

## FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 12 OCTOBER, 2006 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SOUTH STREET, FARNHAM

- \* Cllr M W Norris (Chairman)
- \* Cllr C H Mansell (Vice Chairman)
- \* Cllr D J Attfield (Town Mayor) *ex officio*
- o Cllr P G Burden OBE
- \* Cllr M A Clark (arrived at 7.35pm)
- \* Cllr C A Cockburn
- \* Cllr S Farrow
- \* Cllr (Mrs) P M Frost
- o Cllr C G Genziani (Deputy Town Mayor) *ex officio*
- \* Cllr (Mrs) A E Mansell MBE
- \* Cllr P G Marriott
- o Cllr (Mrs) P M Marriott
- o Cllr (Mrs) S Scrivens
- \* Cllr V K Scrivens

- \* Present
- o Apologies for absence

PR APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE  
148/06

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P G Burden, (Mrs) P M Marriott and (Mrs) S Scrivens.

PR MINUTES  
149/06

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2006, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PR DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS  
150/06

<u>Name of Councillor</u>	<u>Agenda No/ Minute No</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Type of Interest</u>	<u>Reason</u>
M A Clark	5	Budget	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
M A Clark	8	Sandy Hill Youth Shelter	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
C A Cockburn	5	Budget	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
C A Cockburn	8	Sandy Hill Youth Shelter	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
(Mrs) P M Frost	5	Budget	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor

(Mrs) P M Frost	8	Sandy Hill Youth Shelter	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
(Mrs) A E Mansell	5	Budget	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
(Mrs) A E Mansell	8	Sandy Hill Youth Shelter	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
C H Mansell	5	Budget	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
C H Mansell	8	Sandy Hill Youth Shelter	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
P G Marriott	5	Budget	Personal	Married to Waverley Borough Councillor
P G Marriott	8	Sandy Hill Youth Shelter	Personal	Married to Waverley Borough Councillor
V K Scrivens	5	Budget	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
V K Scrivens	8	Sandy Hill Youth Shelter	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor

PR STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC  
151/06

There were no members of the public present to make a statement.

PR BUDGET  
152/06

Members received a report with a proposed draft Council budget for 2007/08. The report identified that the proposed Net Operating Costs for 2007/08 was £773,351 compared with £747,705 in 2006/07 representing an overall decrease of 0.61% in Net Operating Costs.

The report clarified reasons for any significant budget variations after allowing for a cost of living increase of 2.5% and salary increases of 2.75%

The major significant variations identified in the report were:

Legal and Professional Fees	- £3,750
Web Site Management	+£1,350
Web Site Development	+£3,000
Salaries & Pensions (Admin)	+£18,500
Salaries & pensions (External)	+£2,700
Rates at depot	+£1,385

Members requested that additional explanatory notes be provided when the draft budget is considered for finalisation.

Members discussed other variations within the budget including the cost of the office costs which were charged by Waverley Borough Council, the mayoral allowance and CCTV provision.

Officers clarified that with regard to the public conveniences which were to be transferred to the control of the Town Council, the subsidised funding from the Borough Council was based on a tapered contribution over three years.

Members noted that staffing costs were not distributed to budget heads and therefore the budget did not reflect the true cost of the operation of the Library Gardens, the allotments, cemeteries or farmers market.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**That the draft budget for 2007/08 be approved and would be considered in full at the next meeting of the committee.**

PR  
153/06

GRANTS POLICY & PROCEDURES

Members received a report on the recommendations of the Corporate Development Task Group on the Councils Grants Policy and Procedures.

The report identified that the Councils total grant contributions accounted for 13.78% of the Councils precept compared to an average of 2.9% of similar councils.

The report highlighted a number of issues which had been raised by members regarding the Councils current policy, including the lack of a transparent scoring mechanism, conflict of understandings between revenue and project grants, reserves and the integrity of the Councils Grants decision making process.

The Corporate Development Task Group had applied Best Value Principles to the review and had made a number of recommendations for consideration by the committee. These included:

The creation of a representative Grants Group.

That Project and Revenue Grants be combined and reclassified as Community grants.

That the maximum grant should be £2,000 for community grants.

That grants should be considered once per year

That large grants of over £15,000 should be considered using the same policy, however such applicants should make a presentation to the Grants Group.

That grant funding should only be considered for up to a maximum of three years.

That the grants budget for Community grants should be 2% of the precept (16,023).

Members discussed in detail the report and concern was expressed by some members regarding the reduction of funds available if funding was reduced to 2% of the precept.

In addition, concern was expressed regarding the requirement for applicants to identify the reserves held by the organisation and having to account for the future use of those funds. Officers reminded the committee that there was a need for Council to be both prudent and accountable for public funds and the request for information on reserves was common and good practice.

Members discussed if there would be an appeal process if applicants did not like the decision of the Council on funding. Members concluded that grant funding was a gift from the Council and not a statutory payment to organisations.

Members considered the recommendations of the Corporate Development Task Group.

Cllr Scrivens proposed that the wording of recommendation 3 should be amended to read:

The adoption of a grant policy of COMMUNITY GRANTS **normally** up to a maximum of £2,000.

The amendment was not seconded therefore the amendment.

Cllr Scrivens proposed and Cllr Clark seconded that the wording of recommendation 5 should be amended to read:

With reference to Community Grants, members are requested to consider that grants for up to three years are awarded; any such grant would **normally** be tapered funding (reducing year on year).

Members voted by a majority in favour of the amendment.

Cllr Scrivens proposed and Cllr Clark seconded that the wording of recommendation 7 should be amended to read:

A ceiling of Community Grant funding be established as a percentage of the precept and this should be considered as 4% of the precept

Members voted by a majority against the amendment.

Cllr Scrivens proposed and Cllr Clark seconded that the wording of recommendation 8 should be amended to read:

The adoption of the grants policy for large grants exceeding £15,000 will **normally** be the subject of tapered funding.

Members voted by a majority in favour of the amendment.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL**

- 1. To agree to the principle of the creation of a Grants Group and to identify members on a cross political party basis**
- 2. The authority to allocate grant funding be delegated to the Grants Group subject to ratification by Full Council**
- 3. The adoption of a grants policy of COMMUNITY GRANTS up to a maximum of £2,000.**
- 4. That Community Grants should be awarded once a year**
- 5. With reference to Community Grants, members are requested to consider that grants for up to three years are awarded; any such grant would *normally* be tapered funding (reducing year on year).**
- 6. The adoption of a grants policy for small grants up to £200 to be available throughout the year.**
- 7. A ceiling of Community Grant funding be established as a percentage of the precept and this should be 2% of the precept (£16,023 – 2006/2007).**
- 8. The adoption of the grants policy for large grants exceeding £15,000 which will *normally* be the subject of tapered funding.**
- 9. All large grant applicants will be required to make a presentation to support their funding application.**
- 10. The adoption of the grants policy and procedures as recommended by the Corporate Development Task Group and outlined in the Grants Policy and Procedures.**

PR  
154/06

## **ACCOUNTS**

Members received the unaudited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006.

Officers informed Members that due to a change in audit regulations the Council were no longer required to produce formal accounts, and therefore the unaudited accounts were for information only.

Due to the change in accounting practices officers were unable to provide comparative figures for the previous year without reworking the accounts for 2004/2005. The provision of these comparative figures based on the previous accounts would be misleading in the interpretation of the current unaudited accounts.

However, comparative figures would be available for the following year's accounts.

As delegated by Full Council members received the Annual Return for 2005/06.

Members approved the annual return for signature by the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk.

PR  
155/06

#### CAPITAL MONIES FOR YOUTH SHELTER AT SANDY HILL

Members received a report requesting the Town Council to fund £3,000 towards the repair and improvement of the Youth Shelter at Sandy Hill which had been vandalised.

Members agreed that it was important to support the youth of Sandy Hill and that there was a need for the shelter to be repaired or replaced.

Members expressed concern regarding the apparent lack of commitment from Pavilion Housing, who it was felt had a responsibility to contribute to the works.

Members however expressed concern that the project may be delayed while waiting for the funding issue with Pavilion Housing to be resolved.

Members requested that officers make further enquiries to clarify Pavilion Housing's contribution to the cost of repairing the shelter and what consultation had been taken with young people to establish if the current project was what the young people wanted.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Members recommend to Full Council that £3,000 be released from Reserves or Capital Project Savings for the Youth Shelter at Sandy Hill, subject to the enquiries of officers on the contribution of Pavilion Housing.**

PR  
156/06

#### SCAPTC ANNUAL MEETING

Members noted the meeting of SCAPTC on Saturday 18 November and had no recommendations for items to be included on the agenda.

Cllr M Clark volunteered to attend the meeting if the Council's normal representatives were unable to attend.

PR  
157/06

## REPLACEMENT OUTSIDE WORKFORCE VEHICLE

Members received a report identifying the need to replace the oldest of the Outside Work Force vehicles prior to its MOT Test.

The report identified that the cost of a replacement vehicle was approximately £11,500 plus £1,000 for conversion to LPG.

Members considered if the van should be painted green or left white and requested officers to ensure that the vehicle was painted green, the Town Council colours.

Members enquired if other forms of propulsion had been considered including electric.

Officers informed members that all the Council's other vehicles including the ride on mower were fuelled by LPG and that there was an opportunity for financial savings to be made by installing a LPG tank at the depot in West Street.

Officers explained that a concrete base would be required to site the tank, however this work would be undertaken by the Councils staff, in addition an electricity supply would be required.

The total cost of installation was not available at the time of the meeting.

The cost of renting a Calor tank would be £80 per quarter and fuel could be purchased more cheaply than through local garages.

Members requested that the van be clearly sign painted that it operated on LPG to advertise the Councils commitment to addressing environmental issues.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the authority to purchase a new van be delegated to the Town Clerk.**

**That members approved the installation of an LPG tank at the West Street Depot.**

## **Part 2 – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

PR PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

158/06

The Bank Reconciliation Statement, together with details of payments made during June through to September and the file of invoices, were available in the Council Chamber for inspection by members from 6.45pm, and were signed by the Chairman at the meeting.

PR GRANT THANK YOU LETTERS

159/06

Members noted letters of thanks had been received from the following organisations:

Chantrys Community Association  
Farnham Carnival  
Farnham Voluntary Transport Association  
Hale Darby & Joan Club  
Surrey Artists Open Studios 2006

PR ITEMS TABLED

160/06

None

PR PUBLICITY

161/06

Members agreed that press releases be issued on the following items:

Grants – to indicate a new process will shortly be in place.  
New Outside Workforce Vehicle – the new vehicle will be LPG.

## **Part 3 – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

There were no confidential items.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25pm.

Date

Chairman