

APPLEBY-IN-WESTMORLAND TOWN COUNCIL

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A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE WAS HELD IN THE MOOT HALL ON MONDAY JULY 3 2006 AT 7.30 PM

Present :	Chairman	I Potts
	Vice Chairman	A Connell
	Councillors	AK Morgan
		Mrs E Langan
		HR Potts
		J Pape (until 8.20pm)
		PR Elliott
		Mrs B Swinscoe
		F Harland
		S Rooke
		Mrs C Patterson
		KJ Budding (as RFO)
		Mrs M Clowes
		CK Duncan
Apologies :		None received

F1/7/06 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received by the Chairman or recorded by the Clerk. Cllr Duncan was welcomed to his first Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting since joining the Council.

F2/7/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Morgan declared a personal interest in agenda item 5, stating that as long as it remained a decision of Council whether or not to send a member to the NALC conference his personal interest may become prejudicial.

F3/7/06 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

Cllr Budding gave members his financial report. He clarified his voting intentions whilst acting as RFO, stating his plan to not vote on any matters brought as RFO. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should seek written advice for Cllr Budding from CALC and the Monitoring Officer at EDC (email sent).

Cllr Budding read to members a letter received from the Audit Commission regarding their queries following submission of the Annual Return for 2005-06 which he had replied to. He also gave members his provisional assessment of the Council's financial situation as at the end of June.

Difficulties experienced by the Council's tenants during the town enhancements were discussed and it was **AGREED** that the Clerk should write to all tenants to inform them they could apply for help from EDC through their business rates, but that this needed to be done while the enhancements were still going on (letters were duly delivered by hand the next day by the Asst Clerk)

Members discussed the subject of insurance for any Councillors helping out in the TIC and it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would speak to the Council's insurance provider to ensure cover was in place under their public liability insurance.

Cllr Budding reported that the Charity Commission had agreed that ATC could deal with their Bird Robinson Charitable Trust as they felt appropriate, ie: spend all the capital and interest or transfer the money to one of their other charity accounts, as long as it was not capitalised and as long as it was transferred in the correct proportions.

The Bird Robinson Charity trustees, Cllrs Elliott and H Potts, held a separate meeting and it was **AGREED** that this small fund would go into the Hannah Kennington fund (for the benefit of Appleby people).

Cllr Budding's report on anticipated income from charities this year was reviewed, together with his proposal to limit consideration of grant requests to twice a year. Members discussed procedures for the donation of interest from charity funds and it was **AGREED** to add to the agenda for the next F&GP meeting on September 4 the consideration of advice from the Charity Commission and also from CALC.

Cllr Budding reported on electrical problems in the Moot Hall and the need to deal urgently with them. **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that the cost of £1,500 plus VAT for items marked extremely urgent on the recent electrical survey be approved.

Cllr Budding's report was noted and he was thanked for his hard work.

F4/7/06 GRANT APPLICATIONS

In light of the Council's current financial situation, members had previously resolved that grant applications would be deferred for consideration at the September meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, other than those for a specific event taking place before September. The following applications were therefore considered at the July 3 meeting.

a) Appleby Jazz Festival

Members were very sorry to not have the money to pay a grant but felt they would very much like to support the Jazz Festival

RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the hire charge for the 150 chairs booked for the Jazz Festival be waived, in lieu of a grant (value over £450) with the usual conditions of hire. Cllr H Potts kindly offered the use of his transport to move the chairs.

Cllr Pape left the meeting at 8.25 pm due to a prior engagement.

b) Eden Community Outdoors

RESOLVED to recommend to Council that this application be granted in the sum of £150 from the Dorothy Chapman charity.

The charity trustees, Cllrs H Potts and J Pape would need to hold a separate meeting and agree to the donation being so given, should Council accept this recommendation, since Cllr Pape had already left the committee meeting at the time of this discussion.

c) Appleby Swimming Club

RESOLVED to recommend to Council that this application be granted in the sum of £150 from the Dorothy Chapman charity.

The charity trustees, Cllrs H Potts and J Pape would need to hold a separate meeting and agree to the donation being so given, should Council accept this recommendation, since Cllr Pape had already left the committee meeting at the time of this discussion.

F5/7/06 INVOICE FOR NALC CONFERENCE

RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the invoice booking a place at the National Association of Local Councils Conference in September be paid and that Cllr Morgan's contribution be discussed at the September F&GP meeting. It was **AGREED** that, should the VAT not be reclaimable, Cllr Morgan would pay this cost.

F6/7/06 MONTHLY TOWN COUNCILLOR SURGERIES & YELLOW FEEDBACK FORMS

Members considered a proposal by Cllr Rooke to begin holding monthly **Town Councillor Surgeries** from Friday September 1st, from 7pm to 8pm, with two Councillors in attendance – one from each Ward. Surgeries to be held in the Public Hall foyer in front of the Supper Room, in order to allow disabled access, or alternatively the Exhibition Centre in the TIC, with current planning applications on show so the public have an early sight of them and any questions they ask can be taken to the Planning Committee meeting on the following Monday.

Cllr Rooke also proposed that a more formal system be put into place for handling of the Council's yellow **Feedback Forms**, with the Town Clerk allocating each form a number from a register as they arrived at the Moot Hall. The date and subject to be entered into the register and the form to be allocated to a Councillor, with their initials entered into the register. The form to then be placed in the Councillor's pigeonhole (to be constructed). Cllr Rooke explained his idea of putting forms out for Councillors to deal with was so residents could see their Councillors were doing something about their concerns. The Councillor would then take the yellow form and acknowledge receipt on a standard format letter, before taking the appropriate action to deal with the query and passing it to the relevant organisation. The Councillor would then inform the resident of action taken – by telephone, email or letter. The Councillor would monitor progress and chase up any reply, so that on completion they could notify the resident and send them any reply they had received from the relevant authority, before entering the completion date in the register.

Cllr Rooke informed members of his intention to go up to the next Annual Meeting keeping a register of who attended surgeries and what subjects they raised – and to put up posters and notify the press.

RESOLVED to recommend to Council that both parts of this proposal be adopted.

Cllr Patterson asked Cllr Harland, in his role as Parish Newsletter Editor, to please publish a list of which authority should be contacted by residents with which type of complaint, since most yellow Feedback Forms contained issues which were dealt with by authorities other than the Town Council.

F7/7/06 PRE-NOTIFICATION OF ELECTORS' QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Clerks had requested that the need for questions from electors at Council meetings to be pre-notified be removed. The Clerks had been advised during their CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) tutor groups that this requirement was considered old-fashioned.

RESOLVED to recommend to Council that this item be deferred until Full Council on July 12.

F8/7/06 ORDER OF COUNCILLORS NAMES ON AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Cllr I Potts had planned to propose the recording of Councillors names on agendas and minutes in alphabetical order, rather than the current order of seniority.

RESOLVED to recommend to Council that this item be deferred until Full Council on July 12.

F9/7/06 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr I Potts asked Cllr Connell to give an update on the loft clearance plans for the Moot Hall. Cllr Connell reported that the loft was full of items needing sorting and TIC staff were desperate for the space, stating he would like to make a start on finding out what was there and deciding what to do with it. Council had already previously resolved that the loft be cleared. It was **AGREED** that this process would begin on the following Sunday.

Cllr H Potts kindly offered his transport to move the contents of the loft once sorted.

Cllr Connell had made an initial inspection and reported there were a gross of commemorative mugs now six years old which had previously been earmarked for use in the Public Hall in the event of another flood. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that this decision be rescinded and that the TIC be asked to sell the mugs in order to recoup the much-needed funds used to purchase them.

F10/7/06 NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee would be held on Monday September 4 at 7.45pm in the Moot Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm