



MINUTES of a MEETING of the PROPERTY AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on MONDAY 11 JUNE 2012 at 6.30PM

Present: Cllrs Bowyer (Chair), Ayres,
Belchamber MBE, Britton,
Emberson, Long and Squires

2012/2013

1. EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. MOBILE PHONES

Members and the public were reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) was prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

3. APOLOGIES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declaration of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. Councillors Squires, Bowyer and Emberson declared personal interests as Members of the District Council with regard to the items on the Southfields Jubilee Centre and the Church Street offices. The Town Clerk and Councillor Belchamber MBE declared personal interests with regard to the item on the Local Government Pension Scheme.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2012 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

7. CHAIR'S REPORT AND URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

8. OFFICERS REPORT

8.1 The Brick Shelters

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which updated Members on the results of the consultation on the proposed demolition of the Brick Shelters on either side of the Arun Footbridge and proposed a way forward. Members were pleased with the high level of response to the

consultation and noted that only two of 45 respondents wished the shelters to remain. The installation of benches was thought to be more appropriate than planters, although both were well-supported. It was therefore thought appropriate this time for the Town Council to proceed with the installation of benches only at the two locations, but to review further at a later date the need for planters. Councillor Belchamber MBE reported on the River Ward meetings that he had been having which were looking to allocate funding to local projects in the most deprived areas. The residents on the West Bank had identified the need for planters and funding was being sought for that. Possibly fibreglass boats could also be provided by local business and it was possible that the Ward budget could also be directed at this. This element was supported by the Committee. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1. The consultation exercise on the shelters be noted.**
- 2. The removal of the shelters with the initial installation of benches only at the two locations be approved.**
- 3. The potential external funding for planters be noted, with a possible top-up to be considered by Ward Members from their Ward budget.**

8.2 West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme – Annual Update

The Committee considered the annual update to employers in the West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme (previously circulated) and **RESOLVED** that:

The paper be noted.

8.3 Staff Sickness Report

The Committee considered the latest Staff Sickness records for the full years 2001-2012 and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The report be noted.

8.4 Staff Movements 2011/2012

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which set out those members of staff that had joined and left the Council during 2011/12. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report be noted.

8.5 Hearing Loop and Portable PA System

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which explained that the Hearing Loop system in the New Millennium Chamber was no longer compatible with digital hearing aids. Members strongly supported the need to have appropriate systems in place to assist Members and also noted that this could also be useful when looking to hire out rooms. The Town Clerk reported that a variety of options were still being evaluated and he wished to liaise with certain specific Members to ensure that a correct and appropriate system was

purchased. He was also looking to minimise the cost wherever possible. He explained that this item was not budgeted for and therefore possibly a Supplementary Estimate would need to be sought. However, in the meantime he would further investigate the options prior to the purchase. Members fully supported this and **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Clerk be instructed to proceed with the purchase of necessary and appropriate equipment to support those Members who have difficulty in hearing the debates at Committee and Council, subject to a balance being achieved between the cost and effectiveness and, if necessary, the approval of a Supplementary Estimate.

8.6 Southfields Jubilee Centre

8.6.1 The Committee considered two reports (the first previously circulated and the second on Staffing circulated to Members of the Council only). The reports updated Members on the progress towards delivering the new building and also set out proposals to ensure that appropriate caretaker and cleaner resources were available for the Centre when it was open. Members were delighted with the progress that was being made with the new build and hoped that the land transfer would be expedited.

8.6.2 With regard to the staffing proposals, Members were also supportive of the way forward set out in the Exempt report. In the ensuing discussions, the Town Clerk undertook to :-

- Ensure the caretaker and the cleaner(s) were CRB checked;
- Investigate the need for Public Entertainment Licences;
- Ensure that "cleaning up" after a hire was an integral part of the hall hire agreement;
- Circulate to Members the charging regime for the new Centre;
- Inform Councillor Long regarding the flooring arrangements and whether it was sprung;
- Include in the Agreement permission for the use of an occasional liquor licence if acquired by an outside organisation (subject to approval by the Town Clerk), but not to seek any other alcohol-related licences generally;
- Arrange, in addition to the opening/open day, a prior view for Councillors of the Centre.

8.6.3 In all other respects, Members were satisfied with the proposals for staffing and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve that:

1. The staff structure be amended to bring together the Caretakers and Amenity Team under the oversight of the Services Officer

2. The appointment of caretaker/cleaner resources within the options set out in paragraph 3.4 for a maximum of 14 hours per

week (probably 12) be approved and delegated to the Town Clerk.

3. The report otherwise be noted.

9. **FINANCE**

9.1 **Finance Report 2011/2012**

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which highlighted any significant variances from Budgeting Income and Expenditure related to the Property and Personnel Committee's budget for 2011/12.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report be noted.

10. **MASTERPLAN – NORTH LITTLEHAMPTON**

11. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Members of the public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.

12. **OFFICER'S REPORT(Exempt)**

12.1 **Dairy Community Centre – Electrics**

The Town Clerk reported orally that he had closed the Community Centre for at least a week to undertake emergency electrical work. The cost of this could be in the region of £7,000 but was needed to enable the Community Centre to meet its bookings. The Centre had further been affected by the heavy rain earlier in the day, although the damage as yet had not been assessed. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The actions of the Town Clerk in progressing emergency electrical repairs at the Dairy Community Centre be endorsed and that the report otherwise be noted.

12.2 **Southfields Jubilee Centre – Staffing**

The report had previously been considered under an earlier item.

12.3 **Church Street Offices – Funding Options**

12.3.1 The Committee considered a presentation by the Town Clerk, which he would also be making to the Policy and Finance Committee on the following week. He explained that although the final decision would be taken by Council, he needed the views of Members prior to progressing this matter further. In his presentation, he explained the current situation with regard to the decision of Council to acquire the Church Street offices; the position with regard to North Littlehampton funding and also referred to the Dairy site. He explained that there were several options, but it was thought that the most practical and

affordable option was to obtain a loan in the sum of £300,000 for a 15-year term. Members also considered whether it was appropriate to demolish or not to demolish the Church Street offices at this stage. Members were concerned about the potential ongoing costs of retaining the building, particularly bearing in mind the recent reports of damage following break-in to the property. This would have significant implications for the ability of the Town Council to let out the offices and achieve an income to cover costs.

- 12.3.2 The Committee therefore endorsed the recommendation to the Policy and Finance Committee and Council to borrow £300,000 for 15 years and in the meantime to keep a close eye on the costs at the Dairy to ensure that value remained in retaining it rather than selling it. Lastly, it was thought that any development of the new Community Centre on Church Street should await the receipt of funds from the North Littlehampton development.

The meeting ended at 7.55pm.

CHAIR