

**CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN**  
**THE COUNCIL OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, CLEVEDON ON WEDNESDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup>**  
**FEBRUARY 2009 AT 7.30 PM.**

**Present:** Councillors C Francis-Pester (Committee Chairman)  
 C. Blades, R. Garner, L. Little, J. Middleton, T. Morgan, J. Norton-Sealey,  
 D. Shopland, G. Watkins, C. Wring.  
 Town Clerk – Ms P. Heath  
 Guests Mr N. Phillips & Mrs S. Radcliff Clevedon Pier Trust.  
 Mrs V. Thompson – NSC Liaison Officer

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillors P. McNeill (family commitment) and G Morris (illness)

*Proposed by Cllr. Francis-Pester, seconded by Cllr Norton-Sealey and **AGREED** that the presentation under agenda item 8 "Clevedon Pier Trust" is moved to be heard next.*

*Proposed by Cllr Francis-Pester, seconded by Cllr Norton-Sealey and **AGREED** that standing orders be suspended to allow the representatives from the Clevedon Pier Trust to address the Committee.*

**FGP/09/01 PRESENTATION FROM CLEVEDON PIER TRUSTEES.**

Mr N. Phillips, Chairman of the trustees, explained the history of the pier and its renovation including details of the ongoing maintenance costs. The Pier is owned by North Somerset Council and managed by the Trustees, both parties being responsible for the maintenance costs the largest part of which is the actual support structure. The Trustees put any surplus funds, approximately £30,000 a year, into a fund to contribute towards the estimated £1000000 bill over 10 years. The cost of maintenance had increased since the original conception of the regeneration of the pier due to increasing government regulations on health & safety, and the designation of the area as a Site of Scientific Interest. Due to constraints on the site there are no toilet facilities which preclude many additional fund raising events from taking place. There are no office or storage facilities and the combined shop area and entrance is small and can cause accessibility problems. The Pier Trustees are currently awaiting a response to an offer made for the derelict Pier Hotel which they hope will provide sufficient space to improve the facilities on offer by the Pier. Discussions are also being held with NSC to amend the lease to a partial repairing lease instead of a full repairing lease. The insurance of the Pier has risen dramatically in the last few years being £12,500 before 9/11 and £30,000 after 9/11.

The Trustees have commissioned and presented at the meeting a business review, looking at the current business opportunities of the Pier and its sister attraction The Heritage Centre. They do not intend to commission a business plan, which will cost £30,000, until the outcome of the Pier Hotel bid is known.

The Members questioned the Trustees on the presentation and information received it was stressed by the members that a business plan was essential to support any funding bid. In response to a question the Members were reminded that the Town Council had a representative on the board who received all the accounts and information and whom the Trustees expected to provide this information to the Council as part of their representative's responsibilities. Members expressed their support for the Pier and its role in the tourism trade and identity of Clevedon.

*The representatives from Clevedon Pier Trust left the meeting*

*Proposed by Cllr Francis-Pester, seconded by Cllr Norton-Sealey and **AGREED** that standing orders be reinstated.*

#### **FGP 09/01 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

Cllr Morgan & Cllr Middleton declared a prejudicial interest in the budget item "Chairman's Allowance" as Chairman and Vice-Chairman

#### **FGP 09/02 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Finance & General Policy Cttee meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and ratified by Council on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2009 were accepted

#### **FGP 09/03 UPDATES ON ACTION ITEMS NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

There were no updates on items not elsewhere on the agenda

### **PART 1**

#### **FGP 09/04 THE REPLACEMENT/ENHANCEMENT OF THE PHOTOCOPIER**

Details of cost for a replacement photocopier had been circulated with the agenda. The Town Clerk explained the maintenance cost for the machine was based on the number of copies with a minimum charge of £25 per month.

Following a detailed discussion it was proposed, seconded and **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that this council leases a mono photocopier with network facilities at a cost of £52.89 plus vat per month over 5 years providing it is on a full repairing lease, if not then the Council should purchase the machine at a cost of £2523.38 plus vat.

<b><u>PART 2</u></b>
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**FGP 09/05 THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BUDGET SHEETS FOR THE COUNCIL**

Members discussed at length the budget sheets presented by the RFO including the reserves, earmarked and general, held by the Council Website Management – the IT sub committee would meet to discuss the updating of the web site.

Rates - Members asked if the Council Offices could be run as a charity.

It was agreed that the allocation of budgets and any adjustments would be shown on the spread sheet plus details of cash held by the Council against earmarked reserves.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK/RFO**

**FGP 09/06 THE ANNUAL RETURN AND COMMENTS ON THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS CERTIFICATE**

Copy of the External Auditors report had been circulated with the agenda; members noted the comments and the responses made by the Town Clerk to the report.

1. Risk Assessments – these had been undertaken by the previous Town Clerk and would be reviewed annually by the FGP Committee.
2. The level of Fidelity Insurance would be checked at the financial year end and amended accordingly
3. The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations would be reviewed at the start of the Council year.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

**FGP 09/07 TO APPOINT/ REAPPOINT THE INTERNAL AUDITOR**

It was agreed to re-appoint Mr M. Kingshott as internal auditor with an honorarium of £100.

**FGP 09/08 TRUSTEES OF CLEVEDON PIER TO REQUEST GRANT FUNDING**

Members discussed at length the earlier presentation by the Clevedon Pier Trustees. Concern was expressed that no business plan had been produced despite being requested on several occasions, also that the commissioning of one was going to cost approximately £30,000, equivalent to 1 years payment to the maintenance fund, particularly as much of the preparatory work had been done in the business review document.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that this Committee requests Clevedon Pier Trust to complete a grant application form for the funding they require and submit with 2 years accounts and current year budget.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

**FGP 09/09 THE USE OF "FREEPOST" BY THOSE WRITING TO THE COUNCIL.**

Following a discussion it was agreed to stop the 'freepost' service with Royal Mail as this service had not been well used, only 47 response in 2 years, and was not cost effective.

**FGP 09/10 SUBSCRIPTION TO NALC – DIRECT INFORMATION SERVICE AT A COST OF £105.75 PER YEAR OR £285.53 FOR A 3 YEAR DEAL.**

Following a discussion it was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** to subscribe to NALC Direct Information Service for 3 years using the email format. Hard copies would be made available for those Councillors who request it.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

**FGP 09/11 STAFF AND COUNCILLOR TRAINING.**

Members noted the SLCC regional conference training day but felt the distance was prohibitive. All training would be agreed on a case by case basis but member supported the principal of training for all Councillors and staff as required.

**FGP 09/12 THE COUNCILLORS AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS AND CONTACT LIST.**

It was felt that all agendas should be sent out on headed note paper with the Council's address, contact details and logo.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

Members were requested to amend the information held by the office of their contact details to ensure they were accurate and also to enable the office to contact councillors via email.

**ACTION ALL COUNCILLORS**

**FGP 09/13 DESIGNS FOR THE PAST CHAIRMAN'S BADGE**

The Town Clerk requested guidance from the members as to the style of badge required. It was **AGREED** to seek quotations on a badge based on the current style and also on the style made for Cllr Wring. Cllr Wring and a former chairman were requested to bring a copy of the badge into the office in order that details could be taken for the quote specification.

**ACTION CLLR WRING/FORMER CHAIRMAN/THE TOWN CLERK**

**FGP 09/14 STATUTORY RESOLUTION ATTACHED CONCERNING THE LGPS.**

*15 Statutory Resolution – as per notification at Council meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009*

*That Clevedon Town Council gives formal notice that on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009, being 28 days from the date of this notice, The Council, as per the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997, will join the Local Government Pension Scheme administrated by Bath & North East Somerset Council. Clevedon Town Council further resolves that as at that date all members of staff current and future will be eligible to join the scheme as from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009.*

The Council had given designated authority to the Finance and General Policy Committee to determine the above resolution which had been displayed on the agenda. Members were reminded that details of the Local Government Pension scheme and the requirements had been circulated to Councillors during the appointment process for the Town Clerk.

The Resolution was proposed seconded and **AGREED**.

*Due to time constraints the following 3 items were adjourned to a special Finance and General Policy Committee meeting to be held within 2 weeks to discuss these items only*

- To discuss and agree a response to “Communities in control: real people, real power: code of recommended practice on local authority publicity – a Consultation” as per Council minute 09/166.
- To discuss and agree the terms of reference for the Finance and General Policy Committee.
- To receive, discuss and put forward recommendation on the committee structures – report attached

**FGP 09/15 CHAIRMAN ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY –**

There were no Chairman’s items for information

Cllr Shopland asked if details of the ‘Waverley’ appeal could be heard at the special meeting. It was agreed that Cllr Shopland provide details of the nation appeal for information only

**FGP 09/16 TO DETERMINE PART I AND PART II ITEMS**

It was agreed that minute dealing with the Photocopier should be a part 1 item

The meeting finished at 9.38 pm

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APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

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

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