Council, it was important that the Council took swift action to deal with any safety issues, such as fly-tipping, control of noxious plants, and that the Clerk should be authorised to take any necessary action, if she felt time was critical. Members discussed how such illegally tipped items should be removed. It was agreed that two options should be investigated; the costs of removal by Kirklees MC, or by the Council's contractor. The second option would require a licence for him to take such action.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Clerk be authorised to use her powers under Financial Regulations 3.4 to take action to deal with fly-tipping, control of noxious plants or any other safety issue at any of the Awarded Quarry sites

(2) That the Clerk investigates the possibility of obtaining a suitable licence to allow the Council's contractor to remove illegally tipped items and dispose of them at a Waste amenity site, and the costs of this, or of requesting removal of items by Kirklees MC.

The Clerk also reported that she had received further acknowledgement of the Council's consideration of an indication of interest in acquisition of this land. This was noted.

(3) Jackson Bridge, Hanging Ground - the Clerk reported that she had received correspondence from a local resident indicating that another resident had claimed that this land appeared on his deeds. She

Holme Valley Parish Council

had asked the resident to supply further details and proof of this claim.

RESOLVED: That this correspondence be noted and the information requested awaited.

(4) Former public conveniences, Jackson Bridge: Cllr. Rogers asked what progress, if any, there had been concerning the possible demolition of this building. The Clerk agreed to chase this up with the tenant of the adjoining site.

06 37 Freedom of Information Act 2000

(1) RESOLVED: That it be noted that the lifespan of the current Publication Scheme has been extended by the Information Commissioner, to the second half of 2008, from the initial four year period; further details to be confirmed nearer that period.

(2) 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 after approval of the minutes by the full Council.

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Chairman