

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

**PRESENT**

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

**1. APOLOGIES**

Mr. Wren.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

At this point Mrs Holmes welcomed Ann Slade from the Bedford Credit Union, Jill Dickinson from Mid Beds D C and Steve Nash from Aragon Housing who arrived to talk about Credit Unions.

The Bedford Credit Union was formed some 10 years ago and has been very successful as indicated by an increasing number of investors. It is proposed that the Mid Beds Credit Union will join up with the Bedford Credit Union which will reduce the costs of starting up a totally new scheme.

The risk to investors' savings is far less as Credit Unions are 'mutuals' and hence owned by the investors themselves. It should be noted that Credit Unions are regulated by the Financial Services Association.

Investors can make regular savings at good rates of interest as profits are returned to them - investors can also apply for loans.

On 16<sup>th</sup> December the Shefford Baptist Church will be having an open day to recruit both volunteers and members.

The committee agreed to support the initiative in any way it can.

**3. THE MAKING OF ENFORCEMENT BYELAWS**

Information received from the Department of Communities and Local Government has indicated that subject to the results of a Consultation (deadline 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008) it is proposed that the steps to implement a new byelaw will no longer include a need to have it placed before the Secretary of State.

**4. REQUEST FOR FUNDING – MID BEDS CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

It is **RECOMMENDED** to full Council that the sum of £500 be donated to the Mid Beds Citizens Advice Bureau. It was felt that in current financial crisis, certain members of the public would be seeking more financial advice than ever before.

**5. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – PUBLICATION SCHEME**

It is **RECOMMENDED** to full Council that the Model Freedom of Information Act is adopted. The deadline for adoption is 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.

## 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The clerk gave an update on the applications for funding for new bus shelters in the town.

Consideration was given to the possibility of updating/redesigning the website.

The clerk is to contact various local landowners to enquire if they have any land that could be used for allotments.

It was agreed to precept for a new laptop.

Numerous complaints have been received from residents regarding the last two deliveries of the Shefford Newline magazine. Complaints have varied from no delivery at all to some receiving two copies on different days. The distribution team is to be requested to make improvements to the current system and possibly introduce a form for each road stating the name of the person that made the delivery and the date on which it was delivered etc.

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.