

MEETING OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE OF BRACKLEY TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE UPPER HALL, TOWN HALL, BRACKLEY ON MONDAY
15TH FEBRUARY 2010 at 7.49 pm

Present: The Worshipful the Town Mayor (Councillor C S Billingham)
Councillors C J Blunden, C O Cartmell, D Dunham, T D Hayward,
L Ross and P H Stocker (Chairman)

Apologies: Councillors K D Bonner-Dunham, D Shaw and W B Stimpson

In attendance: Councillor K Dixon

478. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

479. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Finlayson, St Annes Close said that the Vehicle Activated Sign on the Northampton Road was not working. He had noticed that Members were being asked to consider purchasing one of these signs and he commented that the Town would then be responsible for maintenance costs. He felt that these signs should be purchased and maintained by either Northamptonshire County Council or the Police.

480. TRAINING FOR MEMBERS

Members were reminded that the new date for the training session on Standing Orders and Chairmanship was 22ND February from 7 to 9 pm. This would be undertaken by Mrs Jacque Wilson. Members noted.

481. VOTING PROCEDURE FOR MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

Concern had been expressed about the procedure of the appointment of Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor. The current system allows for the possibility that the decision could be overturned at the Mayor Making Ceremony. Members were therefore asked to look at alternative procedures and that these be included as a new Standing Order. It was suggested that the candidate would be selected only if he had a majority vote from Councillors on the full Council. Councillor Blunden felt that this could be unworkable. Councillor Dunham commented that at the present time there was no way to voice an objection to a candidate. But he felt it should be a majority of the full Council and if there was insufficient numbers then the matter should be referred to a future meeting. The Town Mayor said she had queried the current procedure because she understood that the decision should be 50% of the Council plus 1 as it must be a decision which would hold at the Mayor Making ceremony. After discussion it was

RESOLVED:

That the Standing Order Working Party discuss the matter
and that the decision be brought to a future meeting of this
Committee

482. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS 2010/11

A list of dates and times of meetings for 2010/11 was attached to the Agenda. It was

RESOLVED:

That this list be accepted.

483. NCALC – PARISH PARTNERSHIPS

Members were asked to consider the Northamptonshire Councils Charter consultation document regarding the formation of parish partnerships between the principal councils and local councils. Mr Moody of NCALC requested that all Councillors are made aware of the document and that their views are very important to NCALC as a membership organisation.

The Town Mayor said the document was full of loopholes and problems. The same information was again being written with no thought to costs involved and she questioned what 'clout' local councils had. She said it was a quango in its worst form, a case of 'jobs for the boys' and a complete waste of resources and she questioned where the money was coming from. Councillor Dunham said the document was simply regurgitating central government directives with no regard as to what could be done locally. Councillors Cartmell and Ross agreed with all the comments. After discussion it was

RESOLVED:

To write to NCALC stating that the Town Council is unable to support the document in its current form. The Council feels that it a waste of resources and is just paying lip service to government directives resulting in increased costs to local authorities.

484. NCALC SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Members were advised that a meeting would take place on Saturday 20th March 2010 at 9.45 am at Higham Ferrers Town Hall. Councillor Joyce would be attending. It was

RESOLVED:

That the three items listed in the report be agreed and that Councillor Joyce be appointed to attend this meeting on the Council's behalf.

485. VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGN

At the suggestion of Sergeant Tim Pearson, Members were asked to consider the purchase of a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) which could be moved around the Town. It was thought that the actual cost for the sign would be around £3/4,000. Sgt Pearson had also approached Councillor Ross with a view to getting additional signatures for the Urban Speed Watch group for them to obtain funding.

485. VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGN Cont'd.....

Councillor Ross said he had had a conversation with Sgt Pearson but he got the impression that the Police would have very little to do with the scheme, although they think it is a good idea. There are 10 VAS's owned by Northamptonshire County Council and these would be shared throughout the whole county. He also commented that there are no figures about how effective these machines are.

Councillor Blunden felt County Council should provide the machines and that the Town Council should not go ahead and purchase one. Councillor Hayward suggesting waiting until more signatures are obtained and then try for funding. Councillor Dunham said that the Town needed to demonstrate there was a speed problem and that the signs would be of benefit. It was

RESOLVED:

To wait until 500 signatures have been obtained and then ascertain if there is external funding.

486. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Members were reminded that the Annual Town Meeting would take place on Monday 8th March at 7.30 pm and that signs would be erected around the town a week before the event. An advertisement has also been booked in the Brackley Advertiser for that week. Some invitations had been sent out and Members were asked if they had any further suggestions. It was

RESOLVED:

That an invitation be sent to the new Chief Constable.

487. NCALC AUDITOR REPORT

A copy of the NCALC Auditor's report was attached to the Agenda. It was

RESOLVED:

That the Standing Orders referring to the Code of Conduct be updated and amended to read May 2007 and this be brought back to this Committee in March for adoption.

That Members note the reference to initialling of cheque stubs against invoices.

488. INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW

The above review was undertaken by Councillor Dunham and a report was attached to the Agenda for Members consideration. The Chairman thanked Councillor Dunham for his work and the resulting report.

489. STANDING ORDERS

Members were advised that the new Standing Orders for Local Councils have been received. Part II will need some slight amendment and it was suggested that the working party look at this before the next meeting of this Committee. Relevant Members were asked to put forward suggested dates for this meeting.

490. ANNIVERSARY OF GRANTING OF BOROUGH STATUS – TOWN MAYOR

The Town Mayor advised Members that a meeting of the working party had taken place and would meet again on 27th February 2010. Matters were progressing with events for the piazza and updates would be given on a regular basis.

491. FINANCE REPORTS

Interest declared by the Town Mayor in item 3236 of List of Accounts 11B and she did not discuss or vote thereon.

List of Accounts

List of Accounts 11B had been circulated with the Agenda. It was

RESOLVED:

That List of Accounts 11B in the sum of £7,682.12 be approved and passed for payment.

Income report – received by Chairman

492. INFORMATION REPORT

a) Northamptonshire Police Authority
Councillor Cartmell commented that perhaps the Town Council's comments had achieved something now that a meeting is to be held in Brackley. He asked that this continues to be monitored to ensure that it does happen.

b) Police Community Panel

c) SNC Standards Committee – 8th January 2010

493. EMAILED DOCUMENTS

Councillor Cartmell brought to Members attention the amount of documents which were now being emailed to Councillors. He said there was a cost involved for Councillors to print these and asked if claims could be made for this expense. The Town Clerk said that she did ask if Members wished to have hard copies. Councillor Cartmell commented that by the time the Agendas had been received, it was too late to request these. He asked the Town Mayor what happened at South Northamptonshire Council and she replied that there was a choice of whether to have the documents emailed or whether to receive hard copies. She said most District Councillors chose not to have hard copies.

493. EMAILED DOCUMENTS Cont'd.....

Councillor Blunden suggested that lengthy documents be emailed to Members as soon as received to enable Members more time to read these. Councillor Dunham said he preferred to receive documents electronically.

494. FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

Members were advised of the following presentations:

Providence Court about the Sawmills site on Monday 1st March at 6 pm.

WYG on the Masterplan on Thursday 11th March 2010 at 6 pm.

495. BANBURY ROAD CROSSING

A request had also come in via email from Richard Hall, for a follow up meeting to discuss the proposal for an alternative positioning of the zebra crossing at Southfield School. A list of suggested dates was included. Councillor Cartmell asked if these dates could be emailed to Members and also if some steer could be given on what the meeting will be about.

496. SNVB 50+ FORUM

Notification had been received that the next open forum meeting would be held on Tuesday 16th February 2010 from 2 to 4 pm in Brackley Baptist Church. The programme would include a discussion with a representative from County Council about public transport in the area.

497. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from this Meeting during the discussion on matters relating to staff as publicity would be prejudicial to the public by nature of the business to be transacted.

498. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

A specimen policy supplied by Northamptonshire County Council was attached to the Agenda for Members approval as the Town Council is required to have a pension's policy because it is an employing and administering authority of the Northamptonshire Pension Fund. It was

RESOLVED:

That this be agreed.

CONTINUATION OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE OF BRACKLEY TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE UPPER HALL, TOWN HALL, BRACKLEY ON MONDAY 15TH FEBRUARY 2010 at 7.59 pm

499. TOWN COUNCIL HANDBOOK FOR STAFF

A copy of a Town Council Handbook for staff was emailed to the Mayor and Chairman of this Committee and Members approval was sought for the adoption of the book, which sets out all the terms and conditions of staff employment. A hard copy was available in the office and Councillors had been asked if they wished a copy to be emailed to everyone. It was

RESOLVED:

That all Councillors be sent an electronic copy and that the matter would be discussed again at the next meeting of this Committee.

500. TOWN PARTNERSHIP

The Town Mayor asked Members if they would give some thought to the formation of some form of partnership, as she thought this would be beneficial to the town and be a means of communication between the Town Council and various other bodies/organisations etc.