

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2009

PRESENT: Councillor T C Stenstrom (Chair) plus Councillors B Brooks, G Davey, S C Egan (Town Mayor – ex-officio), J Evans, K Evans, A D Hampton, N P Hodges, S A Hodges, K A Kemp, L M Payne and S T Wiliam

ALSO PRESENT: Derek Wolfe – Executive Officer
Cliff Lewis – Deputy Executive Officer
Mark Sims – Responsible Finance Officer
Angie Norman – Administration

F37. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An Apology for absence was received from Councillor O Cash.

F38. **DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

F39. **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE'S LAST MEETING**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee's last meeting held on 5 January 2009 be approved and signed subject to the following amendment:-

Minute No. F34 – Draft Revised Sickness Absence Policy

That the recommendation be amended to state that the Sickness Absence Policy be referred back to the Resources Committee and then submitted to Town Council for approval and implementation.

Minute No. F35 – Use of Financial Regulation 3.4

It was highlighted that the £1,000 was not agreed at the meeting and the Executive Officer stated that this was only in draft form and no decision had been made on the £1,000.

F40. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – 1 APRIL 2008 TO JANUARY 2009**

Councillors gave consideration to the budget monitoring report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 January 2009, noting that total expenditure was projected to overspend by £27,167 in 2008/09. Concerns were raised regarding the 2004 and 2008 election costs and the fact that no invoice had been received from the Vale of Glamorgan Council

regarding the 2004 costs. The Executive Officer assured Councillors that there were sufficient funds within the Council's current budget and in the election reserve to cover the cost of both the 2004 and 2008 elections.

Councillors asked about the reason for the delay in receiving the 2004 invoice from the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The Executive Officer advised that the delay was due to unresolved issues relating to the EU elections, held in 2004, which the Chief Executive of the Vale of Glamorgan Council had advised had subsequently created problems regarding the breakdown of costs for individual Town and Community Councils. Some Councillors considered that these unresolved issues relating to the 2004 elections were not reasons for them not having received an invoice for the 2004 by-election costs.

Councillor Hampton proposed that officers contact the relevant department in the Vale of Glamorgan Council requesting an invoice for the 2004 elections. He was advised that officers had repeatedly contacted the Vale Council to that effect, but to no avail. Councillor Payne felt that it was reasonable to request a rebate on election costs as compensation for the delay in billing by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report for the period 1 April 2008 – 31 January 2009 be received and noted.

F41. **SECTION 137 LIMITS FOR 2009/10**

RESOLVED: to note that the Section 137 expenditure limit for Barry Town Council in 2009/10 was £216,013, based on £6.15 per elector.

F42. **REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEE'S**

Councillors were advised that three recommendations had been received from the Resources Committee. The first one asked this Committee to consider including the contingency in the budget for the financial year 2009/10 in the sum of £10,000.

Councillors were informed that with effect from 1 April 2009 separate contingency funds would no longer be shown in the salaries vote heads within the Council's budget, but would be shown as a single stand-alone fund. The Chair advised that with effect from 1 April 2009 the Responsible Financial Officer would be responsible for controlling the annual contingency fund with the normal support method of the Executive and Deputy Executive plus guidance from either the Chair of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes or Resources Committee's.

Councillor Hampton proposed an amendment to the recommendation, namely that £2,000 be placed in the contingency fund with the shortfall of £8,000 being funded from the money put aside for two projects, High

Street Festivities and Barry Athletic Club, following their reported removal from the Council's budget at its meeting held Monday, 23 February 2009. This motion was seconded by Councillor Kemp.

Other Councillors pointed out that Council had not removed the two projects from the budget. They advised that funding was still available for these projects, pending officer's reports. Therefore the money could not be used as a contingency fund.

Councillor S A Hodges expressed concerns that only £10,000 was allocated for the contingency, whereas in the previous year it had totalled £17,000 (this figure was corrected to £18,800 later in the meeting). She asked for a breakdown of how the contingency had been spent in 2008/09. The Responsible Financial Officer informed Councillors that so far the contingency had been used as follows:-

Cemetery allocated £5,000 – had spent all
M & S allocated £5,000 –close to having spent all
Pioneer Hall allocated £800 – had spent £600
Memorial Hall & Theatre allocated £8,000 – had spent £5,500

Councillor S A Hodges moved an amendment to the recommendation that the contingency fund for 2009/10 be based on 4% of the overall salary bill as in 2008/09 to provide the Responsible Financial Officer with a reasonable amount to work with. The Executive Officer advised that there could only be one amendment on the table at any given time and that a vote should first be taken on the amendment proposed by Councillor Hampton. A vote was taken, the outcome of which was:

For – 2
Against – 8

The amendment was declared LOST.

A vote was then taken on the amendment proposed by Councillor S A Hodges, the outcome of which was:

For – 3
Against – 5
Abstentions – 2

The amendment was declared LOST.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion, which was declared CARRIED.

Councillor N P Hodges requested that he be recorded as saying “when severe difficulties arise from the contingency of £10,000 it will be as a result of this meeting.”

The second recommendation sought the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee's approval to the Draft Training & Development Policy. As the detailed policy had not been provided it was **RESOLVED** that the Draft Training & Development Policy be submitted to the next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee for approval.

The third recommendation related to a Draft Drug & Alcohol Policy. It was:-

RESOLVED that the Draft Drug & Alcohol policy be referred back to the Resources Committee for further consideration.

F43. **COMMUNITY ACTION SELF HELP (CASH) GRANTS 2009/10**

The Committee was requested to give consideration to any potential schemes that might be eligible for Community Action Self Help (CASH) Grant funding in 2009/10. Councillors were provided with a report from the Executive Officer in relation to the replacement of Christmas lighting in the High Street by the Broad Street and High Street Traders Association. A suggestion was put forward that an application be made with regard to a water feature in Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery to assist in creating a biodiversity area in the cemetery.

Following a lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that applications be made to the Vale of Glamorgan Council for CASH grants for 2009/10 for the following projects:-

1. The creation of a water feature in the Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery, for the purpose of creating a biodiversity area within the cemetery.
2. To assist the Broad Street & High Street Traders Association with the replacement of their Christmas lighting as outlined in the Executive Officer's report.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm.

Signed
(Chairperson)

Date