

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 17TH JANUARY 2007

PRESENT

Mr. Steeples presided over Mesdames Harrison and Holmes, Messrs. Gray and Coward.

1. APOLOGIES

Messrs. Mackin and Wren.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. ANNUAL INSURANCE RENEWAL – MILLENIUM GREEN

It is **RECOMMENDED** to full Council that the sum of £644.49 be donated to the Bellcote Meadow Millenium Green Trust in respect of the annual insurance renewal.

4. A COUNTY UNITARY PROPOSAL FOR BEDFORDSHIRE

Authorities have been given the opportunity by the Local Government White Paper to submit proposals for unitary government or improved two tier working in local areas. In Bedfordshire County Council's case they will be recommending the abolition of the existing four authorities (County Council and three Districts) to be replaced by one 'shire unitary' council.

In Bedford Borough's case they will be proposing that there are two unitary councils. Proposals made to the Secretary of State are just the start of the process. Opportunities to open up the discussion and debate must be made in order to explore the impact of the proposals on residents and taxpayers.

5. CORPORATE ASSESSMENT – STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

Mid Beds D C has decided to ask for an assessment of its performance by the Audit Commission. Part of the Assessment will include a survey and so the District Council will be writing to Town/Parish Councils in due course to request their help in responding to that survey. A sample of the questions likely to be asked by the Audit Commission has already been received.

6. REQUEST FROM ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

A member of the Environment Agency's Flood Management Team has asked if they could place a 'flood trailer' at a public event in the town. The Summer Gala on 3rd June was deemed to be an ideal event. The EA also asked if they could contribute to a town magazine or newsletter in order to inform residents of the changes to their flood warning service. The committee agreed that they could place an article in the next issue of Shefford Newslines.

7. HIGHWAYS/FOOTPATHS – LETTER TO LEADER OF BEDS C C

A letter is to be sent to the Leader of the County Council in response to a letter received from the Assistant Director of Highways and Transport regarding his reply to a previous letter from him to the Town Council. In general the letter expresses the Town Council's lack of confidence in the County Council's ability to maintain the highways and pavements of the town in good order.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Council's insurance company is to be contacted to ascertain if their insurance cover in respect of trees is adequate bearing in mind the recent high winds.

The meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.
