

**DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

MINUTES and REPORT of the MEETING of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE of the Council held in the **Methodist Church Rooms, Castle Street, Dursley** at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2014 for presentation to the Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

**PRESENT**

Chairman: Councillor C Nelmes

Councillors: J.A. Ball, S Creswick, N Grecian, R Blackwell-Whitehead, L. V. Patrick, A Stennett

In Attendance: Deputy Town Clerk

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received and were accepted from the Town Clerk (personal) and Councillors M Laybourne (personal), F. Firth (personal) and T.G. Frankau (personal).

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Ball declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in agenda/minute item 12, as an employee of the Dursley and District Community Association.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to take agenda item 12 at the end of the meeting.

**3. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS**

There were no requests for dispensations.

**4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

The Chairman made members aware of a letter from Mr Amesbury regarding maintenance of the War Memorial Gates and plaques. The letter outlined his dissatisfaction with Council's response following his recent enquiries and complaint.

Councillor Ball declared an interest as Chairman of the Dursley and Cam Branch of the Royal British Legion.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to write to Mr Amesbury to explain that Council will continue to investigate maintenance issues and will look at the quotations he supplied; advice will be taken from the War Memorials Trust to ensure that future maintenance work undertaken is correct; the maintenance work specification will be discussed at a future Policy and Finance Committee meeting and Council will endeavour to keep him updated on progress.

**5. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2014 were approved and signed.

**6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman had no matters to report.

7. COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID - RESPONSE FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It was noted that the Department for Communities and Local Government had, in response to Council's letter, contacted Stroud District Council to remind them of their obligations under the Right to Bid scheme; all Community Asset nominations submitted have now been granted (minus the 2 applications Council withdrew).

8. YOUTH CENTRE PROJECT

Members considered a report by the Town Clerk regarding the use of reserves for the Youth Centre project.

It was noted that £18,000 of the tennis court reserve had incorrectly been allocated to both the youth centre and the new playground on the War Memorial.

The COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS provisionally agreeing use of alternate reserves, pending final accounts for the project.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to ensure that this does not happen again by amending the reserves records to show planned future use as well as actual use.

9. PROPOSED LICENSE FOR THE YOUTH CENTRE AND DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR THE YOUTH CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members considered a report from the Council's Solicitor on the proposed license for the Youth Centre and draft constitution for the Youth Centre Management Committee.

It was noted that the Solicitor is advising the creation of a lease without security of tenure rather than a license.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to follow up on the Solicitor's advice and reopen dialogue with the Synod regarding the creation of a lease.

10. REVIEW OF COUNCIL WARD BOUNDARIES FOR STROUD DISTRICT

Members considered the Local Government Boundary Commission's review of Council ward boundaries for Stroud District.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to confirm that the Council will not be proposing any changes to the existing pattern of wards in the town as the current arrangements in the town work well.

11. STROUD AND DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU GRANT APPLICATION

Councillor Ball declared an interest as a Director of the Stroud and District Citizens Advice Bureau and withdrew from the meeting.

Members considered a grant application for £4,500 from the Stroud and District Citizens Advice Bureau.

The COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS that the Stroud and District Citizens Advice Bureau receive a grant for a period of 3 years, the amount awarded is to be considered as part of the budget setting process undertaken by the Committee and Council.

Councillor Ball rejoined the meeting.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to check the declarations of interest process in relation to Council appointed representatives and Directors.

12. DURSLEY AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

As previously agreed, the item was deferred and taken under item 14.

13. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members reviewed the Committee Work Programme, making minor amendments.

The COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS that the revised Work Programme (Appendix 1) is adopted.

14 DRAFT ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER SERVICES BUDGETS 2015-2016

Members considered the draft administration budget, including 3-year forward planning.

It was noted that the Staff Committee would be discussing office staffing and accommodation on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014, which would impact on the budget.

The proposed communications budget was reduced to £4,000; a planned clear out day may offer the opportunity to reduce the health and safety budget and costs related to a COSHH assessment.

Councillor Ball withdrew from the meeting.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to consider item 12 at this point in the meeting given its relevance to the other services budget discussion.

12. DURSLEY AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Vice Chairman reported on a recent meeting held with the Association Chairman and Centre Manager to discuss progress on the action plan issued in March 2014.

It was noted that although the Association has undertaken some actions, progress is still slow and, given the seriousness of the situation, not enough has been achieved in terms of marketing the centre, setting up communications, developing income generation and reviewing shared access and maintenance issues with the school.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to release the next grant instalment but make it clear that no further grant award payments will be made unless the action plan is completed by January 2015 and the actions are demonstrated at a review meeting held with the Policy and Finance Committee in January 2015.

14 DRAFT ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER SERVICES BUDGETS 2015-2016  
(Continued)

Members returned to Agenda item 14 and considered the other services budget, including 3-year forward planning.

Revisions were made in relation to the large grant budget which is oversubscribed. The provisional grant awards for Transition Cam and Dursley and the Dursley and District

Policy and Finance

28<sup>th</sup> October 2014

Community Association were taken out of the budget. The Stroud and District Citizens Advice Bureau award was set at £3,500 for 3 years.

The COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS that the above changes to the large grant awards are adopted with the revised budget (Appendix 2) and an item is placed on the budget setting Council meeting 'to discuss Dursley and District Community Association funding in 2015'. The Town Clerk will be required to advise on periods of notice in relation to withdrawal of long term grant funding and the COMPACT.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.07 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date