

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee held on Monday 18 June 2007. Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm.

Present Chairman: Cllr J Capel  
Cllrs P J Adams, P Davies, Mrs J Foster, Ms L Hazell, S Tilbey and M Taylor

Officer: Mrs Janet Holmes

64. **Apologies for absence**  
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Cole.
65. **Election of Committee Chairman**  
Proposed by Cllr Ms L Hazell  
Seconded by Cllr M Taylor  
Cllr J Capel was appointed Chairman of the Finance and General Purpose Committee for the year 2007/8
66. **Election of Vice Chairman**  
Proposed by Cllr Ms L Hazell  
Seconded by Cllr S Tilbey  
Cllr M Taylor was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Finance and General Purpose Committee for the year 2007/8
67. **To agree the timing of future meetings**  
The Committee unanimously agreed that meetings should be held at 6 pm
68. **Declarations of interest**  
Members were asked to declare any personal interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
69. **Public Forum**  
No members of the Public were present
70. **To receive the minutes of the meetings held on 20 February 2007 part 1 and 2**  
The minutes were duly approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman of the Committee
71. **Financial Matters**  
a) To accept a schedule of payments for the period 1.5.2007 – 31.5.2007  
Payments duly accepted. A full statement of balances will be available for the next Finance and General Purpose meeting
- b) To receive the report from Haines Watts the Council's Internal Auditor for financial year 2006/7  
The Internal Auditor had visited the premises and carried out an audit of the council's finances and procedures for the past year. Councillors considered the comments in the report and noted that comments had been made regarding the following topics  
The Capital Building Project, VAT, Computers, Banking , Risk Assessment and Asset Register  
The following actions would need to be taken during the forthcoming year

Chairman.....

Date .....

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

- VAT. Once the final decision regarding the hall development had been made, the VAT situation might need to be changed.
- Computers. A review of the security aspects will need to be undertaken if members of staff undertake work from home.
- Banking. A change to the banking arrangements will necessitate a review of the Council's Financial Regulations and possibly an update of the Council's Standing Orders.
- Risk Assessment. No risk assessments were reviewed during the year 2006/7. It is suggested that these be undertaken piecemeal over a period of time during the current year.
- Asset Register. Although the information had been commenced with the review of the insurance cover, a formal register would need to be compiled during the year.

c) Statement of Internal Control

In response to the District Auditor's request to review the Parish Council's system of internal control, the committee unanimously adopted a formal policy document entitled "Statement of Internal Control" as part of the Parish Council's Financial Regulations.

d) A review of the amount to be held for the Parish Council's reserves

Cllr Capel distributed financial statements showing the impact on the Council's finances and reserves should a decision be made to borrow £1.5 million or £2.5 million over a period of 20 years. It was noted that if the Council borrow the greater sum, there will need to be a change to the agreed minimum reserve figure of £ 260,000. [currently set at one year's expenditure]

Cllr Capel agreed to produce an additional set of figures which would show the impact on future precepts if borrowing took place and the reserve figure remained the same.

AGREED that this item would be discussed further at the next meeting when the Halls Committee would have made a decision on whether to rebuild or refurbish.

e) To discuss the funds available for the future building project, agree a maximum amount available and how the funds should be repaid

After reviewing the financial statements, the committee agreed that the Parish Council could not sustain borrowing an amount in excess of £1.5 million. Anything over this amount would not be a viable proposition. Although it was recommended that payments be made over a period of 20 years, a longer period can be considered if deemed necessary.

f) Requests for Grant Aid

i. Burnham Community Association

AGREED that this application be deferred to the next meeting when a copy of the audited accounts should be made available

ii. Victim Support Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire

AGREED that this application be deferred to the next meeting when a copy of the audited accounts and information of Burnham residents who had benefited from the scheme should be made available.

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

iii. High St Traders Association

Burnham High St Association had requested assistance for forthcoming events in Burnham .

AGREED to grant the Association £250 for all community events held in Burnham during the year up to 31/3/2008

iv Burnham Lighthouse 2007.

A request was received for £500 to support the project for 2007.

AGREED that £500 [ the maximum amount under the Council's policy] be granted.

g] The High St Traders Association has requested that the Parish Council provide outside power on the toilet block with an on/off switch within the Jennery Lane toilets

The Clerk informed members that there is no three phase power supply to the toilet block and the current rating is not designed to power equipment such as generators as requested by the Association.

AGREED that the request be denied.

Clerk to write to the Association with a suitable letter of explanation

**72. To receive a verbal report from the Parish Clerk regarding the recent visit by HM Revenue and Customs.**

The Clerk had received a visit from a HM Revenue and Customs Inspector. A complete review of the Council's employer's and contractors records, including all payroll details, was undertaken.

It appears that correspondence which commenced in the year 2002/3 regarding PAYE settlement agreements on council properties was still outstanding. A formal report from the Inspector regarding the meeting has not yet been received. The matter will be brought back to this committee at a later date.

**73. Future Projects**

Councillors were invited to submit possible projects for consideration at future meetings which could be of benefit to the community. It was agreed that this matter should also be discussed at a meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

**74. Staffing**

a. To note the employment of two new members of staff.

The Clerk reported that two part time members of staff had been appointed Mr Peter Kennedy was employed as a handyman for 12 hours per week and would cover for the caretaker during holidays and other absences when his hours would increase accordingly

Ms Joy Simmonds would be employed on a casual basis to cover Mrs R DiCioccio's maternity leave – at least until the end of October. Ms Simmonds was self employed and would invoice the council on a monthly basis

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

b. To consider the request from two members of staff for amendments to their annual leave entitlement.

i. The Clerk had previously obtained the committee's agreement to carry over three weeks leave to March 2008 to attend a specific event abroad. Her family circumstances had now changed and she requested that she be allowed to take these three weeks in September /October 2007

AGREED unanimously

ii. A member of staff had requested that he receive payment in lieu of annual leave  
The Committee agreed that one weeks leave could be paid during this year only

c. Staff training

The Clerk requested permission to attend the Clerk's summer school which will be held at the University of Gloucestershire on 11 /12 July 2007

AGREED that the Clerk should attend the course as part of her ongoing professional development.

d. Incident between a member of the staff and a member of the public at the George Pitcher Memorial Ground.

The Clerk reported that a member of staff had been verbally abused and intimidated whilst working at the George Pitcher Memorial Ground. A report had been made to the police

**75. Use of Jennery Lane toilets**

The Clerk had received information from the District Council regarding the use of Jennery Lane toilets which had now been forwarded to the police

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.50 pm