

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held in the Council Chamber at Wells Town Hall on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009 at 7.00pm

The meeting started late at 7.20pm due to an earlier planning meeting over running.

**PRESENT:** Councillor: T Robbins – Chairman  
Councillors C Borastero, N Kennedy, J North, H Siggs and C Price

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: Jo Swift, Steve Luck (RFO)

#### **09/056F PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was one member of the public who made the following comments:

Whilst appreciating the difficulties the Council is presently experiencing there are still concerns regarding the lack of information available to the public particularly where publicly owned assets are concerned. Three points were made:

1. Are the various reports referred to on tonight's Agenda as having been scrutinised by Councillors prior to the meeting now in the public domain and if not why not?
2. The potential transfer of the Bishops Barn back to the City was discussed in a private session. Surely any decision of this matter should be minuted precisely and available for public comment.
3. Administration of the Wells Recreation Ground Charitable Trust has been fragmented for many years and appropriate care of this public asset has suffered as a result. Mrs Siddons then went onto to talk about Mendip District Council and was told that with all respect comments regarding Mendip District Council had to be directed to them.

The Chairman responded and explained that only the finances were scrutinised prior to the start of the meeting. The discussion of the Bishops Barn was minuted and it clearly states in the minutes of the last meeting that the following be recommended - 'That a letter be sent to Mendip District Council stating that Wells City Council are not presently in a position to take on the Recreation Ground and Barn and that the City Council don't want to manage it anymore'.

Councillor H Siggs apologised and said he would have declared and interest and left the room had he known that this subject was going to be discussed.

At this stage of the meeting Councillor Price asked why an item to discuss the drop down screen for the main hall had not been put on the Agenda even though it had been agreed to at the last meeting. The Chairman said it had been considered but as no further information had been made available it had been decided not to put it on the Agenda but it would go on the next Agenda now information was available.

**09/70F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor D Anderson and Councillor M Brandon

**09/71F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any Declarations of Interest under the Local Authority (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007, issued under SI No. 11/59 including paragraph 12 (2).

**09/072F FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received the financial reports for November which had been scrutinised and approved. The bank statements were checked by Councillors Borastero and North.

**09/073F. REPORT FROM RFO**

Lloyds Bank – the RFO needs permission for Internet Banking but has to be a signatory on the bank account to be able to have internet access. Councillor North proposed that the RFO be a signatory but doesn't sign any cheques. This was seconded by Councillor Borastero. All unanimously agreed.

Precept – there has been some confusion regarding the date for the precept. On the diary of engagements the meeting of the full council on 28<sup>th</sup> January was scheduled to agree the precept however Mendip District Council want the precept amount by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010. The Town Clerk has had it agreed by Mendip District Council that the deadline will be extended until the end of January 2010.

The budget has been prepared so will be sent out shortly to allow Councillors plenty of time to view it before the next meeting.

**09/074F TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

There was nothing to report.

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference would be looked at so that each Working group knew what the remit was.

**09/075F ITEMS FOR URGENT REPORT**

Councillor Borastero reported that although the report had not yet been received from the Auditor it was mentioned that Policies and Procedures was one item that would be on there. The Town Clerk said she had started looking into this already.

The status of Committees and Working Groups also needs to be looked at with regards to delegated powers/schemes of delegation/Terms of Reference. The Financial Regulations also need to be reviewed. Councillor H Siggs will liaise with the Town Clerk on this matter.

**09/076F DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting is Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 at 7pm. ***(please note change of date)***

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

There was one member of the public present.