

MINUTES

of the Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock on **TUESDAY 1st DECEMBER, 2015** at **7.00pm.**

PRESENT

Councillor H Smith (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Vice Chairman)

Councillors A Lewis, J Moody, P Palfrey,
P Sanders, J Sheldon, P Williamson.

Councillor Mrs M Ewings (Deputy Mayor)
(wef Minute No 184(g))

Councillor C Rogers (Chairman – Properties
Committee)

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk, General Manager, Assistant to the
Town Clerk

179. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Mrs S Bailey.

180. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were received (Minute No. 183(a) refers) – Councillor Mrs A Johnson by virtue of a family relationship to a Vice President of an organisation concerned and Councillor P Williamson by virtue of being an office holder of a body which provided space for the operation of the service.

181. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 20th October, 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Noted That the view of the Borough Council regarding the sharing/provision of personal ICT equipment was awaited.

182. GENERAL FINANCE

a) Schedule of Payments

The Committee received and considered a copy of the monthly accounts, as at 31st October, 2015 for submission to the next Council Meeting (Appendix 1).

b) Budget Monitoring Report

The Committee received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report as at 31st October, 2015 (Appendix 2).

Noted That arising from consideration of the above Members' attention was drawn to provision within the budget for delivery of Christmas lights on/around Council owned land together with the nature of the collaborative partnership working arrangements with the BID Company Ltd.

183. ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

The Committee considered the following matters requiring a decision:-

a) Goose Fair Park & Ride

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Appendix 3) in connection with recognition of the contribution made by local Lions Clubs to the operation of the Goose Fair Park & Ride service.

RECOMMENDED THAT in recognition of the improved usage of the facility and consequential contribution of the Lions Clubs that for this year only, and without prejudice to future years, an award of £1,250 be made to each Club.

Noted That Councillors Mrs A Johnson and P Williamson had previously declared an Interest in the above item (Minute no. 180 refers).

b) Tavistock Art Project

The Committee considered correspondence (Appendix 4) together with an accompanying request to address a Meeting of the Council from the Tavistock Art Project.

In the ensuing discussion reference was made to a range of issues including the extent of any role the Council might have in

monitoring safeguarding practice, the extent to which requests included within the correspondence could be dealt with at an operational level and the merits of receiving a presentation. It was noted that should the operational decision be made to permit the use of shop windows for display it would be necessary for any placements to have prior approval regarding suitability.

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Art Project be afforded the opportunity to make a presentation prior to a future Meeting of Council on a date to be arranged falling after determination by Council of grants to be awarded for the 2016-17 Financial Year.

c) Member Representation at Pre-Booked External Events (Course/Conferences)

The Committee considered how best to proceed in respect of those instances where Councillors found themselves unable to attend at pre-booked external events and, in particular, the treatment of lost monies arising from same.

Following consideration of the issues involved it was:

RECOMMENDED THAT all Councillors attending at courses/conferences or similar events which involved pre-booked transport costs, a booking fee or similar, be required as a condition of attendance to give an undertaking should they become unable to attend that:

- (If an elected Member) they thereby authorised deduction of costs incurred (such as booking fees, transport etc) from the next and future payments of Members' allowances receivable by them;
- (If a co-opted Member or an elected Member when recovery was not possible through Members' allowances) they thereby undertook to reimburse the Council the costs incurred.

The exceptions to the above conditions being where one or other of the following three circumstances applied, namely:-

- i) Cancellation occurred in time for the Council to either avoid the payment of a fee or to recover any fee paid; or

- ii) There was an occurrence which the Council classified as a genuine emergency; or
- iii) A substitute attendee was available to take the place of the designated Member.

184. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following items had been circulated for information only.

- a) Townscape Heritage Initiative – Project Progress Report (Appendix 5)
Noted That the THI Project Manager would be making a short presentation to Members immediately prior to the next Meeting of Council, so as to provide an up-date on progress and afford the opportunity to ask questions
- b) Tavistock Heritage – Minutes of the Meetings held on 12th August and 22nd October, 2015 (Appendices 6 – 7)
- c) Devon Association of Local Councils, Larger Councils Sub-Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th June 2015 (Appendix 8)
Noted That pursuant to an enquiry the Clerk would place a list of those meetings at which he represented the Council within the Assistant to the Town Clerk’s report.
- d) National Association of Local Councils Larger Councils’ Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th October, 2015 (Appendix 9).
- e) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 10)
- f) Destination Okehampton – Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th November, 2015 (Appendix 11).
- g) Items for Future Agendas – there were no items suggested.
- h) Up-dates received from Council Representatives serving on outside bodies – there were no up-dates.

URGENT ITEM

In the interests of expediting the business of the Committee, the Chairman agreed to take the following item as a matter of urgency.

185. FORWARD PLANNING, POLICY & PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE – FUTURE MEETING

Consideration was given to the timing of the third (and anticipated final) Meeting of the above Sub-Committee in connection with the Budget/Precept setting for the Council 2016-17.

RECOMMENDED THAT a Meeting of the Forward Planning, Policy & Programme Sub-Committee be held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 13th January 2016.

186. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was

RESOLVED THAT the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business.

187. DEBTORS

(**CONFIDENTIAL** by virtue of relating to commercially sensitive information)

The Committee considered and noted the list of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last quarter day and received up-dates, where appropriate, in respect of same.

Noted That in connection with debtor c) it was further

RECOMMENDED THAT in the event that the above debtor fails to keep to the approved repayment plan, authority be granted to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, to take such action including to bring such proceedings as are necessary to secure the recovery of all monies and debts due to the Council.

188. LEGAL MATTERS

(**CONFIDENTIAL** by virtue of relating to commercially confidential matters)

Pursuant to the provisions of Minute No. 108 the Council was advised that the matter was now in the hands of the Solicitors of the parties concerned.

The Press and Public were re-admitted to the Meeting.
The Meeting closed at 8.05pm

Signed.....

Dated.....

CHAIRMAN