

## HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes: **Policy and Finance Committee** held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011

### Present Cllrs:

**J Ash-Edwards (Chairman)\*\***  
**T Farmer (Vice Chairman)**  
**C Ash-Edwards**  
**R Bates**  
**D Dorking**  
**M Davies**  
**S Hillier**

Apologies \*\* Absent \*

**Also present: Cllrs Sabin**

### 26. Apologies

Cllr J Ash-Edwards – Conflicting Meeting

In light of Cllr J Ash-Edwards apologies Cllr Farmer took the Chair and Cllr M Davies was nominated as Vice Chairman for the meeting.

### 27. Minutes

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed with one insertion to minute 19 Polling Places Review being made - addition of the acknowledgement of South Road being a Polling Station under bullet point 4.

### 28. Substitutes

Cllr Clarke for Cllr J Ash-Edwards

### 29. Declarations of Interest

None

### 30. Payments and receipts and income and expenditure reports for the period August 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 – September 30<sup>th</sup> 2011.

Members had before them the list of Payments and receipts and income and expenditure reports for the period **August 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 – September 30<sup>th</sup> 2011** with no matters arising;

Members **RESOLVED** to;

**Recommend the list of payments for income and expenditure for the period August 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 – September 30<sup>th</sup> 2011 to Full Council for approval.**

### 31. Internal Audit, Audit Risk Assessment and Statement of Audit Control

In light of the comments of the Internal Auditor at the last meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee in September Members were presented with three documents to assist with the management of Council's internal financial controls. The Clerk explained that the documents had been formulated using templates provided by the Internal Auditor and would be implemented immediately if agreed. Members welcomed the documents and were pleased that the documents presented had been tried and tested by other Town/Parish Councils and had stood up to audit regulations. The Clerk

confirmed that the Town Council was one of a number of Councils audited by the Council's Internal Auditor and versions similar to those being recommended for adoption were in currently in place. The Clerk was then asked to check if the risks relating to the loss of data and fidelity of officers were appropriately covered through the Council's insurance policies. The Clerk responded that he was aware of insurance against the actions and fidelity of the Clerk were in place, but needed to check about other Members of staff and that the Council's data was backed up by an external server. To complement the documentation being agreed and to make the Council's financial controls more robust Members were asked to nominate two Members of the Committee who were not already cheque signatories to monitor on a quarterly basis the internal financial functions of the Council, duly Cllr Mrs Davies and Cllr Dorking were nominated and accepted the positions. The issue of cheque signatories knowing whether they were signing a cheque that was within budget was again brought up. It was hoped the quarterly testing would pick up budgets nearing exceeding their levels and a note attached to the cheques to make signatories aware that the budget was near to be/or was going to be exceeded would help Members when signing cheques off. With the new governing documents agreed and a further layer of audit checking in place to monitor the work of the Responsible Finance Officer and cheque signatories in place,

Members **RESOLVED** to;

**Adopt the Council's Internal Audit Plan, Financial Risk Assessment and Statement of Internal Control for 2011/2012 and to recommend to Full Council that Cllr D Dorking and Cllr M Davies be assigned to undertake quarterly monitoring inspections of the Council's financial activity.**

**32. Town Hall, Allotment Rent and Burial Charges 2012 - 2013**

Members approved the proposed rise in hiring charges for the community use of the Town Hall, Allotment charges and the Cemetery fees as presented in the report. In addition Members agreed to raise the cost of weddings to £200 for the forthcoming financial year 2012 - 2013. Members did raise concerns about the level of charge for hirers from the private sector. It was felt when looking at the current market for room hires in the private sector the Council could significantly raise its fees and still be competitive. It was noted that the Town that would need to meet the expectation of the private sector if wished to compete in the market and needed to be marketed in a more robust manner. The Clerk agreed to go away and look at the charges and come back with a revised figure before the new fees were implemented in April. Without further comment,

Members **RESOLVED** to;

**Increase in costs for Council services for the 2012/2013 financial year;**

- a) **Non commercial Town Hall Hirers by 4.5% (to the nearest ten pence for accounting purposes).**
- b) **Commercial Town Hall Hirers, the rise in charge be deferred to review the market place and report back in January.**
- c) **Weddings fees are raised to £200.**
- d) **Allotment Rents be raised by 5% (to the nearest ten pence for accounting purposes).**

**e) Cemetery Fees be raised by 5% (to the nearest ten pence for accounting purposes).**

**33. Update on meeting with Local Bus Companies and West Sussex County Council**

The Clerk verbally reported that in conjunction with West Sussex County Council that a meeting had been held with Town's bus companies. As a result the Town Council would be entering into a quality bus partnership with Metrobus and Countryliner, which would mirror arrangements in place with Southern Rail. It was noted that during what was an exploratory meeting the possibility of introducing Real Time Information Boards was discussed. The potential of such an initiative was supported by those attending the meeting and the logistics of introducing the boards were going to be considered. It was thought the introduction would be straight forward to implement, as Metrobus already have the equipment onboard of all their buses. Countryliner do not have the system at the present time, but the systems will be fitted to their buses in the future. In the meantime, scheduled times could be shown for Countryliner buses where actual live information can be displayed for Metrobus. All of the signs would be able to have messages sent to them which would help in situations where there is disruption, road closures or instances of re-routing. West Sussex County Council would be in overall control of the system but work in partnership with the operators. The systems work well elsewhere and it was deemed that adding the systems to Haywards Heath should not be a problem. The locations of the systems that have been suggested by the operators are:-

- (2) Perrymount Road (for rail station), both directions
- (2) South Road, both directions
- (1) Princess Royal Hospital, towards town/stn
- (1) Princess Royal Hospital reception, TFT screen
- (1) Sainsburys

Cost would be in the region of £55,000, the cost of each board including power and 5 years maintenance being around £7,500k each, which the Clerk suggested could be funded from Highways Section 106 contributions for Haywards Heath. It was noted that there is a substantial amount of money left in the Section 106 pot for Highway projects in Haywards Heath and would still leave funding available for other projects. Members thanked the Clerk for his update, welcomed the idea and instructed him to progress the matter with the Bus Companies and make a formal approach to West Sussex County Council's County Local Committee, then

Members **AGREED** to;

**Authorise the Clerk to investigate the purchase of real time information boards for designated bus stops in Haywards Heath and that the Clerk ascertain whether this can be funded through Section 106 Highways contributions.**

**34. Grants Applications**

Members were presented with two grant applications. The first application related to the Bluebird Community Partnership. Members were happy that the application was for a specific project with a tangible outcome for a group of people who needed to visit a local facility to access much needed services. The second application was from Outset Youth Action. Members felt that the application did not specifically relate to Haywards Heath and that there was not enough information relating to how the project would benefit young people

in the Town. Members asked that the application be deferred and that the applicant be asked for further information relating to the benefits to young people in Haywards Heath, the number of beneficiaries in the Town and the apportionment of money from the overall project costs to the Town. With this in mind,

Members **RESOLVED** to;

- a) **Award a Grant of £319.62 to Bluebird Community Partnership to fund the purchase of a wheelchair restraint.**
- b) **To defer the application made by Outset so that the Community Liaison Officer can request further information from the applicant.**

**35. Urgent Business**

None

**36. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Chairman moved to exclude the public and press from the meeting and moved the meeting into exempt business.

**Meeting closed at 9.16pm**

DRAFT