

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2005**

**PRESENT**

Mr. Steeples presided over Mesdames Harrison and Holmes, Messrs. Mackin and Wren.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Messrs. Gray and Coward.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mrs. Harrison declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 5.  
Mr. Steeples declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 13

**3. ADOPTION OF CHURCHILL WAY PLAY AREA**

Mrs. Harrison informed those present that she had recently visited the above play area and surrounding land with both the Play and Open Spaces Officer of Mid Beds D C and a representative from the Ivel & Ouse Countryside Project. Apparently there are three adoption possibilities : a). just the play area, b). the play area plus the area adjoining the western side of Churchill Way up to the by-pass, c). a combination of both a) and b) plus the area up to the boundary of the football pitch and Beechwood Rise. It was felt by all those present at the site that it was a good opportunity to enhance the area as a 'gateway' into the town.  
It is **RECOMMENDED** to full Council that the whole area (option c) be adopted.

**4. NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTION**

It is **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that the National Insurance contribution relating to the previous clerk's salary should now be paid.

**5. REQUEST FOR FUNDING – SHEFFORD P3 GROUP**

The committee has received a letter from the Shefford Branch of the Parish Paths Partnership asking if the committee would consider making a precept with a view to granting financial assistance towards a re-print of the 'walk' leaflets. The committee stated they would look on the request favourably and further consideration would be given at the appropriate Finance and Policy committee meeting later this year when the full precept would be set.

**6. SUMMER FAYRE – STMA**

Information received by the Council indicates that the STMA would like to be involved with the running of the Summer Fayre. It was suggested that a meeting of the outgoing Summer Fayre committee, the STMA and the Town Council should be arranged in order to ensure a smooth hand-over of all appropriate material with a view to maintaining the best interests of the community.  
It is **RECOMMENDED** to full council that a Leisure and Events Committee should be set up to manage social events and give consideration to any awards due.

#### **7. EXPLANATION REQUIRED BY UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE RE CO-OPTION ON TO TOWN COUNCIL**

An e:mail has been received from an applicant enquiring as to the reasons why he was unsuccessful in his application to become the new co-opted member to serve on the Town Council. A letter of explanation is to be sent.

#### **8. FINANCIAL RESERVES HELD BY THE COUNCIL AT 31.03.2005**

The Clerk produced a summary of the financial reserves held by the Council along with the expected expenditure for which they were allocated.

#### **9. BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON**

Copies of the figures comparing the annual budget with the first half year's actual income and expenditure.

#### **10. GRANT TO YOUTH SERVICE**

An enquiry has been made by the Youth Service as to whether or not the Town Council could offer financial assistance towards the purchase of a gazebo, chairs etc. which would enable the youths to have a meeting place.

It is **RECOMMDED** to full Council that the sum of £200 should be offered accordingly.

#### **11. SHARE FUNDING PCSO PROJECT**

Mr. Mackin informed members that the project was progressing well with fourteen Parish Councils showing a definite interest. He further stated that if all Councils paid a contribution it may well be possible to fund two PCSO's but at the present time nothing had been signed or committed. A further meeting is to take place on 21<sup>st</sup> November.

#### **12. PURCHASE OF CHARTER re TOWN MARKET**

The current managers of the Town Market are to be contacted to see if they would allow the Town Council to purchase from them the Charter which allows the High Street to have a weekly market. An enquiry is also to be as to the costs.

#### **13. FUNDING METHODIST CHURCH**

The Methodist Minister has written to enquire if the Town Council would be prepared to offer financial assistance towards the costs of covering 9 windows in the church with polycarbonate which would reduce heating costs and eliminate draughts. Bearing in mind the church is a regular venue for local schools to hold Christmas Carol Services, Easter and Harvest Festival Services and the recent Craft and Flower Festival, it is **RECOMMENDED** to full Council that the sum of £500 should be donated.

**14. OVPPF TROPHIES**

It was suggested that although the judging of the nominations for the OVPPF Trophy should take place on 21<sup>st</sup> September as decreed, it might be preferable to actually award them to the recipients at the Annual Town Meeting in April. Overall it was thought that this would give a greater sense of 'ceremony'. Mr. Fisher, the donator of the trophies is to be contacted for his comments.

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

It was felt that a system should be devised which would make the public aware of issues which may be used to update the Town Plan which is a 'living' document. It was decided to have a Town Plan and News Update item on each committee agenda with possibly a quarterly report at the end of month full council meetings.

It is **RECOMMENDED** to full council that two Vehicle Activated signs should be purchased. This being the case, then there is the possibility of installing a third for no charge. If the recommendation is accepted, then the signs will be erected in Bedford Road, Ampthill Road and Clifton Road and a 'reserve' fund is to be opened for their purchase. The exact siting of each sign will be decided by mutual agreement.

The matter of obtaining three quotes to facilitate the purchase of a computer and ancillary equipment is to be progressed as a matter of urgency.

It was thought prudent to set-up a budget for the replacement of existing playground equipment in due course. The playground inspector is to be contacted to see if it would be possible to gauge the life span of the equipment already on site.

The Shefford Saints F C (Juniors) committee is to be requested to carry out remedial work on the changing room at Bellcote Meadow as required by the lease granted to them from the Town Council.

The meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.

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