



**MINUTES of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on MONDAY 18 JUNE 2012 at 6.30PM**

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

The Mayor, Cllr Neno, also attended

**2012/2013**

**1. EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

The evacuation procedures were noted.

**2. 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.

**3. APOLOGIES**

There were none.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and Officers were invited to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. No declarations were made at this stage.

**5. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2012 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

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

There were none.

**7. PUBLIC FORUM**

No questions were raised.

**8. OFFICER'S REPORT**

**8.1 Members' Code of Conduct & Register of Members' Interests**

8.1.1 The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which explained the background to the production of a new Code of Conduct and Register of Members' Interests as a result of the Localism Act 2012. The Clerk explained that whilst several models had been proposed, a model Sussex-wide code was emerging and that he had therefore adapted this to the Town Council's needs. This was in line with the Council's previous statement

that it wished to keep the existing Code as intact as possible. The Clerk explained the key themes of the new Code and also explained that he was seeking further clarification with regard to the Scheme of Dispensation and how recommendations from the Standards Committee could be dealt with by the Council.

- 8.1.2 Members were supportive of the Code, which met the core criteria that they had set previously and **RESOLVED** to:

**1. RECOMMEND to Council the broad principles of the proposed new Code of Conduct as set out in Appendix 7 of the report, subject to any further amendment that the Town Clerk might need to make in advance of that meeting, particularly regarding a Scheme of Dispensation and recommendations from the Monitoring Officer/Standards Committee.**

**2. Note that a further review might be necessary in the autumn once the District Council is in a position to advise their local councils.**

## 8.2 Town Traders' Partnership and Portas Pilot

- 8.2.1 The Clerk reported orally on the meeting of the Town Traders' Partnership held on 19<sup>th</sup> June. He spoke about three issues that had been discussed namely: the flooding in the town centre; the Manor House car park and the Portas Pilot. He explained that he had invited the Traders' Partnership to consider ways in which the Town Council might be able to assist the town centre Traders in future, should there be a repeat of the flooding earlier in the week. The Town Clerk would report back fully to the Committee on the receipt of this information and also when Arun had undertaken a review of their response to the floods.
- 8.2.2 The Traders had also suggested that the District Council be approached to reverse the traffic flow in the Manor House car park, thereby pointing those using the car park back towards other town centre car parks and the retailers, rather than directing them out of town. Members were supportive of the broad proposal and endorsed the Town Clerk progressing the Traders' proposal.
- 8.2.3 Lastly, it was noted that the Portas Pilot application had been unsuccessful, but would be automatically resubmitted in the second round. However, the Clerk would be liaising with the Town Team to progress how the initiatives identified, which were mainly a scheme to fill empty shops and improved signing, could be progressed with or without the Portas funding.
- 8.2.4 It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

**The actions of the Town Clerk in these matters be endorsed and that the current position otherwise be noted.**

## 8.3 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Town Clerk reported that it had been intended to bring revised Standing Orders to this meeting of the Committee and Council later in the month. The

lateness of the Code of Conduct papers had meant that these changes could not be incorporated in time and therefore would be brought to the September meeting of the Committee. The position was noted.

8.4 **Littlehampton Health Services Advisory Group**

In the absence of an agenda, there was nothing to report.

9. **ACCOUNTS**

9.1 **Finance Report 2011/12**

The Committee considered the first Finance Report for the Committee's budget for 2012/13 (previously circulated) and **RESOLVED** that:

***The report be noted.***

9.2 **Audit 2012/13 to 2016/17**

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which advised Members that Littlejohn LLP had been appointed as the auditor for Littlehampton Town Council and all smaller relevant bodies in West Sussex for the period 2012/13 to 2016/17. Members were asked if they knew of any reason why Littlejohn LLP should not be appointed as the Council's auditor and no Members knew of any. Members noted that the scale of fees would realise a £1,000 budgetary saving. It was **RESOLVED** that:

***It be recorded that no Members present knew of any reason why Littlejohn LLP should not be appointed as the Council's auditor and that the report otherwise be noted.***

9.3 **Earmarked Reserves**

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which identified Earmarked Reserves to be held to meet known and predictable liabilities. In response to a number of questions, the Clerk agreed to ascertain for Councillor Squires, the progress that was being made with regard to the acquisition of a bench from the Ham Ward monies and also to clarify for Councillor Gammon the expenditure that had been met from the Brookfield Ward budget in recent years. In all other respects the proposals were supported and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

***1. The allocation of Earmarked Reserves from the 2011/12 Budget as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.***

***2. The removal of Earmarked Reserves no longer required as set out in Appendix 2 be noted.***

10. **MASTERPLAN – NORTH LITTLEHAMPTON**

The Town Clerk had no updates to report.

11. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

**POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 18 JUNE 2012**

**SUMMARY OF MATTERS DISCUSSED UNDER  
THE EXEMPT PART OF THE AGENDA**

**12. Church Street Offices: Funding Options**

The Committee considered a report setting out options for funding the acquisition of the former District Council housing offices in Church Street with additional works. Following the discussions at the meeting, a recommendation to Council has been agreed to obtain a loan in the sum of £300,000 over a 15-year term to achieve this.