

Holme Valley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 27 APRIL 2009 -

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr R P Dixon

Vice-Chairman : Cllr Mrs B E Smith

Councillors : Cllr M Bower, Cllr Mrs R Bratt, Cllr T Dearnley, Cllr C M Kaye, Cllr Mrs J Roberts, Cllr P Robinson

Officers : Mrs S S Barber, Mrs MA Bewick

To accept Apologies for Absence

None were received.

08 94 To receive Members' declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Cllr Mrs Roberts declared a prejudicial interest in item 9(2) in that she is a verger at St David's Church, Holmbridge.

08 95 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 96 To accept the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance and Management Committee held on 9 March 2009 numbered 08 80 - 08 93 inclusive be received and adopted as a true record of the meeting.

08 97 Correspondence arising from the Minutes

(1) Minute number 08 78 - Repairs to walls, Holme allotments: The appointed contractor had confirmed acceptance of the contract and work would commence early May 2009.

(2) Minute number 08 92 - Public clock service contract: The Clerk had raised a query regarding the inclusion of VAT and a revised quotation had subsequently been submitted by the contractor.

(3) Minute number 08 75(2) - Due to a discrepancy in the nomination process, Kirklees Council had suggested that the Denby Dale Parish Councillor would stand on the Committee for an extra year, and the Clerk had supported this option following earlier discussions at Committee and with the Council's current representative on the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED: (i) That the above be noted and approved.

(ii) That the revised quotation for the public clock service contract be accepted and the Clerk's actions be approved.

08 98 Investment of Income

The Clerk had investigated interest rates through a number of bank/savings accounts, to maximise any potential interest on the precept and reserves, but providing relatively easy access to the funds until required.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Clerk be authorised to invest the agreed amount in a Guaranteed Fixed Deposit Account with Bank of Scotland, leaving the money already invested with Kirklees Council for the time being.

(2) That it be noted and approved that the Clerk takes this action as soon as possible.

(3) 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.

08 99 Annual Accounts

(1) It was RESOLVED: That the Financial Summary, Comparison and Income as at 31 March 2009 be approved. The Clerk answered Members' queries on the financial position at year end.

Members noted that the Council's payment policy was payment within 30 days.

(2) Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31 March 2009: Members discussed the format of reports produced for the financial year end, but felt that the current format was helpful to Members of the Council and the public. It was agreed that a Receipts and Payments Statement be produced for the Annual Parish Meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be authorised to produce the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009, to be presented to Council in the format of previous years, i.e. Statement of Receipts and Payments, Income and Expenditure Schedule, Balance Sheet and Annual Return.

(3) Annual Audit for 2008-2009: The Clerk explained to Members information about the completion of the Internal Audit for the year ended 31 March 2009, as the necessary forms had now been received. An audit checklist had been prepared, to be used by the Internal Auditor (previously appointed), who would then complete the appropriate section of the Annual Return. Once the Accounts and other sections of the Annual Return had been approved by Council, arrangements would be made to publish the accounts by the legal deadline of 30 June 2009 (one month earlier than last year) and submit the Return to the External Auditors as required.

In respect of the Land Charity Accounts, it was agreed that the Clerk should discuss the matter with the Internal Auditor, to pursue whether he would be willing to act as auditor for the Council as sole trustee of the Land Charity, whereby a separate audit of the accounts is required.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Internal Auditor should focus on the report agreed as there were no other issues which the Council wished to highlight.

(2) That the Clerk be authorised to make all necessary arrangements for the audit process, and to take the necessary actions to complete the Annual Return, for presentation to the Council prior to the deadline.

(3) That the Clerk be authorised to discuss accounting and audit arrangements for the Land Charity with the Internal Auditor.

(4) That the Clerk be authorised to participate in and complete as necessary, any survey or questionnaire as part of HMRC review of the temporary reduction in the standard rate of VAT.

08 100 Criteria for Grants

Following consideration of a number of examples of grant criteria used by other councils, the Clerk undertook to produce a set of proposed grant criteria for the amended types of grant - resource and event. A review of the grant application form would also be undertaken at the same time, to ensure consistency.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk should produce the grant criteria as agreed above, to be considered at the next Finance and Management Committee meeting, following consultation with Members, if necessary.

08 101 Applications for Grant

(1) Holmfirth Methodist Church: An application had been received for financial support towards prizes for the children's art competition at the Flower Festival. Using its s.137 powers, it was

RESOLVED: That a grant of £50 be awarded to Holmfirth Methodist Church towards this provision, to be paid to schools within the Holme Valley.

(2) St David's Church, Holmbridge: Cllr Mrs Roberts withdrew from the meeting for this item, in view of her prejudicial interest in that she is a verger at the Church. An application had been received for financial support towards essential work to the Church Clock, following a recent service of the clock.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £100 be awarded to St David's Church, Holmbridge, towards repair work to the Church Clock.

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08 102 Representation

(1) Joint Parish/Kirklees Council Liaison Meeting - 29 April 2009:

RESOLVED: That the Council be represented by Cllrs Bellamy, Mrs Bratt, Kaye and Mrs Roberts at this meeting.

(2) YLCA Training events: Members approved attendance at the following events:

(i) 6 May 2009 - Councillor Skills, Holmfirth - Cllr Bailey and Cllr Mrs Bratt

(ii) 1 June 2009 - Finance for small/medium councils, York - Administrative Support Officer

(iii) 29 May 2009 - In the Chair, Havercroft, Wakefield - Cllr Mrs Bratt

(iv) 15 May 2009 - Seventh Clerks' Networking Lunch (to include a session by the Charity Commission on charities engaging with local councils) - Clerk

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be authorised to make arrangements for attendance at the above events.

(3) YLCA Power of Well Being Training: Although Members had previously agreed that they were interested in taking up this power, and two dates (22 and 23 July 2009) had subsequently been offered by YLCA for training at the Council Offices, Members now agreed that the matter be passed back to full Council to consider. If at least 50% of councillors are willing to commit time to this training, further dates could be considered later in the year.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk should include the item on the agenda for the next Council meeting, to establish the level of interest in this training from some of the Councillors, if not the full 80% as required to be able to use the Power.

A further course listed on the agenda had already been noted by the Council and no further action was necessary.

08 103 Administrative Matters

(1) Guidance for Chairman in relation to information from HMRC re use of Chairman's Allowance: Following advice received from HMRC, the Clerk suggested modifications to the existing guidance, to assist the Chairman in accounting for expenditure and charitable donations. Any donations were to be made on the recommendation of the Chairman, but approved by Council.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be authorised to implement the modifications as suggested, prior to submission to Council for approval.

(2) Members noted a third party insurance settlement, after the claim was successfully defended and withdrawn.

08 104 Miscellaneous Rentals

Allotment allocation process - Following the receipt of a complaint about the process of allocating allotments and current use of some allotment plots, Members considered a review of the allocation process for the allotments at Holme. Although it is difficult to monitor, Members agreed that the sites should be used as agreed, for a tenant's own exclusive use and the plots should not be sub-let, as per the tenancy agreement.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk would write to each allotment tenant, expressing these concerns; the letters to accompany the standard annual tenancy agreement now due, and a stamped addressed envelope for their use to confirm acceptance of the terms.

Following the receipt of correspondence from Holme-Grown, a Community Group and gardening network, Members agreed that prospective tenants on the Allotment Waiting List should be provided with details of the group, for them to make contact if appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk would write to those residents on the Waiting List, to provide details of Holme-Grown for them to make contact if they so wish.

08 105 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