

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 15th OCTOBER 2009

PRESENT: Cllr T Robbins (Chairman)
Cllrs D Anderson, C Borastero, M Brandon, N Kennedy, J North, C Price and Siggs

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Steve Luck, The Town Clerk's Assistant
Cllrs T Butt Philip, J Parkes, S Robertson and D Unwin

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Mr Roy Mackenzie asked the committee two questions in connection with the resignation of the Town Clerk: a) Had the City Council lost any monies as a result and b) had Mr Donoghue been given a financial pay off. The Chairman assured Mr Mackenzie that the City Council had not suffered any financial loss and Mr Donoghue had received only the remuneration he was entitled to.

Mr Livings made various observations regarding the agenda and asked who was present at the meeting with Mr Donoghue when he tendered his resignation. The Chairman replied that he, the Mayor and a legal representative were at the meeting. In reply to a question from Mrs Pam Somers the Chairman replied that the City Council would give any information they were legally allowed to divulge to the public concerning the resignation of the Town Clerk at the appropriate time.

09/046F CONFIRM APPOINTMENT OF STEVE LUCK AS RFO TO THE CITY COUNCIL UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

The Committee unanimously **recommended** the appointment of Steve Luck as RFO to the City Council

09/047F FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Committee received the financial reports for September which had been scrutinised and found to be satisfactory:

(i) Business Rate Deferral

The Council no longer had the opportunity to defer payment of the substantial increase in business rates for this year nor the next three years due to a late payment. The full amount for the current year had now been paid.

(ii) Audit arrangements

The City Council is awaiting the certificate from the external auditors.

(iii) Town Hall Telephones

The Town Hall telephones had been upgraded and a link was now in place to the Cemetery

(iii) Council Property

The external work to the Town Hall had been satisfactorily completed and signed off. A meeting has been arranged with the Magistrates' Estates Office to continue their dialogue concerning Town Hall accommodation. The Committee **recommended** that all should be done to retain courts in Wells and all negotiations should reflect this. A full report of all council property and insurance liabilities will be given to members at a later date.

09/048F REPORT FROM THE CEMETERY SUPERINTENDENT

Noted. (Copy enclosed) members received the new Cemetery price list for information.

09/049F REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

(i) Council properties

Members noted that 1 Priory Road had now opened. A site meeting had been held during the week with the surveyors dp+Paul and a representative from Armitage Venesta to discuss the ongoing problems with doors at the Town Hall Buildings public conveniences resulting in Armitage Venesta bearing all future cost of repairs until a suitable solution had been reached

(ii) Finance

Members had met on 8th September and would report back to the committee at a later date.

(ii) Policies

Cllr Siggs confirmed that a number of practices were under review and the outcome would be brought back to members for ratification as inclusions in either Standing Orders or the Civic Review.

09/050F REPORTS IT PROVISION

Members **recommended** to accept the proposals made by PC Comms if confirmation could be obtained from them that the proposed system could be upgraded in the future. The Chairman confirmed that the current proposals were within the IT budget.

Cllr Siggs declared a personal interest and left the room during the following discussion concerning the proposal from Phase2. Members asked that more information be sought and brought back to the next meeting.

09/051F TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Cruse Bereavement Care – Members asked for more information and the matter to be brought back to the next meeting

09/052F TO ELECT MEMBERS TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

It was **recommended** that Cllrs N Kennedy, J North, D Anderson were elected to the personnel committee as members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Cllr S Robertson expressed an interest to be elected as a representative from “other members” of the City Council. Dates of the Committee would be discussed at or after the City Council Meeting

The Chairman informed the Committee that the staff had received a 1% cost of living rise to be back dated to April 2009.

09/053F REPLACEMENT OF GLASS IN THE MILLENNIUM TAPESTRY DISPLAY CASE

Members asked if before accepting the quote from Roman Glass an enquiry for a quote could be made to the Council Insurance company and then a final decision made.

09/054F SIGNAGE FOR THE NEW ALCOHOL RESTRICTED ZONE

Members unanimously **recommended** to accept the quote for the new signs.

09/055F ITEMS FOR URGENT REPORT

It was **recommended** that Cllr D Anderson should once again take charge of Christmas Lights in Wells

Cllr N Kennedy thanked the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and staff for their efforts over the past few weeks.