

ALSAGER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE ALSAGER INSTITUTE
ON TUESDAY 14th JULY 2009

Present: Councillor W H Stevenson (Chairman)

Councillor C V Burgess
Councillor Mrs M Camm
Councillor D I Hough
Councillor W Howell
Councillor A Snape

Mr. T Fitton (Town Clerk)

3 members of the general public

09/016 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs J Burgess and S Roberson.

09/017 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests in Accounts.

09/018 Minutes of the Meeting – 2nd June 2009.

Resolved: That, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee held be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

09/019 Town Maintenance

Further to Min. 09/005 dated 2nd June 2009 the Town Clerk updated Members on a request from Alsager Health Centre for the Town Council to undertake grounds maintenance work at the Centre for 2 weeks prior to the judging of the In Bloom competition on 29th July 2009.#

Alsager Health Centre would be re-charged for 21 hours per week.

Resolved, That, authorisation be given for J Price (Town Maintenance) to undertake the aforementioned work for Alsager Health Centre.

09/020 Public Participation Period

There were no matters raised by members of the public.

09/021 Play areas – Earmarked Reserve

Further to Min. 09/007(b) dated 2nd June 2009 the Committee considered play area improvement schemes in Alsager for which the Town Council has an ear marked reserve of £10,000.

Councillor Hough explained the position with regard to play area provision by Cheshire East through the Local Area Partnership. It was noted that 22 play areas across Cheshire East were to be improved over the next two years in a funding package worth around £1million.

The money had come from the Playbuilder Programme provided by the Department for Children, Families and Schools to give all children and young people access to good quality public play spaces by the end of 2011. The play areas to be improved in the current round of funding were located in Macclesfield, Crewe and Nantwich and Congleton.

Discussion ensued on the merits of provided facilities for the 8 – 13 year old age group at Wood Park on the Radway Estate and also enhancements to other play areas in Alsager.

Resolved: That, the Town Council be recommended to utilise the ear marked reserve of £10,000 towards the cost of providing play facilities at Wood Park on the Radway Estate.

09/022 Grants to Voluntary Organisations (2010/11 Budget)

Further to Min. 09/009 dated 2nd June 2009 the Committee reviewed the current procedure and criteria for Grants to local voluntary clubs and organisations and considered whether or not to appoint a Grants Panel to consider the application for inclusion in the 2010/11 Budget.

Resolved: That, the Town Council be recommended:

- a) That the current Grant Application Form, Criteria for Grant Applications and Grants Policy Guidelines be reaffirmed without modification.
- b) That the under mentioned Members be appointed to a Grants Panel to review applications and to make recommendations to the Finance Committee for inclusion Grants in the 2010/11 Budget.

Councillor W H Stevenson (Chairman)
Councillor D I Hough (Vice- Chairman)
Councillor Mrs G Burgess
Councillor W Howell
Councillor Mrs T E S Jones
Councillor A Snape

09/023 Annual Audit Return for Year Ending 31st March 2009

Resolved: That, the Certificate of the Audit Commission indicating a clean report in respect of the Annual Audit Return for the Year Ending 31st March 2009 be received and noted and displayed on the Town Council's website.

09/024 VAT Position – Alsager Institute

The Town Clerk informed the Committee of the implications of a letter dated 8th June 2009 from HM Revenue & Customs indicating that in future the Town Council could not reclaim VAT in relation to the activities of Alsager Institute by reason of the Town Council being the custodian trustee for the Institute.

It was further reported the HM Revenue & Customs had set out criteria which needed to be met in order for future reclaims to be agreed and at the moment the Town Clerk reported that together with the Council's Auditor he was in consultation with the Charity Commission to see whether or not these criteria could be met without affecting the Institute's Charitable Status.

Resolved: That, the report be received and the matter be considered on the receipt of further information from the Charity Commission.

09/025 Alsager Town Guide

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council had a three year contract with Plus Publishing for the production of a Town Guide and that work was under way on updating the current information for the next guide which was to be published at the end of September 2009.

Resolved: That, the report be received and noted.

09/026 Accounts for Authorisation

Resolved: That, the report be received, the income noted and the payments authorised. (Appendix A)

09/027 Budget Monitoring Statement to 30th June 2009

Resolved: That, the Budget Monitoring Statement be received and noted.

09/028 Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That, in accordance with the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information.

09/029 Alsager Institute Accounts 2008/09

Further to Min. 09/015 dated 2nd June 2009 the Committee considered the under mentioned recommendations from the Institute Committee following consideration of the internal Auditors report on the Accounts to 31st March 2009.

- a) That, it be noted that the Town Clerk would endeavour to review the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders during the summer of 2009.
- b) That, Risk Assessments for both the Town Council and the Institute would be reviewed during the summer of 2009.
- c) That, it was noted that a requirement for hirers to produce a copy of their insurance certificate at the time of booking was already included on the booking form as a condition of hire.
- d) That, the legal position of the Town Council and the Charity Commission be investigated by the Town Clerk and report back to a future meeting together with a report on the VAT reclaim following the results of talks with the Charity Commission.
- e) That, the existing cash collection and banking arrangements be reviewed.
- f) That, the first hour of the School Dance be revised from 6pm to 7pm for early evening use to reflect the current booking position.
- g) That, Alsager Together committee be granted free use of the Institute in respect of the organisation of the bi-annual Alsager Together event.
- h) That, it be noted that the Terms and Conditions were already printed on the rear of the booking form.
- i) That, the Asset Register be reviewed as part of the process involving the impending review of the Town Council's Asset Register.

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on each of the recommendations and it was:

Resolved: That, the recommendations from the Institute Committee be approved and adopted.

09/030

Town Council I.T. Provision

The Town Clerk reported on updates to the website by DH Technologies, the Town Council's IT provider. The website was now operational and Members were invited to view the site and forward comments to the Town Clerk.

With the permission of the Chairman Councillor Mrs T E S Jones addressed the committee regarding the current provision of IT service to the Council and future modifications

Resolved: That, a contract and service level agreement be agreed between the Town Council and DH Technologies for provision of IT services to be reviewed at 31st March 2010.

The meeting commenced at 7.45pm and concluded at 8.45 pm.

Councillor W H Stevenson
Chairman