

**CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN**  
**THE COUNCIL OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, ON WEDNESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2012**  
**AT 7.30PM**

**Present:** Councillor C Francis-Pester Committee Chairman  
 Councillor, J Geldart, C. Hall, G. Hill, L. Little, T. Morgan, N. Pennycott, D. Shopland, & C. Wring.  
 Town Clerk – Ms P. Heath,  
 In Attendance: Cllr L. Knott, Cllr G Watkins

**FGP 12/281 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors C. Blades & B Garner (family commitments) J Middleton, P McNeill, & J. Norton-Sealey (Illness),

**FGP 12/282 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda

**FGP 12/283 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2012.**

The minutes of the Finance & General Policy Committee meetings held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012 and ratified by Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2012 were accepted.

**FGP 12/284 RECEIVE AND DISCUSS THE CURRENT FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BUDGET SHEETS**

Following a detailed discussion Members noted the financial sheets that had been circulated with the agenda. Members noted that as the Council starts to discuss the 2013/2014 budget it was important for Members to raise any questions prior to the meetings to enable a detailed response from the RFO to be made.

PART 1
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**FGP 12/285 TO RECEIVE MOTION FROM 3RD OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING**

*"that this Council decide that all small grants shall not exceed £250."*

Following a discussion in with minute No FGP 12/294 the Motion **FAILED** by 2 votes to 5

**FGP 12/286 TO RECEIVE MOTION FROM 3RD OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION THAT STANDING ORDER 1BB, TO BE AMENDED THAT THE TERM 'CHAIRMAN' BE REPLACED WITH 'MEMBERS'**

*1bb Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2 hours.*

*All business not transacted in this time shall be deferred until the next meeting of the committee unless the ~~Chairman~~ Members shall deem that a short extension will conclude the business agenda. Any extension so given shall not be longer than FIFTEEN MINUTES*

Proposed seconded and **AGREED** by 5 votes to 3 to add "or on conclusion of the item under discussion"

**AGREED**

**FGP 12/287 STANDING ORDER NO 31 AMENDMENT TO WORDING TO BRING WITHIN LEGAL REQUIREMENT THEREBY READING**

*c) That having been voted upon under 'b' above the proposed amendments to standing orders A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders not mandatory by law shall stand, without discussion, for the period from that meeting until the next Full Council meeting before being discussed, voted and ratified."*

**AGREED**

PART 2

**FGP 12/288 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE NALC "PEOPLE IN ACTION CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY CLLR GELDART**

Members noted the report that had been circulated with the agenda

**FGP 12/289 TO RECEIVE AND DISCUSS THE REPORT AND COST ANALYSIS FOR THE SETTING UP OF A BUSINESS INCUBATOR AND SUPPORT FACILITY**

Cllr Geldart spoke on her report and answered member's questions as to the cost and operation of a scheme. The Town Council would acquire a shop within the town centre with the ground floor retail being used as a pop up shop i.e a short 2 – 3 month lease to a new company to try out their retail idea before committing to a long term lease. Upstairs accommodation would be turned into short term low cost subsidised desk leases for self-employed residents to work from an office structure. The Town Council would have to undertake the longer term lease or purchase of the premises in order to facilitate the project. Concern was raised that there was no demonstrative need of either the Pop-up shop or the low cost desk rental. It was noted that there were desk space rentals available in the town but at a commercial rate. Criteria of who could rent either the shop or the desk space would have to be drawn up giving clear definition as to who and what could be done from either project. Past projects of this nature run by the Principal Authority was discussed particularly the enterprise zones. It was noted that the business and retail communities around the town were not involved nor had they or North Somerset Council Business Development Officer been contacted to solicit their advice and opinion.

The Town Clerk explained that the Council would have to set up a limited company/ Social Enterprise Company to run the project under the Councils Power of General Competence.

As this was a business enterprise it would be required to register for VAT.

Proposed, seconded and **AGREED** to 1) set up a meeting with the Chamber of Trade, InClevedon Traders Association, NSC Business Development Team and any other relevant bodies to seek their advice, information and joint cooperation in the scheme.

2) Obtain realistic costs for specific buildings in the town covering rent/loan interest, utility bills, insurance, planning regulations and changes etc.

3) Establish if there is a need?

**ACTION 1) Town Clerk, 2) Cllr Geldart 3) Town Clerk**

### **FGP 12/290 TO DISCUSS THE USE OF CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES FOR COMMUTER DESK SPACE**

Cllr Geldart explained her proposal for the Council to rent out desk space for those employed out of Clevedon to use instead of travelling to their place of work, so lowering the carbon footprint whilst giving employers the knowledge that the employee is in a work environment and not watching daytime television. There would be a low charge to the users plus ability to use the Town Councils WIFI. Concern was expressed that there would be no control over what was being done in the Council Offices which might be deemed as being condoned or supported by the Town Council. Security was another issue with staff members leaving early afternoon and the users being in the building until 5 or 5.30. The Town Clerk gave details of regular booking which at the moment would prevent a regular day being assigned to the Commuter Desk Scheme. Concern was raised again that there was no demonstrative need.

Proposed seconded and **AGREED** by 7 votes to 1 to include this in the investigation under minute no FGP 12/289

### **FGP 12/291 DETAILS OF PROVISIONAL INFORMATION DISCUSSION WITH NSC IN RESPECT OF THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES IN CLEVEDON.**

A copy of the report on a meeting held with NSC on the future of Public Toilets in Clevedon had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that an update meeting had been arranged with NSC for the 26<sup>th</sup> October. It was agreed that the Town Clerk and Cllr Knott would attend and report back with a view to including this with the FGP special meeting.

### **FGP 12/292 DISCUSS THE CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL WEB SITE AND ITS FUTURE**

Members agreed that the web site needed updating. The Town Clerk explained the history of the current site and the decision taken by Council in 2009 to retain the web site formula and look and not to upgrade to the proposed changes made by the web designer at that stage. It was agreed to reform a working group to look at and talk to the various sector based web companies including the current web designer and bring back a full cost proposal and design for the Committee to agree.

Proposed seconded and **AGREED** to form a working group of Cllr Francis-Pester, Cllr Geldart, Cllr Hill, and Cllr Middleton with a brief to investigate the updating and modernising the Council's web site, to present to the Committee a preferred web designer and a preferred design.

### **FGP 12/293 AGREE THE "USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES" GUIDELINES.**

Proposed, seconded and **AGREED** to adopt the guidelines circulated with the agenda.

### **FGP 12/294 DISCUSS THE GRANTS PROCEDURE FOR NAMED AND GENERAL GRANTS**

Members noted the explanation note which had been circulated to all councillors explaining the types of grants and the procedures prior to the meeting.

It was **AGREED** that the major organisations who regularly ask for financial assistance be asked to provide a detailed 3 year business plan with a further 2 years draft plan and a note of a further 5 years expectation. The Committee would hold a special meeting to discuss the plans and expectations and prioritise the organisations in order of their anticipated need and Council support.

It was **AGREED** that all organisations should have the opportunity to ask for large amounts under Named Grants and that a deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> December for the applications with Accounts and detailed costing. The Town Clerk to contact the regular grantees plus an article will be placed in the newsletter.

**FGP12/295 DISCUSS AND AGREE MEETING DATES FOR 2013.**

Members agreed the meeting dates as circulated; following a discussion it was **AGREED** that the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Statutory Meeting should be held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2013

**FGP 12/296 RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO LOCALISM SUPPORT FOR COUNCIL TAX**

The Town Clerk explained about the government changes to the way Council Tax benefits are to be managed in that they now will be agreed by the principal authority, North Somerset Council, who will have the power to administrate who gets tax discounts and the amount. The proposal before government at the moment is to whether the band d rate given to Parish and Town Councils to calculate their precept should be net or gross of the tax benefit discount recalculation. Capping of precept is also being discussed and it is hoped that a decision will be reached before the end of December.

**FGP 12/297 CONFIRM INTERNAL AUDITOR MR M KINGSHOTT.**

Members confirmed that Mr M Kingshott should be the Councils internal auditor.

**FGP 12/298 RECEIVE THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT**

Members noted the External Auditors report.

**FGP 12/299 CHAIRMAN ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Proposed seconded and **AGREED** that Cllr Watkins should be appointed on to the Finance and General Policy Committee to fill the place left by the resignation of Mrs Walker.

**FGP 12/300 TO DETERMINE PART I AND PART II ITEMS.**

Agenda items 12,13,14 all dealing with Standing Orders  
The meeting finished at 9.32 pm

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN ..... Date .....

FGP 24th October 2012

26/11/2012

Subject to ratification by Council and Committee