

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the **Finance, Personnel & Licensing Committee** meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 30th January 2007 in the Town Hall at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors:

D R Hill – Chairman
Mrs C A Morrison (left 9:25pm)

Ex-officio + voting:

Deputy Mayor - M J Wale
Chair of Guildhall and Tourism - Mrs J L Smith
Chair of Planning and Highways- Mrs R T Wickenden
Chair of Amenities – D M Bulmer

IN ATTENDANCE: The Town Clerk Mr J Furze, the Finance Officer Mr T M Cutler and one member of the press (arrived 7:45 pm). No members of the public were present.

Before the meeting commenced, Cllr D R Hill congratulated Mr J Furze, the Town Clerk, on gaining his CiLCA qualification.

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

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllr P D C Fitzgerald – holiday and Cllr J D Malcolm - illness. Mrs M King, the Internal Auditor was unable to attend due to a family bereavement.

RESOLVED – to note and approve the reasons given.

42. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Mrs C A Morrison declared a personal and prejudicial Interest in Agenda item no.9 "Staff in Confidence" and Cllr Mrs J L Smith declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item no 7, "Completion of Bunded Oil Store".

43. 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 9, Staff in Confidence, be treated as confidential. after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

44. Internal Auditor's Report.

Mrs M King had issued her report of the Audit conducted on the 6th December 2006. There were no adverse comments.

RESOLVED - to note.

45. Review of Internal Controls and Financial Regulations.

The Committee reviewed the Financial Regulations, the Purchasing Delegation Limits and the Financial Risk Assessments of Chard Town Council.

RESOLVED – to note that the Council’s system of internal Financial Controls was considered to be both adequate and efficient.

46. Quality Council Application up-date.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee of the current situation and the progress made to date.

RESOLVED - to note.

Cllr Mrs J L Smith left the meeting while item 47 was discussed and returned for item 48.

47. Completion of Bunded Oil Store.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee of the reasons why the works were necessary. Three tenders were considered. Thanks were extended to the Amenities Manager Mr A Hensher, and his team for their efforts to date.

RESOLVED – to utilise £1,650 from Capital monies to allow completion of the Bunded Oil Store and to make the required purchases from Smith and Jones.

48. Outsourcing of Human Resources Management.

The Town Clerk had circulated documents showing the requirements, possible options, costings and recommendations relating to the outsourcing of Human Resources management. Discussion took place among Councillors.

RESOLVED – to accept the tender by Ellis-Whittam & Partners LLP and to arrange specific insurance cover to protect Councillors against vexatious claims.

49. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw

Staff in Confidence

The Town Clerk updated members on various current staffing issues.

Cllr Mrs C A Morrison left the meeting at 9:25pm when that part of the agenda item was reached in which she had declared an interest.

RESOLVED – to note, that the Town Clerk’s salary be increased by one S.C.P. increment as per his contract, that Cllrs D M Bulmer, D R Hill and M J Wale form a sub-committee to conduct the annual review of the Town Clerk, to recruit a part-time Guildhall caretaker.

The meeting closed at 9:40 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the **Finance, Personnel & Licensing Committee** meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 27th March 2007 in the Mayors Parlour at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors: D R Hill – Chairman
Mrs C A Morrison (left 8:35pm)

Ex-officio + voting: Deputy Mayor - M J Wale
Chair of Guildhall and Tourism - Mrs J L Smith
Chair of Amenities – D M Bulmer

IN ATTENDANCE: The Internal Auditor, Mrs M King and the Finance Officer Mr T M Cutler.
No members of the press and no members of the public were present.

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

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllr P D C Fitzgerald, family commitment and Cllr Mrs R T Wickenden, illness.
Cllr J D Malcolm was absent as he was attending a civic engagement.

RESOLVED – to note and approve the reasons given.

51. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Mrs C A Morrison declared a personal and prejudicial Interest in Agenda item no.8 "Staff in Confidence".

52. 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, be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

53. Internal Auditor's Report.

Mrs M King presented her report of the Audit conducted on the 21st March 2007. There were no adverse comments.

RESOLVED - to note.

54. Review of Internal Audit.

Councillors were informed that the revised "Internal Audit Check List" used by Mrs King for this months audit was an expanded more comprehensive version of that previously used and follows the approach to internal auditing as suggested in the Practitioners Guide and also conforms to the Internal Auditor's report in the Annual Return.

RESOLVED – to note

55. Items Arising from External Audit.

- Expenditure Decisions
- Fidelity Guarantee Insurance

Both of these agenda items had been discussed at the F.P.L. Committee meeting held on 28th November 2006 when it was resolved that the Council's Financial Regulations would be amended in due course to cover Expenditure Decisions and that the Fidelity Guarantee Insurance cover would be increased. Councillors were informed that w.e.f. 1st April 2007, the Fidelity Guarantee Insurance will be increased to £500,000 at an additional premium of £222. This level of cover complies with the External Auditor's requirement to be 50% of the precept plus the cash balances.

RESOLVED – to note

56. Watts Bros Store.

The Finance Officer informed Councillors that following the Quinquennial Inspection of the Watts Bros Store conducted by SPS Surveyors on 1st March 2007 a report making various recommendations had been received. It was noted that the report listed three items considered to be of the utmost urgency; to repair broken roof tiles, to clearly mark fire exits and to arrange for electrical testing to be conducted and for remedial work to be carried out. Anticipated expenditure to be between £750 and £1,000. Earmarked Capital Reserve funds are available for this purpose and quotations are being arranged. Discussion ensued regarding completion of the outstanding work.

RESOLVED – to complete those items of the utmost urgency and to obtain quotations for the remainder of the itemised work.

- 57. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw**
- Staff in Confidence

Cllr D R Hill updated members on various current staffing issues.

Cllr Mrs C A Morrison left the meeting at 08:35 pm when that part of the agenda item was reached in which she had declared an interest.

RESOLVED – to note; that following the resignation of the T.I.C. Manager 2 new posts be created - Tourist Information Centre Specialist and Guildhall Administration Assistant; that the recently appointed Amenities Operative, the Guildhall Supervisor, the Responsible Finance Officer and the Town Clerk's salaries be increased by 1 Spinal Code Point w.e.f. 1st April 2007.

The meeting closed at 08:40 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance, Personnel & Licensing Committee extra-ordinary meeting of Chard Town Council held on Thursday 26th April 2007 in the Mayors Parlour at 9.30am.

PRESENT: Councillors: D R Hill - Chairman

Ex-officio + voting: Mayor - J D Malcolm
Deputy Mayor - M J Wale
Chair of Guildhall and Tourism - Mrs J L Smith
Chair of Planning and Highways - Mrs R T Wickenden

IN ATTENDANCE: The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze and the Finance Officer, Mr T M Cutler.
No members of the press and no members of the public were present.

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

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllr Mrs C A Morrison, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the one Agenda item for discussion and Cllr D M Bulmer, work commitment.

RESOLVED – to note and approve the reasons given.

59. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Mrs C A Morrison had previously declared a personal and prejudicial Interest in Agenda item no.4 "Staff in Confidence".

60. 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 4, Staff in Confidence, be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

RESOLVED - to note.

61. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.
- Staff in Confidence

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on a staffing issue.

RESOLVED –to endorse the Town Clerk’s actions

The meeting closed at 10:30am.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance, Personnel & Licensing Committee meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 29th May 2007 in the Mayors Parlour at 7.30pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors:	D M Bulmer	Mrs J Kenton
	D R Hill	D M Mears (Deputising for Mrs J L Smith)
	D Keitch	Mrs A Spencer
	A Kenton	

Ex-officio + voting:

Mayor - M J Wale

Deputy Mayor – Mrs C A Morrison

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Town Clerk, Mr J Furze and the Finance Officer Mr T M Cutler. No members of the Press and 1 member of the public were present.

62. Election of Chairman

The Mayor, Cllr M J Wale took the chair for this item.

Cllr D Keitch proposed and Cllr D M Bulmer seconded Cllr D R 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.

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

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllrs Mrs J L Smith and J Armstrong, conflicting meeting (attending a Unitary Proposals meeting) and Cllr Mrs R T Wickenden, illness.

RESOLVED – to note and approve the reasons given.

64. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Mrs C A Morrison declared a personal and prejudicial Interest in Agenda item no.8 "Staff in Confidence". Cllr Mrs A Spencer declared a personal interest in Agenda item no.8, "Staff in Confidence".

65. 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, be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

66. Review of Financial Function – to apprise members of procedures applied within the Council.

RESOLVED - to note.

67. Year-end Accounts – review of un-audited year-end accounts.

RESOLVED – to note.

- 68. Review and adopt revised Staff Handbook and Contracts of Employment.** As supplied by Ellis Whittam – the Council’s outsourced HR Management Company

The Town Clerk informed the Committee of the need and reasons for the revision.

Discussion took place by Councillors regarding the content of the Staff Handbook and Contracts of Employment and whether to adopt or to defer.

Following a vote, it was

RESOLVED – to adopt the revised Staff Handbook and Contracts of Employment.

- 69. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw**
- Staff in Confidence

Cllr Mrs C A Morrison left the meeting at 8:30 pm when that part of the agenda item was reached in which she had declared an interest returning at 8:45 for the remainder of the meeting.

RESOLVED – to note.

The meeting closed at 9:10 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 31st July 2007 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7.30pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors: J Armstrong
D M Bulmer
D R Hill (Chairman)
Mrs J Kenton
Mrs J L Smith
Mrs A Spencer (left 8:32 pm)

Ex-officio + voting: Mayor - M J Wale
Deputy Mayor – Mrs C A Morrison

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Internal Auditor, Mrs M King (left 7:45 pm) The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze and the Finance Officer, Mr T M Cutler, (left 8:30 pm). No members of the Press and or the public were present.

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

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllr A Kenton, business commitment, Cllr D Keitch, family illness and Cllr Mrs R T Wickenden, hospital treatment.

RESOLVED – to note and approve the reasons given.

71. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Mrs A Spencer declared a Personal and Prejudicial interest in Agenda item No. 7, Staff in Confidence

72. 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, be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

73. Report of the Internal Auditor, Mrs Mary King – report on the quarterly Internal Audit and the Year End Review.

Mrs King presented her report. There were no adverse comments.

RESOLVED - to note.

74. Budget – Year to Date

Councillors were informed of the time-table and procedures involved in the Budgetary process. Discussion took place regarding certain elements of the budget and its implications and consequences.

RESOLVED – to note.

The Finance Officer left the meeting at 8:30 pm.
Cllr Mrs A Spencer left the meeting at 8:32 pm.

75. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw

- Staff in Confidence

Various Staffing issues were discussed.

RESOLVED – that

- 1) Senior Managers submit weekly time sheets and that "time owing" is not to exceed 15 hours;**
- 2) that the Guildhall Manager and the Office Manager undergo CiLCA training, that the Amenities Manager undertakes a Btech National course in Horticulture at Yeovil Technical College, costs to come from the Training Budget;**
- 3) the Town Clerk enrolls for the CertHE course in Local Policy at Gloucestershire University, costs to come from the Training Budget;**

- 4) that the Town Clerk's post be independently evaluated using the SLCC/NALC Evaluation Appeals Facility at a cost of £250.

The meeting closed at 9:15 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 25th September 2007 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7.30pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors: J Armstrong
D M Bulmer
D R Hill (Chairman)
Mrs J L Smith
Mrs R T Wickenden

Ex-officio + voting: Mayor - M J Wale
Deputy Mayor – Mrs C A Morrison

Appointed voting Reserves: Cllr Mrs J C Shortland
Cllr D M Mears

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze and the Finance Officer Mr T M Cutler. No members of the Press or public were present.

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

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllrs D Keitch - work commitment, A Kenton – holidays, Mrs J Kenton - holidays and Mrs A Spencer- illness.

RESOLVED – to note and approve the reasons given.

77. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr D M Mears declared a Personal interest in Agenda item No. 7, Staff in Confidence.

78 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, be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

RESOLVED – to bring forward Agenda item 5, Christmas Holiday Arrangements.

79. Christmas Holiday Arrangements – dates of closure of Town Council Offices and T.I.C.

RESOLVED – that the Christmas Holiday would be from 3:00 pm on Christmas Eve, 24th December 2007 returning to work on New Year’s Eve, 31st December 2007.

80. Christmas Cover – Office, Guildhall and Amenities Staff – Stand-by arrangements.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that Christmas Stand-by cover was not required for the Guildhall or Office Manager.

RESOLVED – that the Amenities Manager be paid a standby of £10 per day to cover non-Public Holidays during the Christmas closure.

81. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw
- Staff in Confidence (three items)

Three Staffing issues were discussed.

RESOLVED –

1- to accept the current staff salary levels;

2- to employ an additional full time member of staff on the Amenities Department;

The Town Clerk and Finance Officer withdrew from the meeting while item 3 was discussed.

3- to accept the findings of the NALC/SLCC independent panel that the salary of the Clerk to Chard Town Council is placed at SCP 54 to 58; that the Finance & Personnel Committee receives from the Appraisal Panel a report that set objectives have been achieved by the Town Clerk w.e.f. April 2008; and that the Town Clerk’s salary is placed at SCP 55 w.e.f. 31st July 2007.

The meeting closed at 9:10 pm.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting of Chard Town Council held on Tuesday 27th November 2007 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall at 7.30pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

D M Bulmer

D R Hill (Chairman)

D Keitch

Mrs J Kenton

Mrs J L Smith

A Kenton

Ex-officio + voting:

Mayor - M J Wale

Deputy Mayor – Mrs C A Morrison

IN ATTENDANCE:

The Town Clerk, Mr G J Furze and the Finance Officer Mr T M Cutler. No members of the Press and one member of the public were present.

Cllr D Orchard was present as an observer and took no part in the meeting.

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

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllr J Armstrong, illness and Cllr Mrs R T Wickenden, hospital treatment, Cllr A Spencer - Holiday and the Internal Auditor, Mrs M King, illness.

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

83. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr's A Kenton & Mrs J Kenton declared a Personal Interests in Item 7 – Minute 88 (Directors of Company holding Guildhall Bar Franchise).

84. 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, Budget and Precept for 2008 / 2009, be treated as confidential after the public (including the press) have been excluded under Standing Order 41.

85 . Report of Mrs Mary King, Internal Auditor – report on quarterly Internal Audit

Mrs M King had issued her written report of the Audit conducted on the 8th October 2007. There were no adverse comments.

RESOLVED – to note

86. Council Credit Card / Direct Debit usage – to decide whether or not to authorise the use of a Credit Card and Direct Debits.

RESOLVED – that Council does not authorise the application for, or the use of a Town Council Credit Card.

RESOLVED – that the Council authorises the use of Direct Debits together with the necessary changes to the Financial Regulations

87. Parish Council Allowances – whether this Council will pay allowances and Expenses to Councillors.

RESOLVED – to maintain the present situation where only Subsistence and Travelling Expenses are paid to members for Council duty outside of Chard, and for the matter to be debated by the full Town Council after the next Annual Town Council meeting.

88. RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw

Budget and Precept for 2008 / 2009

Cllr D Orchard accepted the Chairman's invitation to remain at the meeting but took no part in the debate.

RESOLVED – to RECOMMEND to the Town Council that the proposed budget resulting in a precept of £520,505.00 be accepted

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.