

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 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 21st April 2015 for presentation to the Council on the 13th May 2015.

PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor C Nelmes

Vice Chairman: Councillor L Patrick

Councillors: J.A. Ball, N Grecian, A Stennett, M Laybourne, R Blackwell-Whitehead, F Firth

In Attendance: Councillor Harding, Acting Town Clerk, John Kay, Phil Curzon (Dursley Festival)

Absent: Councillor Creswick

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were accepted from Councillors Nicholson (work) and Frankau (personal).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ball declared a Pecuniary Disclosable Interest in agenda/minute item 7 as an employee of the Dursley and District Community Association.

3. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Phil Curzon, a representative of Dursley Festival Committee, informed members that a proposal to use the War memorial Recreation Ground for parking would be submitted to full Council on 13th May 2015. It was noted that the availability of existing town centre parking is expected to be limited on 27th June due to the closure of the Castle Street car park for the event and the start of work to the swimming pool extension.

The Chairman of Policy and Finance reported that initial concerns had been raised with Phil Curzon about the proposal relating to access, safety, ground damage and Council setting a precedent.

Members suggested that the Festival Committee approach Rednock, the Gazette office and those businesses with car park facilities prior to submitting the proposal to Council.

Phil Curzon was informed that the Council and Neighbourhood Steering Group would require stalls at the festival.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 17th February 2015 were approved and signed.

6. YOUTH CENTRE PROJECT ACCOUNTS

Members received the Youth Centre Project Accounts, expenditure and final estimate report dated 31/3/15.

It was noted that some snagging work was ongoing; the front window glazing has yet to be replaced at the contractors expense; the original listed front door is not holding up well to regular usage and will need to be replaced, a recent incident resulted in the door glass being broken; replacement of the door will need to be discussed with the Conservation Officer.

7. DURSLEY AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

- i) Members considered reapplying for listing of the Community Centre as an Asset of Community Value (ACV).

THE COMMITTEE AGREED to work with the Association to submit an ACV application and business plan; the draft documents will be considered by the Committee prior to submission to Stroud District Council; the Town Clerk will write to Stroud to raise issue with the font used in the application and urge them to use an accessible style.

- ii) The Chairman, Councillor Harding and the Centre Manager, Jane Ball, reported on the extraordinary meeting of the Dursley and District Community Association held on 8th April 2015. It was noted that 35 people attended the meeting and all wanted to see the centre continue; many of the user groups were willing to help and volunteers stepped forward to take on roles; there are concerns about cash flow, the manager is now working on a voluntary basis and much improvement work is required, including £50,000 worth of capital improvement work, membership recruitment and fundraising.

THE COMMITTEE AGREED that if the Association is able to generate support to create sustainable funding and improved governance, it would consider a grant application in the next round of funding if not before.

8. UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY PLAN.

The Acting Town Clerk informed members that Vale Vision had held a meeting earlier in the day (21/4/15) to restart work on the Community Plan work following recent delays; they plan to establish links between this work and that of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group and Council will receive a progress report in the coming weeks.

The COMMITTEE AGREED to ensure that the Council representative is informed of Vale Vision meetings and seek an update from Cam Parish Council on the current position.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO)

Members considered initial recommendations from the temporary RFO, Andrea Durn, relating to financial practices and staffing issues including:

- payment of salaries by BACS,
- value for money review of payroll services,
- introduction of internet banking,
- need for a strategic plan.

21st April 2015

Policy and Finance

It was noted that many of the recommendations had already been identified within committee work programmes but had not yet progressed.

The COMMITTEE AGREED that the recommendations were useful and would be followed up by the Policy and Finance Committee and Staffing Committee.

Councillor Harding withdrew from the meeting.

10. INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Members reviewed current insurance arrangements ahead of the policy renewal on 1st June 2015, using the WPS summary checklist.

Several amendments were made to the level of cover and checklist format; rebuild costs need to be checked.

The COMMITTEE AGREED that the Town Clerk would liaise with WPS on the changes and report renewal costs back to Council on 13th May 2015.

11. INTERNAL AUDIT

Members noted that the Internal Auditor will return on 22nd and 8th May 2015 to carry out an end of year audit.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:15 p.m.

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Chairman
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Date