

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 23 July 2012

at 6.50pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Present

Councillor: H B Eaglestone (Chairman)

Councillors:	Mrs J C Baker	P J Dorward
	A K Beames	T J Morris
Non Committee Member:		D A Snow
Officer:	Town Clerk	Democratic Services Officer

F339 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for their absence was received from Councillor B J Woodruff and C Woodward.

F340 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

F341 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the following meetings be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman:

Ordinary meeting held on 11 June 2012

Special meeting held on 25 June 2012

F342 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute F279 – Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Delegations and Committee Terms of Reference – The Town Clerk apologised for the fact that she had been unable to present the amended Standing Orders to this meeting. This item would be included on the agenda for the next meeting of this Committee.

F343 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present for this item.

F344 VANDALISM TO COUNCIL PROPERTY

The Committee received and considered the report of the Amenities Manager, as circulated with the agenda.

Once again, Members were disappointed to note the rectification costs due to vandalism. The Town Clerk reported that lead had been stolen from the Langdale Hall roof. There was CCTV footage and forensic evidence and the Police were hopeful of an arrest. The Police had also recommended the use of “smart water” when the lead is replaced.

The Committees noted the comments from the Police with regard to dogs off their leads in recreation areas.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the Amenities Manager's report be noted.
- 2) that the request for signage in recreation areas be referred to the Leisure & Recreation Committee.

F345 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

As the Town Clerk had been unable to prepare the report, this item was to be referred to a Special meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee to be held on Monday 6 August 2012.

RECOMMENDED: noted.

F346 FINANCIAL REPORT

As the Town Clerk had been unable to prepare the report, this item was to be referred to a Special meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee to be held on Monday 6 August 2012.

The Town Clerk did wish to advise the Committee that, following the staff review, it had been recommended that the Council should procure a professional website, which would be easy to update. She circulated information at the meeting from a company used by some local councils. More quotations were awaited. Although she intended to include this in her report to the Special meeting on 6 August, she wished to secure a budget at this stage in order to continue the process. The Town Clerk was advised to examine the costs in depth, in particular the on-going costs.

The Town Clerk commented that her report to the Special meeting on 6 August would also include information on the recommendation from the Public Halls Committee with regard to Langdale Hall and further information on the recommendation to obtain an independent report for the resurfacing of the tennis courts at West Witney.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the verbal report be noted.
- 2) that a budget of £3,400 be agreed for a professional website.
- 3) that delegated authority be given to Officers to appoint the most suitable company.

F347 DISCRETIONARY GRANT AWARDS 2012/13

The Committee received and considered the report of the Democratic Services Officer, as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the report be noted
- 2) that the following grants be awarded:

	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Grant</u>
a)	Witney Film Festival	Subsidised use of hall up to £220
b)	Witney Model & Collectors Club	£75
c)	Base 33 Youth Trust	£125

d) St Johns Ambulance	£100
Total	£300

3) that payments of the above grants be made under the following powers:

- a. **Local Government Act 1972. s145** – Provision of Entertainments
- b. **Local Government Act 1972. s137** – Power of local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purpose not otherwise authorised
- c. **Local Government (Misc Prov) Act 1976, s19** – Power to provide and equip premises for use of clubs and societies having athletic, social or recreational objectives

4) that no grant be awarded to Relate Oxfordshire.

5) that the correspondence from Witney Woodland Volunteers be noted.

F348 **BUS SERVICES**

The Committee received and considered the correspondence, as circulated with the agenda.

Cllr T J Morris (as a West Oxfordshire District Council Member for Freeland and Hanborough) gave background information on this proposal.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the correspondence be noted
- 2) that the Town Council supports the discussion with Stagecoach but does not help to meet the costs of the bus service.

F349 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

F350 **NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP**

The Committee received and considered the confidential minutes of the meetings held on 24 May 2012.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Councillor Mrs B J Churchill had resigned as the Council's representative; however, she remained on the Group as an independent representative.

RECOMMENDED: that the minutes be noted.

F351 **VERBAL REPORT FROM SPECIAL LEISURE & RECREATION MEETING HELD EARLIER IN THE EVENING**

The Committee received and considered the verbal report.

RECOMMENDED: that the verbal report be noted and the recommendations contained therein agreed.

F352 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 10 July 2012 as circulated prior to the meeting were agreed.

The Town Clerk updated the Members on the outcome of the meetings with the staff and the resultant new staffing structure. She advised that three positions were being advertised in the local paper as well as on the internet, and circulated to the various local authorities in Oxfordshire. She advised Members of the timetable and that the closing date for receipt of applications was 15 August 2012. With regard to the senior position of Responsible Financial Officer she advised that it was usual practice for an interview panel of Members to be established.

The Town Clerk also circulated a letter from a member of staff.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the report be noted.
- 2) that the interview panel for the position of RFO/DTC be made up of Cllrs Eaglestone, Dorward, Baker and Morris.
- 3) that the correspondence from the member of staff is noted.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Chairman