

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee held on Thursday 5 February 2009. Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm.

Present Chairman: Cllr J Capel
Cllrs M Cole, Mrs C Binns, P Davies, M Hewitt and M Taylor,

Officer: Mrs Janet Holmes

852. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs P J Adams; Ms L Hazell and S Tilbey

853. 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.

854. Public Forum

No members of the public were present.

855. To receive the minutes of the Finance and General Purpose Committee of 15 December 2008 and the Joint Finance and General Purpose/Halls Committee of 16 December 2008

All sets of minutes were duly approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman of the Committee

856. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not included on the agenda

857. South Bucks Partnership – Questions from Town and Parish councils

Discussion took place regarding the role of SBALC and the proposed increase to subscriptions. SBALC proposed to increase Burnham’s subscription from £55 per annum to £146.

The Parish/Town Clerks meet together on a regular basis at the offices of South Bucks District Council to share information. It was agreed that although this was a useful forum when it was originally set up, with the advent of text messaging and emails for instant communication such a meeting of councillors is no longer necessary.

Members agreed not to renew their subscription, Clerk to inform SBALC accordingly

Clerk

858. Training

a. The Parish Councils (Power to Promote Well –being) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2008

The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities a discretionary power to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well being of their area. A similar piece of legislation has been drafted for Parish Councils. Statutory guidance is in the process of being drafted which will fully explain the conditions required for a Council to qualify as an eligible Parish Council, the period of eligibility for using the well being power and the scope, limitations and restrictions of the power.

At least 80% [16 for Burnham] of councillors of a Parish Council wishing to exercise the power of well being MUST have undertaken training in the use of the well being

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power and clerks must have passed the relevant test. Training will be provided by County Training Partnerships. The information will be launched at a NALC meeting in February [unfortunately during the period the Clerk is on leave] SLCC will organise training sessions in the forthcoming months

The attendance at training sessions is one of the stipulations for keeping Quality Status. The Assistant Clerk, Mrs Mansford, and councillors Mrs Hammon, Pepler and Slater will be attending the regional training day at Binfield on 24 March 2009.

Asst Clerk
Cllr Hammon
Cllr Pepler
Cllr Slater

The Clerk is being trained, as a trainer, by the Society of Local Council Clerks and will attend a similar event in Uckfield in November. By assisting the Society in its training courses, the Clerk will have her travelling and other expenses covered by the Society. Thus there will be no charge to the Council for many of the courses that she would normally attend as part of her ongoing professional development.

Clerk

The Clerk and Cllr Ms Hazell will be attending a NALC "Stepping Stones" training course in London on 10 March 2009

Clerk
Cllr Hazell

859. Local Government Pension Scheme

New Discretionary Policy Statement. Each employer must make a policy statement on six specific discretions. The Parish Council were asked to consider the information and create a discretionary Policy statement. The Clerk presented a proposed document based on the Buckinghamshire County Council policy with minor adjustments. Councillors were unhappy with item 3.1 and requested further information. Cllr Cole offered to discuss the proposals with officers from Bucks County Council.

3.1 Discretion of employer to increase total membership of active member

The County Council will, in exceptional circumstances and on a case by case basis, award augmented years to increase the membership (pensionable service) of a current employee in the pension scheme by up to 10 years. Each case to be considered on its merits

AGREED

- 1. That the matter be deferred to the next meeting
- 2. That Cllr Cole discuss the proposal policy with Bucks County Council pension department and bring the information back to the next meeting

Cllr Cole

860. To consider a suitable property to relocate the Council administration.

See minute 790 of meeting held on 1 December 2008.

The Clerk and the Chairman had viewed a ground floor property in the High St. The cost of £18 per square foot to include all heating, lighting, rate, rent and communal cleaning was within the suggested bracket. The Parish Council to be responsible for the installation of IT as appropriate.

AGREED that the property would meet the Council's needs both in location, suitability and cost. However there is still a measure of uncertainty regarding an office move until after the tenders for the rebuilding have been opened on 9 March.

Clerk to contact the estate agent to explain the situation and ask that the Council may give an answer after 9 March 2009.

Clerk

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861. To consider the long term storage of Council items

The Clerk has details of storage containers that could be placed on the site of the former garage at Burnham Park. The planning department [Mr Tony Franklin] have confirmed that as the structure would not be connected to any services there be no need to apply for planning permission.

AGREED that a storage container be rented or purchased when the demolition date is known

Clerk

862. Clerk’s co-option to NALC Executive Committee

The National Association of Local Councils [NALC] is the body which represents Town and Parish councils. Its members are councillors from England and Wales. It co-opts 4 Clerks to its executive committee and Mrs Holmes has been co-opted to fill a vacancy. It holds 4 meetings a year; two in London and two at locations around the country. Travelling and subsidence expenses are paid by NALC. The Clerk asked for permission to attend the four meetings.

The Clerk was complimented on her co-option and permission to attend was granted

863. Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted [staffing matters] that pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as applied by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and press were asked to leave the meeting.

Members considered the following staffing matters [see appendix]

- 1. To receive an update on the agreement with Old Windsor
- 2. Current staffing issues

7.25 Cllrs Mrs Binns, Cole and Hewitt left the meeting

Councillors then resumed the meeting

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865. Standing Orders

The Clerk informed members that copies of the proposed revised **Standing Orders** were currently being considered by Cllrs Capel and Taylor. They would be offered to members for consideration at the next meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee Copies of proposed **Financial Regulations** and **Risk Assessments Associated with Financial Regulations** were given to Cllrs Capel and Taylor at the meeting for consideration over the next few weeks. These documents would also be submitted to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purpose committee

Cllr Capel/
Cllr Taylor

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.40 pm