



Stonehouse Town Council

MINUTES

OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 4TH NOVEMBER 2013 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE

Present:

Theresa Watt (Convenor of Committee)
Chris Brine (Chairman Town Council)
Simon Lewis (Vice Chairman Town Council)
Vicky Redding
Paul Stephens

Also Present: Town Clerk Gill Jennings

K1/55 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from Councillor Pam Swain

K1/56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are reminded of their obligation within the requirements of the Adopted Model Code of Conduct to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests where applicable.

K1/62 Councillors Paul Stephens and Theresa Watt declared an interest.

K1/60.2 Councillor Vicky Redding declared a DPI (reimbursement of expenses)

K1/57 ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Maximum of 15 minutes – Any member of the public may speak only once in respect of any business itemised on the Agenda for a maximum of 5 minutes)

No Participation.

K1/58 TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30TH SEPTEMBER 2013

The Minutes were approved as a true record.

K1/59 POLICY WORKING GROUP

NALC have issued new model Standing Orders which should now be considered by the Policy Working Group

The Clerk advised the changes were largely in line with the Localism Act and the Town Council had already addressed the issues but the Policy Working Group will compare the latest versions.

Cllr. Watt gave a report from the policy working group. An organisation chart would be created and a standardised template for Working Group reports. The Committee agreed to recommend to Town Council that it adopts the report template.

The Working Group would also hold a refresher Workshop on Council's Standing Orders and Code. This would be held in January 2014.

Further to previous discussions on the District Council's consultation on polling stations the Policy Group had formed the view that the Town Council should ask that the North Ward polling station should be situated in St Joseph's church hall. The Committee agreed that this view should be put forward to the District Council.

K1/60 FINANCE

1. To discuss objectives for future S106 funding & current balances

The Committee were given a copy of the current list of projects created by Stroud District Council. It was felt that canal projects should be identified and added to the list and the list should be regularly updated. The Committee were advised by Councillor Watt that the combi-grant funding had been granted for improvements to Oldends Pavilion. ART Committee would be expected to look at ways to utilise this funding with S106 monies to bring about a more attractive venue. The Committee were concerned that S106 monies had been granted to Glos County Council library services from the Bristol Rd site without a specific project. (Cllr Brine to make enquiries) It appeared detrimental to the potential station that the developer's pledge of work on a station building, bridge and roundabout had been deleted from the planning conditions. Cllr. Brine felt that this was due to the station not being a realistic proposition without commitment from First Great Western.

2. To agree payments and receipts against budget for September and October

Committee Expenditure £5539.33 (Sept) £10754.12 (Oct) and Receipts £1738.70 (Sept) £51112 (Oct) was agreed against budget. November payments to date were agreed £4966.06.

3. To consider a grant application from Sue Ryder for funding

The Committee were mindful that they had made a grant in the past and on this occasion would reserve the balance available for support in the locality.

4. To recommend for resolution that the Town Council rejoins the Local Government Pension Scheme (qualifying period 12 months continuous employment subject to statutory requirements)

Agreed unanimously.

K1/61 TO CONSIDER A DRAFT BUDGET FOR ALL THREE COMMITTEES FOR 2014-15

The RFO had prepared draft budgets for each Committee with a 1.5% increase. Regeneration Committee had subsequently requested further funding of £8000. The RFO explained that the funding envisaged could be found from S106 or an existing budget and the increase was not warranted. Cllr. Redding queried the necessity of setting an annual figure for support to Citizens Advice, Lunch Club and Neighbourhood Warden. It was agreed that a grant budget would be set but these organisations would be expected to bid for funding or enter a service level agreement. The Committee were concerned to note the amount paid to Stroud District Council for maintaining the open spaces on Park Estate. (Cllr Brine to investigate) The Finance Committee would recommend that the Town Council does not increase the budget by more than 2%. Committees would review their budgets and the final budgets would be presented to Town Council on the 16th December.

K1/62 ELM ROAD YOUTH CLUB (update)

The funding is not available for a feasibility study. This matter is now being dealt with by an external group.

The developer has produced a plan offering larger community space. District Council Ward Members would meet with the action group to discuss their needs.

K1/63 MATTERS OF INFORMATION

1. The Electoral Commission have launched a consultation on Standing for Election which allows comment on proposed changes see www/electoralcommission.org.uk
2. DCLG are urging councils to get involved in Our Place Programme – a means of devolving services see www/mycommunityrights.org.uk

K1/64 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9th December 2013

The Meeting was adjourned to discuss a confidential report from the Staffing Committee and by Resolution excluded the press and public.

The Council are currently advertising for a Caretaker/Maintenance Person to look after Council premises. There was a lack of suitable applicants in the immediate area for the key-holding and weekend cleaning work. **The Committee discussed two quotations for contract keyholders and it was agreed to appoint Glevum Security to look after the youth building on an annual contract of £180 per annum with call-out charges of £26 per hour. Cleaning contracts costs were being obtained.**

The Staffing Committee had discussed the report of the Communications Working Group which indicated a need to have a part-time person employed to look after the website and Newsletter. The Staffing Committee had requested the Deputy Clerk to fulfil this role over the next three months with a review after three months.
