



Chard Town Council

HOLYROOD LACE MILL, HOLYROOD STREET, CHARD,
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Mayor: Cllr Martin Wale Town Clerk: John Furze

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the **Finance & Personnel Committee** meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 29th January 2008 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7:30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors:

D M Bulmer
D R Hill (Chairman)
D Keitch
Mrs A Spencer

Ex-officio + voting:

Mayor - M J Wale
Deputy Mayor – Mrs C A Morrison

Appointed voting Reserves:

Mrs J C Shortland and D M Mears

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Internal Auditor Mrs M King (left 8:45), the Town Clerk Mr G J Furze and the Finance Officer Mr T M Cutler (left 8:45). One member of the Press and no members of the public were present.

89. Apologies for absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given.

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllrs A Kenton and Mrs J Kenton both holiday, J Armstrong and Mrs R T Wickenden, both illness.

RESOLVED – to accept the apologies and approve the reasons given.

90. Declarations of Interest.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

RESOLVED – to note.

91. Exclusion of the Press and Public – to agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

RESOLVED – that agenda item no 11, Staff in Confidence (3 items), be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

92. Report of Mrs Mary King, the Internal Auditor.

Mrs King presented her report of the quarterly audit conducted on the 16th January 2008. Mrs King made no adverse comments. In addition, Mrs King had also reviewed the Financial Regulations, the Financial Risk Assessments and the Purchasing Delegation Limits and found them to be acceptable and made no adverse comments.

RESOLVED – to note.

93. Review of the Internal Audit.

The Committee reviewed the effectiveness of the Internal Audit procedures following the amendment to Accounts and Audit Regulations, SI 32006 no. 564.

RESOLVED – that the current Internal Audit procedures are satisfactory.

94. Annual Review of Financial Regulations.

The Committee reviewed the Financial Regulations. The Committee agreed that paragraphs 3.4 and 3.6 should have "except for the Town Clerk's delegated powers as itemised in the Purchasing Delegation Limits" inserted.

RESOLVED – subject to the above amendment, that the Financial Regulations were reviewed and accepted.

95. Annual Review of Financial Risk Assessments.

The Committee reviewed the Financial Risk Assessments.

RESOLVED – that the Financial Risk Assessments had been reviewed and were accepted.

96. Review of the Purchasing Delegation Limits.

The Committee reviewed the Purchasing Delegation Limits. The Committee agreed that they should be amended to read "The Town Council will authorise the following within budget heads." and that its authorisation will include "All quotations and competitive tenders in excess of £5,000". The Town Council Committees authorisation should now read "Competitive quotations will be sought for all orders and regular purchases greater than £2,000 and less than £5,000 and competitive tenders where expenditure exceeds £5,000."

RESOLVED – subject to the above amendment, the draft Purchase Delegation Limits were reviewed and accepted.

97. Review of the Financial Reserves - as resolved the Town Council meeting held 17th December 2007.

A report from the R.F.O. based on information received from the Councils External Auditors and from S.A.L.C. indicated that the Revenue Reserves held by Chard Town Council as at 31st March 2007 were acceptable.

Cllr Mrs J Shortland proposed that an amendment to the substantive proposal, that the reserves be reviewed and accepted or not, be amended to "that the report from the R.F.O. be accepted but that the Council writes to S.A.L.C. expressing disgust at the levels

of reserves that are required to be held.” The motion was defeated. The substantive motion was voted on and it was.....

RESOLVED – to accept the report and to note the level of reserves.

98. Recommendation from Amenities Committee – that the Amenities Committee urges the Finance & Personnel Committee to earmark £60k from its Capital Reserves for the purchase of a new cemetery.

Cllr Mrs J C Shortland proposed and Cllr D Keitch seconded the motion to accept the recommendation from the Amenities Committee to earmark funding of £60,000 for the new cemetery, which is a high priority for this Council, and that the Town Clerk undertakes further discussion with the District Council to identify a suitable site.

Following a vote, four votes for and four votes against, with the Chairman’s casting vote against, the motion failed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 for five minutes.

99. RESOLVED – that on view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the press and public will be excluded during consideration on this item

Staff in confidence – 3 items.

The Town Clerk updated members on a range of staffing matters and received direction from members.

RESOLVED – to note the Town Clerk’s report.

The meeting closed at 10:25 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting of Chard Town Council held on Wednesday 16 April 2008 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7:30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors:

D M Bulmer
D R Hill (Chairman)
Mrs A Spencer

Ex-officio + voting:

Mayor - M J Wale
Deputy Mayor – Mrs C A Morrison

Appointed voting Reserve:

D M Mears

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze the Finance Officer, Mr T M Cutler (left 8:15), two members of the Press and no members of the public were present.

100. Apologies for absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given.

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllrs A Kenton and Mrs J Kenton, both holiday.

RESOLVED – to accept the apologies and approve the reasons given.

101. Declarations of Interest.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

RESOLVED – to note.

102. Exclusion of the Press and Public – to agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

RESOLVED – that agenda item no 5, Staff in Confidence (4 items), be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

103. Resolution from Guildhall and Tourism Committee – to discuss at the next Finance & Personnel Committee meeting if the T.I.C. should be open on a Saturday.

RESOLVED – that the Tourist Information Centre be open on a Saturday throughout the summer providing relevant staff and volunteers are available; that an investigation is undertaken to explore the possibilities of isolating the alarm in the T.I.C. and Foyer areas and that the Guildhall and Tourism Committee review the usage of the T.I.C. at the end of the summer season to plan for the next year.

104. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the press and public will be excluded during consideration on this item

Staff in confidence – 4 items.

The Town Clerk updated members on a range of staffing issues

RESOLVED – that a panel consisting of Cllrs Mrs C A Morrison, D M Mears, and Mrs C A Spencer undertake the Town Clerk’s annual review.

The R.F.O. left the meeting at 8:15 pm

RESOLVED – that the Committee delegates to the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Committee Chairman to seek an independent assessment of the four Senior Management posts within the Council. Costs of the assessment up to a maximum of £5,000 to be met from Reserves.

The meeting closed at 9:20 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the **Finance & Personnel Committee** meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 27 May 2008 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7:30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: D R Hill (retiring Chairman)
D M Bulmer

D Keitch
A Kenton
Mrs J Kenton
D M Mears

Ex-officio + voting: Mayor - M J Wale

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze and the Finance Officer, Mr T M Cutler (left at 8:45pm). There were no members of the Press or the public present.

105. Election of Chairman

The retiring Chairman, Cllr D R Hill, took the chair for this item.

Cllr D M Bulmer proposed and Cllr D Keitch seconded Cllr D M Hill for election as Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee.

There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED – that Cllr D R Hill be elected Chairman of the Finance & Personnel Committee until such times as a new Chairman of the Committee is elected.

Cllr D R Hill then assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting

106. Apologies for absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given.

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllr Mrs C A Morrison, conflicting meeting

Mrs Mary King, the Internal Auditor, tendered apologies for absence due to family illness.

RESOLVED – to accept the apologies and approve the reasons given.

107. Declarations of Interest.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

RESOLVED – to note.

108. Exclusion of the Press and Public – to agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

RESOLVED – that agenda item no 7, Staff in Confidence (4 items), be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

109. Report of the Internal Auditor, Mrs Mary King – report on the quarterly Internal Audit and the Year end review

RESOLVED – to note the report of the Internal Auditor.

110. Review of the Year end Accounts

Councillors reviewed the Year end Accounts and Financial Statements.

RESOLVED – to note

- 111. In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (agenda item 4 above refers) Staff in confidence – 4 items.**

The Town Clerk updated members on a range of staffing issues

The Town Clerk and R.F.O. left the meeting at 8:45pm. The Town Clerk rejoined the meeting at 9:25 pm

RESOLVED – to note

The meeting closed at 9:50 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 22 July 2008 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7:30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: D R Hill - Chairman
D M Bulmer
A Kenton
Mrs J Kenton
D M Mears
G Shortland
Mrs J C Shortland
Mrs A Spencer

Ex-officio + voting: Mayor of Chard, Cllr M J Wale

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze and the Finance Officer, Mr T M Cutler (left at 7:55 pm). 1 member of the Press was present and no members of the public.

- 112. Apologies for absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given.**

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllrs D Keitch, illness and Mrs C A Morrison, conflicting meeting.

Apologies had also been received from Mrs M King, the Internal Auditor, family commitment

RESOLVED – to accept the apologies and approve the reasons given.

- 113. Declarations of Interest.**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

RESOLVED – to note.

- 114. Exclusion of the Press and Public** – to agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

RESOLVED – that agenda item no 8, Staff in Confidence (2 items), be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 35.

- 115. Report of the Internal Auditor, Mrs Mary King** – report on the quarterly Internal Audit.

Mrs King's report of the Internal Audit carried out on 23rd June had been circulated.

RESOLVED – to note the report of the Internal Auditor.

- 116. Value Added Tax Audit, 15th & 16th July 2008** - to report on outcome of the V.A.T. audit

The Finance Officer informed the committee that a periodic investigation covering the previous three years records had been made. No adverse comments had been made.

RESOLVED – to note

- 117. Integrated system for Computerised Accounting** – members to consider migrating the Council's accounts to a fully computerised system conforming to an industry standard.

RESOLVED – to agree in principle to move towards a computerised accounting system. Investigations to be made regarding various options and to report back to the Finance & Personnel committee meeting in September.

- 118. Correspondence** – Letters received by Town Clerk from Mr M Hambrey of Rackclose Cottage, Rackclose, Chard relating to Council procedures

The Town Clerk apprised the committee of various letters received from Mr Hambrey. He stated that Mr Hambrey had declined to visit the Town Clerk's office or to attend this meeting.

RESOLVED – that the Chairman of Finance & Personnel committee write to Mr Hambrey enclosing that requested information that it is deemed proper to do so and stating that the Council now feels the matter to be closed.

The Finance Officer left the meeting at 7:55pm

- 119. In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (agenda item 4 above refers) Staff in confidence – 2 items.**

RESOLVED –

- 1. To accept the results of the Independent Assessment of the four SMT posts with effect from 23rd July 2008.**

123. Investments – to consider purchase of fixed rate bond from Bank of Scotland

RESOLVED – To delegate to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of Finance & Personnel Committee the authority to switch the Council's investments to Somerset County Council if the return is deemed favourable bearing in mind the current market conditions.

124. Integrated system for Computerised Accounting – members to consider migrating the Council's accounts to a fully computerised system conforming to an industry standard and to select a preferred supplier.

RESOLVED – To authorise the Town Clerk to proceed with the purchase of the Omega Accounting Software System through DCK Beavers Ltd

125. In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (agenda item 4 above refers) Staff in confidence.

RESOLVED – to note the Town Clerks report.

126. In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (agenda item 4 above refers) Commercial in confidence – Cedar Close, Chard

RESOLVED – To authorize the Town Clerk to conclude negotiations with Summerfield Developments regarding minor boundary adjustments.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 25 Nov 2008 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7:30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors:

- D R Hill - Chairman
- D M Bulmer
- A Kenton
- Mrs J Kenton
- D M Mears
- G Shortland
- Mrs J C Shortland
- Mrs A Spencer

Ex-officio + voting:

- Mayor, M J Wale
- Deputy Mayor, Cllr Mrs C A Morrison

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze the Finance Officer, and Mr T M Cutler. 1 member of the Public was present for the Public Question Time only.

127. Apologies for absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given.

Apologies for Absence had been received from Mrs Mary King, hospital treatment.

RESOLVED – to accept the apology and approve the reason given.

128. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Mrs J C Shortland declared a personal interest in agenda item no. 7 – Town Crier, as part funding is to come from her County Council Community Budget. Cllr D R Hill declared a personal interest in agenda item no 7 as part funding is to come from Chard 2000.

RESOLVED – to note.

129. Exclusion of the Press and Public – to agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

RESOLVED – that agenda item no 10, Commercial in Confidence – Cedar Close Chard, agenda item no 11, to propose a budget for the coming year and agenda item no 12, Staff in Confidence – be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 35.

130. Report of Mrs Mary King, the Internal Auditor – to consider the quarterly report from the Internal Auditor.

Mrs King had issued her report on the Audit conducted on the 30th October 2008. There were no adverse comments.

RESOLVED – to note

131. Investments – to consider the current situation

The Committee were informed of the current position

RESOLVED – to note

132. Integrated system for Computerised Accounting – to update members on progress

The Finance Officer informed the Committee of the current situation

RESOLVED – to note

133. Town Crier – Members to agree in principle to the installation of a Town Crier for Chard (funding secured from County Councillor Shortland's Community Budget.)

Councillors discussed the implications, costs, funding and benefits of Chard having a Town Crier.

RESOLVED – that this Town proceeds to recruit the services of a Town Crier

134. Financial Risk Assessment – to conduct the annual review

The Committee debated aspects the Financial Risk Assessments. It was considered prudent to introduce a register to record that spot-checks had been conducted by the appointed cheque signatories.

RESOLVED – to note that the Risk Assessments are considered to be adequate and sufficient subject to introducing a Payment Security Register.

- 135. Notice of Motion From Cllr Mrs J Kenton received on Friday 14th November 2008** “ That this Council considers contributing towards the funding of a Sunday Bus Service between Chard and Axminster.”

The motion was seconded by Cllr Mrs J C Shortland.

Discussion took place by Councillors and it was unanimously resolved -

RESOLVED – that at this time, this Council does not contribute towards the funding of a Sunday bus service between Chard and Axminster.

Cllrs C A Morrison left the meeting at 8:20 pm and returned at 8:23 pm

- 136. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (agenda item 3 above refers)**

Commercial in confidence – Cedar Close, Chard.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that the Deed of Variation had now been signed and lodged with the Land Registry.

RESOLVED – to note

- 137. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (agenda item 3 above refers) -**

to propose a budget for the coming year incorporating the Salary Review

Much discussion took place by Councillors.

RESOLVED – to note that the Staff Salaries had been reviewed

RECOMMENDED – by a unanimous vote that a budget for the year be set and it be commended to the Town Council for adoption

The Finance Officer left the meeting at 9:10 pm.

- 138. In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (agenda item 3 above refers) Staff in confidence**

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on a number of staff issues

RESOLVED – to note the

The meeting closed at 9:20 pm