

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held at Burnham Park Hall on Monday 14 April 2003 at 7.30 pm.

Members Present: *Councillor B S Dhillon (Chairman)*
Councillor M Taylor (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors: S E Davies, L K Hazell J Somers, and S L Tilbey

PART1

116. **Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs P C Adams, J P Capel and J M M Thomson.

117. **Resignation Cllr H Blair**

To receive and accept the resignation of Cllr H Blair.

118. **Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest

119. **Chairman's Communications**

The Chairman wished to record his thanks to Cllr Blair for her contribution to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Parish Council as a whole. The Chairman also noted that Cllr S E Davies was not standing for re-election and requested that the Parish Council should write to each of the members thanking them for their Contribution towards the work of the Council

The Chairman informed members that the matter of the halls booking software was discussed a number of months ago when it was agreed that the Executive Officer should make further enquiries to find a package which was more cost effective than the ones quoted for so far. The Chairman informed members that after many months of research a new hall booking programme has been purchased. The new programme has been installed and the Council's staff has received on site training. This would enable the Committee to receive the additional management information it had missed over the last 12 months.

The Chairman reminded Members that it had been agreed that the Council's banking facilities should be changed to the National Westminster bank, however, due to certain administrative issues this has not been completed during the current financial year. However, as a new Council will be in place in May and all members will have to sign new banking mandates the Executive Officer will use this change over as the correct time to undertake the change of banking facilities. Members were requested to be aware that under the new legislation required by banks a copy of Member's passport and driving licence will be required to support the mandate.

120. **Minutes of the Committee Meetings – 10 February 2003.**

Cllr B S Dhillon, Chairman of the Committee presented and moved the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2003.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes be approved.

Finance Report

121. **Schedule of Payments for February 2003.**

The Executive Officer presented the schedule of payments totalling £20,317.40 for February 2003,

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the report was received and noted.

122. **Schedule of Payments for March 2003.**

The Executive Officer presented the schedule of payments totalling £20,093.04 for March 2002.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the report was received and noted.

123. **Audit 2002/03**

The Executive Officer presented the unqualified report of the External Auditors Hacker Young for the year ended 31 March 2002

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the report was received and noted.

124. **Financial Regulations**

The Executive Officer presented the amended Financial Regulations to be considered by the Committee.

The Executive Officer pointed out to members the fundamental changes as follows:

Financial regulations 13 was amended to allow any unspent specific provisions in the revenue budget to be carried forward with the agreement of the Finance and General Purposes Committee or Full Council provided that the resources are allocated to a specific project or item of work which could not be completed in the original financial year in which the provision was raised.

Financial regulation 44b and 44g increased the limit at which three tenders are required before entering into a contractual agreement. This limit was increased from £3,000 to £6,000.

Financial regulation 58 places a duty of the Executive Officer to review the Council's insurances annually.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the Amended Financial Regulations should be recommended to Full Council for adoption.

125. **Training Policy**

The Executive Officer presented a paper for a Council Training Policy written by Cllr H Blair. Members discussed the contents of the paper including if there was a need for the Parish Council to have a training policy.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

126. **Insurance**

The Executive Officer presented Members with a schedule of the Council's insurances and recommended to members that the Council's fidelity insurance should be increased to £750K to reflect the peak monies held by the Council at certain times of the year.

The Executive Officer then brought to Members' attention that as a result of an enquiry it had come to officers' attention that certain hall users did not carry public liability insurance. This particularly applied to weekend bookings in the form of weddings and parties. This lack of cover would leave the Council open to liability under Occupiers liability.

The Executive Officer had made enquiries with Zurich Municipal regarding a hall hire policy which would provide hall hirers with public liability cover without impacting on the Council's Risk History and in addition this would give the Council a damage insurance on which the Council could claim for damage to property. This would be based on an insurance premium of 10% of the Council's letting fees for those hall hirers who had no insurance. The policy would require a £250 deposit and an annual return of hires at the end of each year. The highest premium would be £7,000. based on current hall hires, however based on weekend hires it was anticipated to be about £4,000. One way to resolve this issue would be to increase hall hire charges by 10% on all hirers without insurance.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the Council's fidelity insurance should be increased to £750K
- ◆ That a hall hire policy should be adopted.
- ◆ That the cost of the premium should be passed directly on to the hall hirer.

Subscriptions

127. The Full Parish Council had requested the Finance and General Purposes Committee to reconsider the continuing membership of the Bucks Association of Local Councils (BALC) and the South Bucks association of Local Councils (SBALC).

The Chairman informed the Members that under the current constitution of the SBALC it was necessary for the Parish Council to be also a member of the BALC. However it was understood that SBALC was reviewing its constitution.

Members discussed the benefits to be obtained from the BALC and were still of the opinion that benefits to the Council could be obtained by further associations.

Cllr L K Hazell informed the meeting that if the major parish councils withdrew their support then it was possible that BALC would collapse and therefore asked the Committee to consider what it would find as acceptable for an increase in subscriptions.

Members noted that despite the rise in fees for large Councils there had been a reduction in fees for smaller Councils. Cllr S L Tilbey requested that BALC clarify the reasons for the rise and what added services and benefits the Council would receive for this large increase.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the Committee may reconsider its subscription if the increase was 3%.
- ◆ In addition BALC would also be requested to advise the Council of the tangible services it could offer the Parish Council which it did not already receive.
- ◆ That SBALC subscription would be only reconsidered if a new constitution was agreed.
- ◆ That both subscriptions should not be paid at this time and the matter should be deferred to a later meeting.

128. South East Employers

Members noted the Subscription to South East Employers was now due to be renewed.

The Executive Officer informed Members that the renewal fee was £150 compared to the previous years £98 and increase in excess of 50%.

Members discussed the benefits received from the Association, including the cost of training. The Executive Officer informed Members that most of the training was directed at principal authorities and the other courses were cost prohibitive.

Members clarified with the Executive Officer that the principal information received from the South east Employers was during national pay negotiations.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the subscription to South East Employers should not be renewed.

Applications for grants and grant information

129. Burnham Youth Centre

Members noted the letter of thanks from the Burnham Youth Centre for the Parish Councils Grant of £500.

130. Burnham Lighthouse Project

Members received an application for a grant from the Burnham Lighthouse Project for a grant towards the cost of providing a Christian holiday club for children aged 4 to 11 in the Burnham area.

Members commented on the success of the project in the previous year, however there had been some complaints regarding, parking, noise and that staff had not been police checked.

Members expressed support for the project but felt that although they could not condition any grant funding the Parish Council should put in writing that it was important for the project to comply with any statutory requirements.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That a grant of £500 be made to the project.
- ◆ That the Executive Officer would write to the organisers requesting them to comply with any statutory requirements.

131. Winged Fellowship Trust

Members received an application for a grant from the Winged Fellowship to support the provision of respite care for carers of disabled and visually impaired people.

Members requested more information regarding the services provided directly into Burnham.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ The application be deferred and the Executive Officer would establish what services were provided within the Burnham Community.

Justice Licence Applications

132. Members considered an application for the transfer of a Justices licence for the Garibaldi Public House, 13 High Street, Burnham, Bucks. SL1 7JB

Resolved:

- ◆ The Council had no objections or comments.

133. Members considered an application for a Justices licence for the Night and Day Convenience Store, Totalfina Elf, 120 Lent Rise Road, Burnham, Bucks. SL1 7BH

Resolved:

- ◆ The Council objected on the grounds that the area is already serviced by two off licences and the area may become a gathering point for young people.

Exclusion of Press and Public

134. **Resolved**

- ◆ That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Act

Chairman

Date

Meeting Concluded 9.30 pm