

## CAM PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2010 AT 6.30PM IN THE COUNCIL SHOP

**PRESENT:** M Clifton (Chair), D Andrewartha, B Whatling, J Sherman, J Fowles

**APOLOGIES:** M Nolder, J Tyndall, N Ledoux

**IN ATTENDANCE:** S Hanman (Clerk)

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**FGP.09.61. To receive and accept Apologies for Absence**

Apologies as listed above were received and accepted

**FGP.09.62. To receive Declarations of Interest**

None made

**FGP.09.63. To approve Minutes of the Meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> October as a correct record**

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes be accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair

**FGP.09.64. To note matters arising from the Minutes and not covered by Agenda Items for information only**

None raised

**FGP.09.65. To review 2009/10 budgets and agree any amendments**

Copies of the Budget Report had been circulated. It was noted that, although there were a few minor overspends, the overall budget position was healthy. No amendments were thus considered necessary, although the Training budget for 2010/11 would be monitored in view of the overspend for 2009/10. Copies of the Medium Term Financial Plan had also been circulated, with expenditure to date and that predicted for the remainder of the financial year adjusted to reflect the current position, with predictions now being more accurate as the end of year approaches. The greatest adjustment had been to Contingencies, with predicted expenditure reduced to £5000.

**FGP.09.66. To review budget for 2010 and medium term financial plan**

It was noted that the adjustments to the year-end predictions for 2009/10 meant that the predicted year-end balance would be around £5000 more than it when last considered. The level of Precept was now fixed but, as there are a number of indeterminables for the next year and beyond, particularly with regard to the potential development of the Chapel Street site, it was agreed that any additional surplus should be added to the Contingency budget, which would make it accessible for any project, but not limit its use. No work had been done on the projected budgets for 2011 and beyond, as these would to a large extent be governed by decision to be made in respect of the Chapel Street development – a further review would be needed when this decision is known.

**FGP.09.67. To review funding for development of new community resource centre and associated works**

It was noted that the budgets for 2010 and 2011 would provide for a total of £448,000 for the development

project. This would need to be supported by a total borrowing requirement of £170,000. Rising interest rates would mean that repayments on this sum would now be a little higher than quoted in the budget. It was agreed that it is unlikely that the budget allocation for the development will be sufficient, especially if provision of additional land on the site is to be pursued, which will mean that overall budgets may need to be reviewed, additional borrowing might be needed etc. The timing of the development could have a significant impact on this situation, especially with regard to when loan funds are drawn down – it was possible that, if the project is delayed significantly beyond the date used to calculate the budget, sums budgeted for loan repayments could instead be used for the acquisition and preparation of the additional open space land. However, with interest rates rising, the actual cost of repayments could be significantly higher than budgeted, and are likely to increase more the longer the project is delayed. In addition, it was possible that provision would need to be made to fund the eventual purchase of the additional land, possibly through further borrowing. Once the land is under the control of the Parish Council, budgets would also need to include provision for its maintenance. If the improvement of the Jubilee Playing Field is to continue at the same time as the Chapel Street development, there is little scope to increase the Development budget using funds previously allocated elsewhere – thus the only way to significantly increase the development budget would be to increase the amount of borrowing (unless some sort of external funding can be identified). An illustration of the likely impact of this in respect of loan repayments was provided which indicated that, in terms of the overall budget, it might be seen as quite feasible to borrow additional funds, possibly in several tranches in order to smooth the impact.

**FGP.09.68. To receive and comment on report of Internal Auditor for 2009/10 accounts**

A scanned copy of the Internal Audit report had been circulated. There were no issues of concern. The final part of the Internal Audit, including signing off the Annual Return, would be completed at the year-end. It was thus RESOLVED to recommend adoption of the Report to Full Council, with no further action being necessary.

**FGP.09.69. To consider review of Health & Safety Policy and Risk Assessments**

The Clerk and Cllr Whatling had reviewed Health & Safety Risk Assessments and updated these where considered necessary. Copies of the updated Assessments had been circulated. It was RESOLVED that the revised Risk Assessments be accepted. The next review would be due in late 2010.

Financial Risk Assessments had also been reviewed, and again it was RESOLVED that these be accepted.

**FGP.09.70. To consider future of Newsletter, including the possibility of carrying advertising**

With regard to advertising, it was considered that, although this could bring in some additional revenue, which would contribute to the cost of producing the Newsletter, administration of this would place an additional burden on staff who were already under pressure. Space for advertising was also limited, unless the overall size of the publication is increased, which would in turn increase the printing cost. It was therefore decided to leave the arrangement as it stands for the time being, but to review it next year. The format of each Newsletter would also be revised to provide general Parish Council information on the front and back pages, with information focussing on particular aspects of Council activities, as previously agreed, on the inner pages.

Delivery of the Newsletter would continue to be managed through a combination of volunteers (mainly Councillors) and the local Air Training Corps Cadets. It was RESOLVED that the Cadets be paid £100 for delivery of each edition.

**FGP.09.71. To decide date and theme for next Coffee Morning**

Date – Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 10am – 12 noon

Theme – Supporting Carers

Charity – Cam & Dursley Young Carers

All Members would be consulted on possible themes and local charities for future events.

**FGP.09.72. To consider any staffing and administrative issues including working hours, staff appraisals**

It was noted that the office was running fairly smoothly, with a regular flow of visitors seeking information.

The most frequent enquiries of late had been as follows

- Queries, complaints etc regarding snow clearance, highway issues etc during the recent icy conditions
- Complaints about litter, bins not emptied etc
- Enquiries related to planning applications
- Requests for bus and train timetables
- Hall bookings
- Some use of public computer, including a few Homeseeker uses

It was agreed that current opening hours should be maintained and should not be extended from April, when the Deputy Clerk's working hours would increase. This would allow more time for the Deputy Clerk to carry out duties outside the office, such as allotment and open space inspections, and to attend evening meetings where necessary. It was also agreed that the Deputy Clerk should be allowed time away from other duties to complete work on her CiLCA qualification. Flexibility would also be maintained in the Clerk's working hours, to allow working from home when this is appropriate, in particular on Fridays, when the Clerk would not normally be expected to be in the Office. Thanks were extended to both Clerk and Deputy for their continued hard work and flexibility.

Staff appraisals were currently being carried out and would be reported in due course.

It was agreed that a leaflet display stand should be acquired for the Office – the Clerk would make enquiries and order on consultation with the Chair

**FGP.09.73. To note date for next meeting and items for agenda**

Either 19<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup> April, to allow for year-end accounts to be completed.

**FGP.09.74. Any Other F&GP Matters for Information or Referral**

A review of winter weather issues with regard to highways would be added to the agenda for Planning & Highways Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 7.30pm.