

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at 7.00 on Thursday, 11th February 2010. Councillors Blessett, Dilks, Pelling, (Chairman) Shinkins, Stevens and Wallis attended with the Clerk Mrs S Kostyrka. Cllr Baxter shared his thoughts regarding item 30/10 with some committee members prior to the commencement of the meeting.

25/10 To receive apologies for absence.
Cllr Stevens arrived at 7.15pm.

26/10 To receive declarations of interest, if any.
None.

27/10 To adopt the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th November 2009.
The Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

28/10 To receive the report of progress in relation to matters arising from these Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

It was clarified that the recommendations made by the committee for the precept had not been agreed at the Council meeting on 26.11.09 and had been reduced to £89,144 Min (135.09). Cllr Shinkins expressed her disappointment that in her absence, the Y&C budget had been cut even further whilst new initiatives remained untouched.

29/10 To consider banking and investments (Min 22/09)

This item was deferred to the next meeting, pending a change in interest rates.

30/10 To consider the co-option process and put recommendations forward to Council to amend Standing Orders accordingly.

Cllr Stevens arrived at 7.15pm. It was clarified that due to the Clerks unexpected absence and the resignation of Cllr Moore, the item had been deferred, and the applicants had been notified accordingly. The Clerk then provided the process and legal information as advised by LALC. The committee then considered the discussion paper prepared by Cllr Baxter. After a very lengthy discussion it was recommended that applicants would not be short listed nor remain anonymous during the selection process. The Clerk was asked to write a clear set of rules including the legal process for recommendation to Council and to be included within the Councils Standing Orders. This would give a clear time scale for the co-option process which would include:

1. Agreement of advertising and costs.
2. The completion of a pro-forma application by candidates.
3. The encouragement for applicants to attend a Council Meeting prior to the co-option, and also attend the co-option meeting to introduce themselves and to explain why they want to be a Councillor.
4. To appoint a Councillor Mentor to each new Councillor to enable a better understanding of process and procedure.
5. To have a questionnaire for Councillors to complete if they leave.

It was agreed that Cllrs Dilks and Stevens would consider the wording for another advert, and Cllr Blessett would consider the pro-forma. This would be an agenda item for the February Council meeting and would be re-advertised in early March for a mid March deadline. Copies of the applicants pro-forma would then be circulated to Council Members with the Agenda. This would be on coloured paper clearly marked "Private and Confidential", and would be returned to the Clerk by members for shredding after the meeting.

31/10 To consider the procedure for committees to put their budgets forward to F&GP and put recommendations forward to Council to amend Standing Orders accordingly.

After a lengthy discussion it was recommended that a paper would be written to remind members of the process for budget setting. This would be an agenda item for the next meeting and it is recommended that this would be included within the existing Financial Regulations.

It was unanimously agreed that Committee Chairs (as well as the