

**MINUTES of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2012 at 6.30PM**

**Present:** Cllrs Emberson (Chair),  
Belchamber MBE, Gammon,  
Hulmes, Long, Scrivener and  
Squires

**2012/2013**

**14. EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

The evacuation procedures were noted.

**15. MOBILE PHONES**

Members and the public were reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) was prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

**16. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Britton.

**17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. Councillor Gammon declared a personal interest on the item relating to Littlehampton Harbour as he was a member of Littlehampton Harbour Board. With regard to the items on the town centre, he declared a personal interest as a Member of the Arun District Council Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-committee.

**18. MINUTES**

The non-exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2012 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**19. CHAIR'S REPORT AND URGENT ITEMS**

There were none.

**20. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

**21. OFFICER'S REPORT**

**21.1 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

21.1.1 The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which incorporated draft Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which would need to be recommended to Council and also included revised Schemes of Delegation to

Committees. Responding to a question, the Clerk explained that any comments made up to the meeting of Council would of course be reported and that once the Standing Orders had been approved, they would still remain able to be amended by Council at a later date.

21.1.2 The Committee considered the Standing Orders in depth and suggested the following changes:-

- The indexing showing whether the Standing Order applied to Council meetings, Committees and/or Sub-Committees could be made clearer, particularly for black and white versions, by using different shapes to demarcate the different references.
- Typographical errors in the first lines of the Standing Order 31(o) and 36 were noted.
- Reference needed to be included within the Standing Orders to allow individual Members to attend Committees of which they were not a Member. This would be to allow that Member to speak on a specific item where they had a clear reason so to do. It was suggested that this should be progressed by that Member writing directly to the Clerk indicating that he/she wished to speak on a matter and explaining why. The Member would not be able to vote on such an item.

21.1.3 The Financial Regulations were considered without amendment.

21.1.4 The Committee considered the revised Scheme of Delegation to Committee and agreed that the following changes should be incorporated in the draft considered by Council later in the month:-

- The Performance and Publicity Committee should continue for the remainder of this Council year but then cease to be, with its performance matters being moved to the Governance and Audit Committee and its strategic publicity role relocated to the Policy and Finance Committee.
- The revised Community Resources Committee Scheme of Delegation was supported.
- The revised Policy and Finance Scheme of Delegation was supported with the Periodic Review of the Council Standing Orders and the setting up and monitoring of control systems for the oversight of Council expenditure both relocated to the Governance and Audit Committee.
- The revised Property and Personnel Committee Scheme of Delegation was supported.
- The proposed Planning and Transportation Committee Scheme of Delegation was also supported.
- The Governance and Audit Committee Scheme of Delegation was supported with the inclusion of the two matters referred to earlier from the Policy and Finance Committee.

21.1.5 Other issues discussed included the clarification of the Membership of the Planning and Transportation Committee and also whether the Governance and Audit Committee's extended membership, which would include the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, should include those as full Members of the Committee or as ex-officio.

21.1.6 It was **RESOLVED** that:

**Council be RECOMMENDED to approve the revised Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Schemes of Delegation as circulated to the Committee with the amendments set out in Minute 21.1 above incorporated.**

**21.2 Payments by Parish & Community Councils – Consultation**

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) seeking the Committee's comments and endorsement of a response to the Department for Communities and Local Government on a proposal to allow councils to adopt modern methods of payment and alternative means of control. Members were supportive of the proposals and it was **RESOLVED** that:

**The response as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved.**

**21.3 Harbour Issues**

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which provided an update on harbour issues and the proposed future of the Harbour Project Board. As local ward Member, Councillor Belchamber MBE referred to the appalling consultation with the traders in Pier Road, both with regard to the delay to the East Bank enhancements and also to the investigatory work that was to be undertaken over the next few weeks. He was pleased that the Environment Agency had been persuaded to commence this work at the footbridge, working towards Pier Road later in the autumn. It was hoped that there were now better lines of communication between the Environment Agency and the local traders. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The report be noted.**

**21.4 Town Centre**

**(a) Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee**

The Committee considered a copy of a report which had been considered by the District Council's Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee. Responding to a comment by a Member, the Town Clerk clarified that the Section 106 monies referred to within the report were only a part of the contribution being made by Morrisons as a result of their recent planning permission. Members were pleased that the sums would go towards priorities identified as part of the Portas Pilot bid and also noted the further work to be undertaken regarding the St Martin's Car Park development.

**(b) DCLG Paper "Re-imagining urban spaces to help revitalise our High Streets"**

The Committee considered a copy of a paper from the Department for Communities and Local Government (previously circulated), which was thought to be a useful backdrop to some of the other work that was currently ongoing. The Town Clerk also reported that a further £10,000 had been made available by the Government to support the Town Team. This would need to be applied for by the local MP. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The Paper be noted.**

**21.5 ADC/LTC Liaison**

The Committee considered the draft notes of the Liaison meeting held on 30 August 2012 (circulated at the meeting). It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The notes be noted.**

**21.6 Renegotiation of Section 106 Planning Agreements**

The Committee considered a consultation paper from the Department for Communities and Local Government (previously circulated) regarding the renegotiation of Section 106 Planning obligations. Without responding in detail, Members strongly expressed their opposition to this proposal and asked the Town Clerk to write accordingly. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The Town Council's opposition to the proposal be forwarded as a response to the consultation paper.**

**22. ACCOUNTS**

**22.1 Finance Report 2012/13**

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) highlighting significant variances from budgeted income and expenditure related to the Policy and Finance Committee's budget for 2012/13. In response to a question, the Clerk would write to all Members of the Committee, clarifying the investments set out in the table of the report. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**Other than the action above, the report be noted.**

**22.2 Localising Support for Council Tax**

22.2.1 The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) setting out the details of a Government proposal to exclude parish councils from the impact of the Localising Support for Council Tax scheme. The Town Clerk explained that the original proposals would have caused a reduction in the tax base for local councils, which would have meant that the tax level, or Band D, associated with any given precept amount, would rise. The amount of such an increase could be very significant (not just limited to 10%). It was feared that such increases could lead to local councils being included and caught in the excessive increases referendum arrangement.

22.2.2 The Clerk went on to explain that the new proposal being consulted upon was that the tax base regulations be amended so that the calculation of tax levels for local precepting bodies should exclude the effect of the localising support for council tax schemes. This would mean that things would stay much as they were now. Members were pleased to note this important change and **RESOLVED** that:

**The proposals as set out within the consultation paper be supported.**

23. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

***The public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.***

24. **MINUTES - EXEMPT**

The Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on the 18 June 2012 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

The meeting closed at 8.07pm.

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**CHAIR**