

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock on **TUESDAY 8th APRIL 2014** at **7:15pm**

PRESENT Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs M Ewings (Vice Chairman)

Councillors D Eberlie, D Whitcomb, J Moody.

Councillor H Smith (Mayor)
Councillor J Sheldon (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor Mrs S Bailey (Chairman Properties Committee)

IN ATTENDANCE Town Clerk, General Manager,
Assistant to the Town Clerk.

427. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors A Fleet, Mrs J Metcalf and P Sanders.

428. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

429. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 25th February, 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

430. MEETING OF THE PROPERTIES COMMITTEE HELD EARLIER THAT EVENING

The Chairman of the Properties Committee drew the attention of the Committee to those items listed as requiring a decision by Council as included in the report of the General Manager, together with potential additional costs under the Townscape Heritage Initiative project, as endorsed by the Properties Committee.

431. GENERAL FINANCE

a) Schedule of Payments

The Committee considered the monthly accounts as at 28th February 2014, for submission to the next Council Meeting (Appendix 1).

Noted That queries previously raised by a Member had been addressed by the Town Clerk.

b) Budget Monitoring Report

The Committee received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report as at 28th February 2014 (Appendix 2)

432. TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE SCHEME

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Appendix 3) and the recommendations therein.

The Town Clerk provided an update in relation to the deliberations of the Properties Committee Meeting held earlier that evening (Minute 423 refers), and the related discussion at that Meeting.

RECOMMENDED THAT

- a) Tavistock Town Council at its Meeting on 15th April 2014:
 - i. Endorse the Tavistock Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Tavistock Conservation Area Management Plan and recommend same as a basis for consideration by the Local Planning Authority (para 3.8 of the Conservation Area Management Plan refers);
 - ii. endorse and adopt the Tavistock Public Realm Strategy in principle.
- b) Authorise such arrangements as are necessary to deliver the THI Scheme for Tavistock.

Noted That

- the Committee further reviewed the cost/financial implications of the Scheme including with regard to the recommendations of the Properties Committee. A copy of the current iteration of the Bid document was available for inspection at the Council Offices and the Project Manager

was available to speak to Members who wished to make an appointment;

- minor corrections noted at the recently convened Member Workshop in respect of the Conservation Area Management Plan had been made;
- particular reference was made to the scale and scope of the THI scheme (both for the Council as landlord and accountable body), its anticipated impact upon organisational capacity and the importance attached to proper resourcing of same. The support of the Borough Council in assisting with the development of the Bid and, in particular, the Economic Development Officer was appreciated.

433. REQUESTS/OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

a) Calendar of Meetings 2014-2015

The Committee considered a draft Calendar of Meetings for 2014 - 2015 (Appendix 4).

RECOMMENDED THAT the meeting of Tavistock Town Council to be held on 15th April, 2015 give consideration to the options of progressing with either the current 6 week meeting cycle as presented or moving to a 4 weekly cycle.

Noted That

- indicative Calendars of Meetings for each option would be circulated;
- Members' attention was drawn to the potential impact of a more concentrated meeting cycle upon service delivery.

b) Service Plans

The Committee considered the following Service Plans together with a précis of performance against each in relation to the previous year:-

- Corporate** (Appendices 5-6)
- Administration Office** (Appendices 7-8)

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council endorse and adopt the above Service Plans as a basis for the delivery of related Council Services 2014-2015.

Noted that arising from consideration of the above particular reference was made to:

- the opportunities and risks faced by the Council in delivering potentially its most ambitious programme of work in living memory;
- the importance attached to a realistic assessment of organisational capacity and resource;
- the role of Members and probity in delivery.

Arising from consideration of the above it was further:

RECOMMENDED THAT the Forward Planning, Policy and Programme Sub-Committee be reconvened in June to consider issues associated with staffing levels, organisational capacity and related matters.

c) Village Hall Wi-Fi

This item had been withdrawn at the request of the proposing Member.

d) Tavistock Heritage Festival

A request had been received for Tavistock Town Council to act as Guarantor for up to £ 5,000 for this event (Appendix 9)

Following discussion, it was agreed that advice would be sought from the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the National Association for Local Councils (NALC), to establish if they were aware of any standard agreements which the Town Council could use, if needed. In addition a Member offered to contact the Office with details of any previous such agreements as the Council might have been party to.

434. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following items had been circulated for information only and were noted:-

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 10)

Noted That Members were invited to confirm their attendance at the Grant Presentation Evening (24th April 2014), and the Neighbourhood Planning Training session (29th April 2014), to the ATTC by Friday 11th April 2014 if not already done.

- b) Tavistock Townscape Heritage Partnership (Appendix 11) – Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th January 2014;
- c) Town Team – Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th February 2014 (Appendix 11);
- d) Devon Association of Local Councils – Larger Councils’ Group, Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13th February 2014 (Appendix 12)
- e) Tavistock BID Company – Minutes of the Meetings held on the 20th February and 20th March 2014 (Appendix 13);
- f) Chamber of Commerce – Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd March 2014 (Appendix 14);

Noted That an error within the Minutes was identified. The Chamber of Commerce to be asked to amend their Minute 14.26 to change the wording from ‘TTC’ to ‘WDBC’

- g) Southern Parishes Link Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on the 6th March 2014 (Appendix 15);

Noted That A suggestion was made that the Southern Links Committee liaise with their counterparts elsewhere to identify how best to increase requests for funding.

- h) Tavistock Area Children and Young People’s Hub – Notice of Networking Session and Funding Workshop – 24th April 2014 4.30pm-6.30pm;
- i) Superfast Broadband update (Appendix 16);
- j) Complaints update – the Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the current situation regarding a complaint previously received.
- k) Items for future Agendas.
 - i. Southern Parishes Committee – no matters were brought forward.
 - ii. West Devon/Tavistock Consultative Group – Taxi Licencing/Planning Enforcement were suggested as future Agenda items
- l) Updates and questions to Council Representatives serving on outside bodies.

Noted That a Councillor reported they had attended an Allotment Association Meeting and been asked to pass on the thanks of the Association to the Town Council for its ongoing support.

URGENT ITEM

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

435. SUPPORT FOR ALTERNATIVE INLAND RAIL ROUTE

Copy correspondence from Cridton Town Council (Appendix 17) had previously been circulated

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council lend its support to the proposal for an alternative inland rail route through Cridton, via Okehampton and Tavistock to Plymouth and beyond.

436. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS 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.

437. DEBTORS

(CONFIDENTIAL – by virtue 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 updates, where relevant, in respect of same.

Noted That reference was made to the previous decision of Council to take action to bring a tenancy to an end upon the lease reaching its term. In connection therewith a request was made for a standard response which could be used if/when approached by the public when this decision came to be actioned.

The meeting closed at 9.11pm

Signed.....
Dated.....
CHAIRMAN