

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN
THE COUNCIL OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, CLEVEDON ON WEDNESDAY 29TH JULY
2009 AT 7.30 PM.

Present: Councillor C Francis-Pester (Committee Chairman)
 Councillors C Blades, B Garner, C. Hall, J Middleton, D. Shopland, Cllr C Wring
 Town Clerk – Ms P. Heath,

FGP 09/56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillors P McNeill (family commitment), J. Norton-Sealey (Illness), and G Watkins (illness),

FGP 09/57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda.

FGP 09/58 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Finance & General Policy Cttee meetings held on 10th June 2009 and ratified by Council on 15th July 2009 were accepted

FGP 09/59 UPDATES ON ACTION ITEMS NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

Members noted the action list circulated with the agenda

<u>PART 1</u>

FGP 09/60 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE REVIEW STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Copies of the current standing orders and financial regulation had been circulated at the previous meeting. Members discussed the standing orders and the financial regulations in detail and discussed the wording and interpretation of standing order No. 81.

It was agreed that the following recommendations would be received at the next Council meeting on the 9th of September but under standing order no 81 would not be discussed and agreed until the Council meeting of 4th November.

Proposed, seconded and RECOMMENDED that the following amendments are made to the Standing Orders.

Standing Order 11 amendment – to remove the words “whether or not he gave an original vote” the Chairman has to vote as an ordinary member and only then if the votes are equal give a casting vote[LGA 1972 Sch 12 s 39 (1) & (2)].

“Subject to 11.1 and 11.2 below, the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote ~~whether or not he gave an original vote.~~

Standing Order 71b amendment – add wording “The member shall then leave the meeting once they have completed their contribution or when the meeting decides, whichever is the sooner, and may not remain in the public gallery to observe any vote on the matter”

*"71b. At all meetings of the Council, the Chairman may permit members of the Council (including co-opted members as defined by S.49(7) Local Government Act 2000) who have a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business to be transacted at that meeting to (a) make representations, (b) answer questions or (c) give evidence relating to the business to be transacted. **The member shall then leave the meeting once they have completed their contribution or when the meeting decides, whichever is the sooner, and may not remain in the public gallery to observe any vote on the matter.** Such sessions form part of the Council meeting in law and shall be duly minuted, The Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on the 14 September 2007 shall apply to members of the Council in respect of the entire meeting"*

Standing Order 78.4 amendment – this was in direct conflict with the Financial Regulations 11.1(j)

New wording for both 78.4 & 11.1(j) "The Council and its Committees is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote but at all times consider best value. Any tender notice shall contain a reference to standing orders 62, 64, & 65 regarding improper activity."

The Town Clerk questioned under which standing order, financial regulation, or resolution the Council had specified that all expenditure over £1000 would be submitted to the Council. Members noted that although established practice it had not been included in either Standing Orders or the Financial Regulations nor had it been passed as a resolution.

Standing Order 40.1 and Financial Regulation 3.8

New wording – "all expenditure agreed by a committee not on a specified budget, as agreed at the precept meeting, over £1000 shall stand adjourned until ratified at the next Council meeting".

PART 2

FGP 09/61 THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BUDGET SHEETS FOR THE COUNCIL

Members noted the budget sheets presented by the RFO in the new format generated from the financial package. Members asked that details of the bank accounts should also be included on the figures provided at future meetings.

FGP 09/62 DISCUSS AND MAKE DECISION ON THE GRANT APPLICATION BY AVON & SOMERSET POLICE FOR FUNDING FOR SKATEPARK DECORATION.

Members discussed the history behind this application and recommendation/resolutions made by committees. On 13th May the Amenity Committee recommended that permission be given but this was withdrawn at the Council meeting on 15th July following the Environment & Property meeting on 1st July 2009 which decided that the skate park should be painted in block dark colours. As some Members felt that the Council should provide the grant and support the work of the PCSO it was **AGREED** that this application and the decision as to the painting of the Skate Park should be placed on the next Council agenda for a full discussion.

ACTION THE TOWN CLERK

FGP 09/63 DISCUSS AND MAKE DECISION ON A LETTER REQUESTING FUNDING

Members discussed the letter of request for a video camera to help with the applicant's media studies. The Town Clerk informed Members that the Council had no legal power to provide a grant to an individual person under LGA 1972 s 137, and may bring a charge of the Council acting 'ultra vires'

It was agreed that a grant form be sent to the applicants and also suggesting they contact the Curzon Cinema as they are working to help young people in this field.

It was suggested that the Chairman be given an additional allowance of £100 to provide grants to individuals; this would be contra to LGA 1972 s 15 (5).

FGP 09/64 DRAFT STAFFING REPORT FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION ON WAY FORWARD.

A draft report had been circulated to Committee Members with the agenda; this was discussed at great length by the members.

It was agreed that the Committee needed to study this in detail and also to have full costing of the options listed; the Clerk and the Chairman would arrange a special meeting of the Committee within the next couple of weeks.

Cllr Wring left the meeting at 8.50 pm

FGP 09/65 DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATION OF A PANDEMIC PROCEDURE AND POLICY FOR THE OPERATING OF THE COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL'S BUILDINGS.

Members discussed a policy for the staffing of the office and the hiring of the Council house during a pandemic alert. It was **AGREED** that the Council would follow government advice and directive in respect of the opening of public buildings. It was **AGREED** that Chairmen and Vice Chairmen would be expected to assist with the office operation should staff members become ill.

FGP 09/66 CHAIRMAN ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY –

There were no Chairman's items for information

FGP 09/67 TO DETERMINE PART I AND PART II ITEMS

Part 1 item - review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The meeting finished at 9.05 pm

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN Date