

Holme Valley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 26 JANUARY 2009 -

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr T Dearnley

Councillors : Cllr M Bower, Cllr Mrs R Bratt, Cllr J M Greenwood, Cllr C M Kaye, Cllr Mrs J Roberts, Cllr P Robinson, Cllr M A Walker

Officers : Mrs S S Barber, Mrs MA Bewick

To accept Apologies for Absence

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee due to other commitments, Cllr. T. Dearnley was elected Chairman for the meeting and took the Chair.

Apologies were accepted from Councillors R P Dixon, Oldfield and Mrs. B E Smith.

Cllr. Mrs. Walker was present as a substitute for Cllr. Oldfield.

08 68 To receive Members' declarations of interest in items on the agenda

None were given.

08 69 To consider whether items on the agenda should be discussed in private session

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

08 70 To accept the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance and Management Committee held on 8 December 2008 numbered 08 55 - 08 67 inclusive be received and adopted as a true record of the meeting.

08 71 Correspondence arising from the Minutes

Agbrigg Division Girlguiding UK had written to the Council to thank it for the grant received (minute number 08 49 (3)).

08 72 Investment of Income

Members noted the current rates of interest applying to the Council's accounts and the investment of the Council's income. The Clerk also reported that, as part of the budget process, she had carried out a brief survey of other accounts, and interest rates, currently on offer to the Council. After receiving information of the interest rates available, it was

RESOLVED: (1) That the current rates of interest applying to the Council's accounts and the investment of the Council's income be noted and approved

(2) That given the information about other interest rates available, no change be made at present to the Council's accounts.

08 73 Financial Statement

RESOLVED: That the Financial Summary, Comparison and Income as at 1 January 2009 be approved.

Cllr. J M Greenwood arrived during this item.

08 74 Applications for Grant

As requested at the last meeting, further financial, and other, information in support of grant applications received had been requested from the following applicants:

(1) Holmfirth Festival of Folk - minute no. 08 62 (1) refers

(2) Holme Valley Business Association - Christmas Lights - minute no. 08 62 (2) refers.

To date, recent accounts for the last Festival of Folk had been received, but no further details of

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proposed costs. Members discussed this application further, and

RESOLVED: (1) That a grant of £250 be awarded to Holmfirth Festival of Folk towards the costs of family street theatre

(2) That no further action be taken on the application regarding the Christmas Lights until the information requested has been supplied.

08 75 Representation

(1) Joint Parish/Kirklees Council Liaison Meeting - Members were informed of the proposed date for the next meeting (24 March 2009) and that it would be hosted by Holme Valley Parish Council, and chaired by the Chairman of Holme Valley Parish Council.

The following agenda items were put forward:

Allotments

Community Governance Review

Localities Management

Planning - arrangements for the training which had been offered, in particular on energy policies such as wind and alternative energy.

RESOLVED: (1) That the date for the next meeting be approved, and it be noted that the meeting will be held at Holme Valley Parish Council

(2) That the above items be forwarded to Kirklees Council for inclusion on the agenda

(3) That the Clerk be authorised to make arrangements for refreshments for the Joint Meeting.

(2) Arrangements for appointment of Parish Councillors to the Kirklees Council Standards Committee were outlined to the Committee, and it was noted that Cllr. Kaye's term of office would end in May 2011. It was accepted that nominations would be made in turn, alphabetically, by the five Parish and Town Councils in the Kirklees area.

RESOLVED: That the above information be noted and the method of appointing representatives by the Parish and Town Councils approved.

(3) Members considered attendance at the Sixth NALC/SLCC Clerks' Networking Lunch but did not feel that any attendance was necessary at the moment.

08 76 Administrative Matters

(1) Vice Chairman's Jewel: Three quotations had been requested for replacing the Vice Chairman's Jewel and for a new chain of office. To date, no replies had been received.

(2) Councillors' surgeries: The Committee reviewed the current arrangements being piloted for holding surgeries at different locations. From various experiences, it appeared that whilst holding the surgeries at Libraries was proving to be acceptable to residents, Saturday mornings were far more popular than Monday evenings.

Cllr. Mrs. Roberts wished to investigate the possibility of holding a surgery in Netherthong, given transport issues of getting from Netherthong to Holmfirth, particularly in an evening. The Clerk was also asked to investigate whether there was any option of holding a surgery within the mobile library unit whilst on visits to villages.

RESOLVED: (1) That surgeries should continue to be held at locations throughout the area, but that they should be held on Saturday mornings

(2) That Cllr. Mrs. Roberts, and the Clerk, should investigate alternative locations for some of the Wards, including transferring surgeries for certain wards to Holmfirth Library from the Council offices

(3) That any such changes be put into effect from the beginning of the new civic year.

(3) Retention of Documents: Members reviewed the current record retention policy and considered the feasibility of scanning all documents received by the Council to prevent the accumulation of too many papers. There were concerns expressed about the quality of such scanned documents, and the time that this might take.

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RESOLVED: That the Record Retention Policy as circulated to the Committee be approved.

(4) Insurance cover: Alternative quotations had been requested for the provision of the Council's insurance cover, but none had been received in time for the meeting. A review of the insurance cover would be undertaken at the next meeting of the Finance and Management Committee.

08 77 Budget Preparations

Members considered information relating to its previous recommendations for budget provision 2009-10; the Clerk sought the Committee's approval for investigating possible cost reductions in the support and maintenance for the software used by the Council and the technical support for the computers as an alternative option had arisen on offer from the supplier of the specialist software used by the Council. She would report back to the next meeting of the Finance and Management Committee, but would recommend that the budget provision remain as drafted.

Members discussed the option of increasing the grants budget as discussed at the last meeting, and requested that an amount of £10,000 be put aside for grants for the next year.

As discussed by the Staffing Committee and by the newly appointed Charity Committee, it was envisaged that there would be a requirement for officer time to be spent on the new charity, and that this would eventually have to be paid for by the charity. Until the charity received some income, this would have to be funded by the Council, and it was therefore agreed that a sum of £4,000 be replaced in the budget for administrative and other work for the new charity.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Clerk's report on draft figures and supporting information be accepted
(2) That the Clerk be authorised to investigate possible savings and alternative options in relation to online technical support and hosting of the Council's data reporting back to the Committee with her findings
(3) That the budget as prepared by the Clerk be amended with the inclusion of the above figures for presentation to the Strategy and Policy Committee to assess impact on the precept.

08 78 Miscellaneous Rentals

(1) Repairs to walls, Holme allotments: Members noted that the contractor to whom a contract for some dry stone walling at Holme Allotments had been awarded had informed the Clerk that he would now be unable to undertake the work. Further quotations were being sought.

(2) Thirstin Road, Honley: Members had previously considered a request to create a new parking space/garage site at Thirstin Road, Honley. In undertaking some investigations about fencing on the site, it transpired that this had been erected by an existing tenant who had now written to the Council to request that he be allowed to continue to use this extra area, given his health problems. Members discussed the two approaches and

RESOLVED: (1) That the current tenant be allowed to use this site on the proviso that the site is cleared and tidied up by 1 April 2009, and that thereafter he be charged a rent of £70 pa for this extra area

(2) That no rent be charged for this use for the current year, in recognition of the fact that the tenant has carried out previous remedial works to the site

(3) That the new tenancy only proceed, if the site has been cleared and tidied to the Council's satisfaction

(4) That the other resident be informed of the Council's decision in this matter, but that her name would be kept on a waiting list for a garage site at this area.

08 79 Freedom of Information Act 2000 - to agree what information will be made available to the public

RESOLVED: That, under the Council's Publication Scheme, supporting papers for any items 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