

DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES and REPORT of the EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE of the Council held in the **Methodist Church Rooms, Castle Street, Dursley** at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 16th December 2014 for presentation to the Council on the 6th January 2015.

PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor C Nelmes

Councillors: J.A. Ball, S Creswick, N Grecian, A Stennett, M Laybourne, M Nicholson

In Attendance: Councillor V Harding, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and 4 Directors of Transition Cam and Dursley

Absent: Councillor F Firth

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received and were accepted from Councillors L. V. Patrick (personal), R Blackwell Whitehead (personal) and T.G. Frankau (personal).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Ball, Nelmes and Creswick each declared a Personal Interest in agenda/minute item 12, as Youth Centre Management Representatives.

3. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No representations had been received from the public.

5. MINUTES

It was noted that a meeting was held on 2nd December 2014 and not 4th November 2014 as stated in the agenda. The COMMITTEE AGREED to amend the date.

The Minutes of the meetings held on the 28th October 2014 and 2nd December 2014 were approved and signed.

6. TRANSITION CAM AND DURSLEY

The Directors of Transition Cam and Dursley gave members an overview of the project and its vision to build local resilience in response to economic instability, reliance on oil and climate change.

It was noted that Transition is seeking sustainable ways to strengthen the local economy, reduce living costs and create a robust future for the area; a 'Secret Garden' project is underway to develop a patch of derelict land behind The Chantry Centre into a sustainable community garden; a 'Made in Dursley' label is being developed to showcase the work of local artists, designers, makers and creators; volunteers and interested groups are being sought to get involved in various projects.

Members were open to working together with Transition Cam and Dursley where possible. The group was encouraged to get involved with the Neighbourhood Development Plan project.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to establish appropriate links of communication with the group.

The Directors of Transition Cam and Dursley withdrew from the meeting.

7. DISPOSAL NOTICE FOR CASTLE STREET/PARSONAGE STREET CAR PARK

Members considered a Disposal Notice for Castle Street/Parsonage Street Car Park issued by Gloucestershire County Council on 27th November 2014 under Section 95 (2) of the Localism Act 2012.

It was noted that the moratorium period for intentions to bid ends on 8th January 2015, with bid submissions by 27th May 2015; Stroud District Council are currently negotiating with Gloucestershire County Council regarding purchase of the car park.

Members considered whether Council could/should purchase the car park; the benefits for the community and the maintenance and management implications.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to register Council's intention to bid for the Castle Street/Parsonage Street Car Park and consider further information from Gloucestershire County Council and Stroud District Council at the Council meeting in January 2015.

8. WATER STREET CAR PARK ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE NOMINATION

Members considered a request to change the area of land covered by the Council's nomination for inclusion on the register of Assets of Community Value of Water Street Car Park.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to change the area of land covered by the nomination as proposed by the Neighbourhood Planning Officer, Stroud District Council.

9. AMENDMENT TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL'S (NALC) 2013 MODEL STANDING ORDERS

Members noted an amendment to NALC's 2013 Model Standing Orders (Legal Briefing L02-14 and the openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014).

The COMMITTEE AGREED to make the necessary changes to the Council's Standing Orders when they are reviewed in the future.

10. COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Members considered adopting a new Communications Policy, drafted by the Town Clerk.

Several minor amendments were made.

The COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS that the revised Communications Policy is adopted and Council publishes and actively consults on its draft budget for 2016-17 from November 2015 to January 2016.

11. YOUTH CENTRE LICENSE

Members considered a response from United Reformed Church (West Midlands) Trust Limited regarding provision of a license for the Youth Centre

It was noted that the Church continues to pursue a license rather than a lease; the response has been passed to the Council's Solicitor for comment.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to consider the item and responses at full Council in January 2015.

12. YOUTH SERVICE DELIVERY

Members discussed youth service delivery and future involvement in the South of Stroud Youth Partnership (SOSYP).

It was noted that the current service level agreement with Young Gloucestershire ends in July 2015.

Members considered the pros and cons of different options for the delivery of youth services in Dursley, including continuation of the SOSYP, the creation of a new Dursley and Cam partnership and the direct employment or commissioning of workers.

Concerns were raised about the current SOSYP arrangements, uneven contributions and levels of service, performance issues and lack of direct control.

The COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS that Council give notice of its intention to exit the SOSYP and approach Cam Parish Council to discuss the possibility of jointly commissioning a 2 year contract to deliver youth services, with a view to publishing the tender invitation by the end of January 2015. The Committee Chairman and Town Clerk will draft the tender documents and timescale to allow a 2 month overlap of services.

13. USE OF POWERS UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT 2005

Members considered a proposal put forward by Councillor Creswick to use powers under the Gambling Act 2005 to raise funds for the youth centre and other projects e.g. play areas, festive lighting, grants budget, community events and facilities.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to task Councillor Creswick with producing a report on the Gambling Act powers for a future Committee meeting including the benefits, drawbacks and practicalities.

14. COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

The Town Clerk read out a progress report from Chris Cherry, Vale Vision.

It was noted that the plan had stalled over recent months due to limited capacity of Vale Vision volunteers; the revised draft is however expected to be ready by the end of January 2015.

15. LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

Members considered participating in the new Local Council award Scheme which starts in January 2015.

The Committee Chairman gave an overview of the scheme, benefits to Council and the different award levels.

The COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS that Council take the necessary steps to apply for and achieve the Quality Standard Award.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date