

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 29th June 2010 in the Old Abbey House.

Present:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cllr Alastair Fear | Chair of Amenities & Recreation Ctte |
| Cllr Patrick Lonergan | |
| Cllr Angela Lawrence | |
| Cllr Lesley Legge | Chair, Leader of the Council |
| Cllr Alison Rooke | |
| Cllr Tim Oates | Chair of Planning & Highways |

In Attendance:

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Mr Nigel Warner | Town Clerk |
|-----------------|------------|

24 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from the Mayor of Abingdon, Cllr Duncan Brown and Cllrs Jim Halliday and Julie Mayhew-Archer.

25 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Angela Lawrence, Patrick Lonergan and Alison Rooke declared personal interests in any matters involving the Vale of White Horse District Council as they were Members of that Council

26 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 8th June 2010 be signed as a true and correct record.

27 **Matters Arising**

Minute 10: It was reported that the Environmental Awareness Day took place on Saturday 12th June. The Day had been very well supported by exhibitors and the public.

28 **Statements and Questions from the Public**

Dr Les Clyne asked a number of questions of the Chair of the Committee. These, together with the answers given, are detailed below:

1. This question was withdrawn by Dr Clyne as the answer was within the accounts.
2. *What is the budget in 2010/2011 for community safety schemes and activities, and what is the likely expenditure by the end of the financial year?*
Answer: £17,850 and £18,082.
3. *By what date do the Town Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council have to decide whether the possible transfer of assets and responsibility for the running of Guildhall will take place ?*
Answer: There is no mandatory date.

4. *In order to reduce costs will the Town Council consider reducing the number of councillors from 3 per ward to 2 per ward as is the case for the Vale ?*

Informally. The current number of Councillors was set by the Boundary Commission in its review which was effective from 2003 and this was considered to be the correct number for a town of this size and a Council which undertakes the activities of a busy Town Council.

5. *In order to reduce servicing costs will the Town Council consider reducing the number of committees / sub committees / working parties from the current 23 to a more modest figure... e.g combining working parties?*

Yes this is looked at each year, but servicing costs relate more to the amount of work carried out by the Council. It should also be noted that working parties are usually formed for specific short-term projects and so have a limited lifetime.

6. *In order to help manage more smaller community projects next year will the Council consider increasing the amount of project effort and support by 0.5 FTE project effort and 0.2 FTE admin. effort for the next financial year ?*

Staffing needs are reviewed at regular intervals and community projects are supported through many Council activities.

29 **Approval of statement of accounts for year ended 31st March 2010**

Members received and considered the draft accounts for 2009/10, as circulated with the agenda.

There had been a significant change to the accounts this year, with a move from accounts based on the Statement of Recommended Accounting Practice for Local Government, the "SORP" which required the Council's accounts to be drafted in a similar way to those of principal authorities, to accounts based on the Financial Reporting Standard for Small Enterprises (FRSSE), a reporting standard usually used in the private sector and which is designed for small organisations. The Town Clerk stated that as a result there had been some challenges to drafting the accounts and he was expecting audit to request some changes. The audit of the accounts would take place during the summer and therefore any changes would be brought to the next meeting of this Committee. It was also likely that the meeting scheduled to consider audit matters, due to take place on Tuesday 28th September 2010 may well need to take place.

The Town Clerk explained that the FRSSE required an annual report to be produced as part of the accounts. This was separate to the more detailed reports produced for the Annual Parish Meeting and as part of the Best Value process. This report was circulated at the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Lesley Legge, seconded by Councillor Patrick Lonergan and

Resolved: that the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010, together with the Annual Report and the Annual Governance Statement, be approved by the Council and that authority be given to the Mayor and the Town Clerk to sign these documents on behalf of the Council.

30. **Exclusion of the public, including the press**

Resolved:

That in accordance with section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

31. **Minutes**

Resolved: that the confidential minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 8th June 2010 be signed as a correct record.

The meeting rose at 7.45 pm.

.....
Chair Finance and General Purposes Committee

.....
Date