

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 21ST APRIL 2004

PRESENT

Mr. Steeples presided over Mrs. Harrison, Messrs. Mackin, Gray, Wren and Fletcher.

1. APOLOGIES

Mrs. Holmes.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

3. SPEED INFORMATION DEVICE

Information received from Bedfordshire County Council regarding the hire of a Speed Indication Device indicated that it wouldn't be the most suitable piece of equipment to satisfy the member's plans to reduce speeding in the town. It was decided to put the possible of hiring of a SID on 'hold' but enquiries as to the actual cost of hire was to be ascertained.

4. SHEFFORD NEWSLINE

An advert of the Council's intention to invite Tenders regarding a possible change in the printing/format etc. of their quarterly magazine, is to be placed in the Biggleswade Chronicle in accordance with their Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

5. AUDITOR'S REPORT

Guidelines have been received from Lubbock Fine (External Auditor's) regarding the payment of salaries and gratuities and included an extract from the National Association of Local Councils briefing notes.

6. PARISH BASIC ALLOWANCE / TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE

Information received regarding Parish Basic Allowances and Parish Travelling and Subsistence Allowances. Clerk to study the information to note current position on these topics and be aware of any changes.

7. DATA PROTECTION

As information is held on various residents in the town it was decided to see if there was a need to register under the Data Protection Act 1998. After due consideration it was decided to register accordingly.

8. THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

A letter and two booklets from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister giving information on 'Draft Guidance to Monitoring Officers by the Standards Board for England' and 'Local Investigation of Allegations of Misconduct'. Clerk to oversee.

9. FORTHCOMING CHANGES TO THE LAW ON PREVENTING ILLEGAL WORKING

Notification from the Department of the Minister of State at the Home Office that the Government intends to change Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. A Home Office Guidance Booklet was enclosed. The Government will also be producing more detailed guidance for employers on how to comply with the law on preventing illegal working bearing in mind that ten new countries will be joining the European Union on 1st May 2004.

10. DOG FOULING/LITTER PICKING

Information to be sought from Defra on the various bye-laws relating to these topics.

11. BEDFORDSHIRE HEARTLANDS NHS PCT

A letter has been received from Mr. Robin Younger, Chairman of the above organisation enquiring if the Council would be interested in having a meeting with the PCT to discuss the work they do and their plans for the future. The members thought that such a meeting would be a good idea and Mr Younger is to be invited to give a presentation on the evening of the first Planning & Environment meeting on 2nd June.

12. CCTV SURVEY

In February Mr. Wren contacted the occupants of various shops and businesses in the town to see if they would be interested assisting to fund a second CCTV camera. They were informed that with their support, the camera could be situated at the junction of North and South Bridge Street with the High Street which would be to the mutual benefit every outlet in the main town centre area. They were further informed that the Town Council would pay all maintenance and running costs once the camera had been installed. As only approximately 40% of the businesses had responded favourably it was decided that the project could obviously not go ahead. However, the information is to be kept on file and letters are to be sent to the businesses that had replied positively thanking them for their co-operative attitude.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Mackin informed members that he had recently responded to a solicitor's practice in Hitchin regarding an incident that had occurred last May. The incident which involved two cars with two occupants in each had been caused by a deep pothole in Ivel Road.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.
