



## POLICY, FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

### Minutes of a Committee meeting held on Tuesday 6 October 2018 at 10.00am at the Hayridge Centre

**Present:** Cllr Iain Emmett (in the chair) and Cllrs: James Buczkowski, Gordon Guest, and Mike Thompson.

Judy Morris: Clerk

1. **APOLOGIES** were received and accepted from Cllrs: Eileen Andrews (personal) and Lloyd Knight (work)
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None.
3. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: To receive questions from members of the public present at the meeting.** None.
4. **MINUTES:** The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 September 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record. Proposed Cllr Gordon Guest, seconded Cllr Iain Emmett.  
**NOTE:** Cllr Mike Thompson objected to the Minutes and abstained from voting.
5. **RESOLUTIONS: To review resolutions sheet:** Noted.
6. **COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS:** To receive details of any comments or complaints for October 2018:

October 2018

Complaint with regard to anti-social behaviour at Head Weir Road play area. Light broken by ball kicked from play area over the fence into her garden.

Email rec'd 4 October 2018

Thank you for your emails and for progressing this. I am slightly surprised and annoyed that my previous formal complaint was not dealt in this way. As you have quite rightly pointed out this is a long-standing issue now and from my perspective the Town Council have made no effort to address it and I have lost patience. In order to structure your discussion, please consider the following points:

1. Reimbursement for damage caused: I expect the light, it's fitting (electrician's time) and the cost of travelling to and from Exeter to pick it up to be paid for. This comes to a total of £12 for the light (I went for the cheapest, it is not like for like for will do), £15 for fitting (Electrician charges £30 an hour) and petrol (11.9 miles return = 23.8 miles @0.40p per mile which is a standard business rate for fuel, £9.52, totalling, £36.52. Over the last year, we have experienced damage to plants in our garden and here-on-in, I will be charging the Town Council, for all damages. If £36.52 is not reimbursed in a timely matter, then I will seek recompense through: a) the ombudsman via MDDC; and, b) the small claims court;
2. Immediate removal of the goal painted on the garage of number 1 and number 2 Splatford Drive;
3. The naturalisation of the WHOLE strip of grass that is adjacent to my property and not the current, useless 10cm that is currently there.

These above three points are non-negotiable in addressing the excessive nuisance I am experiencing. If not sorted, then I will pursue this via MDDC and the Ombudsman. In addition, the following also needs to be considered.

4. Removal of climbing frame and in its place a smaller piece of equipment that is suitable

It was accepted that the Council had a responsibility to lessen the impact of any anti-social behaviour. It was acknowledged that the Police have received no reports of anti-social behaviour and concern that this was a neighbour dispute.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Obtain legal advice with regard to points 1-3.
2. Write to the complainant to explain that the Council does not accept any liability but is in discussion with Mid Devon District Council about how we can minimise the inconvenience and impact. The Council will contact the complainant again as soon as it has any more information or details about what will be done to progress this matter.

- for toddlers and key stage one children. I will not tolerate any more children sitting on it and shouting abuse at us or having absolutely no privacy in my home;
5. Transition to a toddler / key stage one play area; it was nice in the summer to see mums and dads with their little ones bringing picnics to the play area, but they could only do this and will only bring their children to this play area, when the older ones were not kicking the footballs around the play equipment;
  6. The re-siting of goals that are in Willand and are not used OR the purchase of a set of goals and their siting in a more suitable space nearer to where the children who currently play football at Head Weir live. They mostly travel from Fairfax and Raleigh Road and so the large playing field adjacent to Millennium way is more appropriate and should have minimum impact on the surrounding neighbourhood. I would happily contribute to their purchase. The kids have told me that they don't want to play with the equipment in the play area and a set of goals would be more appreciated.

Regards

14 October  
C Snow

All on the P&F committee

Having seen the agenda placed on the Town council website i would like to bring to the attention of the committee on the following points

The agenda has been placed on Thursday 11th October and there are a number of issues to be addressed

The rule of 3 clear days not including the day it was posted and subject to council WORKING days, this would exclude a saturday as the office does NOT operate on a Saturday. The 1972 act shows this is quite clear, and the NALC recomendations also.

The agenda is also missing the financial reports on the agenda pack, and also tabled reports

It was acknowledged that it is not ideal to include Saturday when working out the three clear days' notice of a meeting but it is legitimate to do so.

It is also not ideal to send out appendices to the agenda after the agenda has been sent out but again it is legitimate to do so. The Committee Chairman was aware of the situation and had given approval for the financial reports to be sent on the Friday

The Policy & finance meeting of the finances CANNOT be discussed as the Appendices of finance have not been included within agenda pack.

If the finance documents have have been sent out separately on Friday this falls foul of the rules of the 3 clear day rule and must not be discussed at the meeting.

The finance documentation could have been prepared by the office staff as well as the agenda in good time while the clerk was away and there is not excuse that the documentation could not have been prepared while the clerk had time off.

The agenda item; 10. TRANSPARENCY ACT REVIEW: To agree date for meeting

This report has been written and should have been passed to the relevant committee to digest the important information.

Why has this report NOT been placed on the agenda appendix as this will be in the public interest.

Youth working group.

To date I have NOT seen who is on this group, or whether this is a working group of a committee. It seems this is a JT youth group with a couple of town councillors as membership, and it gives the impression that the town council is running this. The town council had made decisions to cut ties financially as well as legally and the JT youth group to be a self-funding separate entity. Clarification on this matter must be made urgently to clear up this issue.

The review of the Clerk's appraisal is questionable, and with the amount of serious mistakes in procedure and accounting, I would like the councillors to discuss this, as it would seem that one person doing the appraisal & reviewing it will look like favoritism, and a review of all committee members to challenge the appraisal should be looked into.

A very serious issue that MUST be brought up and acted upon by ALL members on the P&F

instead of with the agenda on the Thursday.

The Transparency Act review documentation will be circulated with the agenda for the meeting, once the meeting date has been approved and will then be in the public domain.

The Council refutes the accusation that there was in any way a breach of trust by the Clerk when processing and submitting the Annual Return to the external auditor. The Clerk acted as per legal requirements and the Council does not see that the Clerk has failed in her duty.

The times of the Committee meetings are determined for the convenience of the Committee members. It is not unusual for Councils to have a combination of both daytime and evening meetings, both Devon County Council and Mid Devon District Council do this.

There are a number of ways in which the public can engage with the Council and, if a member of the public is unable to attend a meeting then they are welcome to send a

committee is the failure of the Clerk to inform the P&F committee on the external audit. This allows Councillors to ask & or challenge the audit on specific matters. The failure is a breach of trust, and a failure of being open & transparent. This MUST be addressed and challenged. There is NO excuse for this.

letter or email setting out the issue of concern for discussion by the relevant Committee or full Council meeting.

Finally, the meeting times for daytime meetings is unacceptable to the public. Some dates need to be evening dates so that at least the public can challenge or ask questions on the finances of the town council.

The Clerk had previously invited Mr Snow to make an appointment to discuss his concerns about the JT Centre accounts. It was suggested that the Clerk reiterate this option to Mr Snow.

I will be watching this meeting with interest

C Snow  
12 October  
2018

Just to clear things up ... the JT accounts should have had a final statement, and a resolution to conclude the accounts and what is to be held back. This is to make sure a clear break from the council of its responsibilities and financial ties.

I hope this clears up exactly what is what I'm asking

Mr C Snow

### **Complaint to Cemetery & Town Hall Committee**

The Chair invited questions from the Committee and it was reported that correspondence had been received from a member of the public relating to:

1. Cemetery & Town Hall Committee Agenda – appendices not attached to the Agenda when published to the Website
2. Grass not being cut for 3 weeks in the old cemetery

A discussion took place and the Deputy Town Clerk informed the committee that the former was apparently due to limitations in uploading files to the website and that the latter was because a member of staff had been on annual leave.

Cemetery & Town Hall Committee have written to Mr Snow about the matters raised. The limitations with regard to uploading files onto the website will be discussed later in the meeting.

15 October  
Chairman  
Food Festival  
Steering Group

Thank you to the Council staff for working with the Food Festival Steering Group to ensure the success of the Festival on 13 October. The poor weather conditions meant a change of venue for the cookery demonstrations and some of the craft stalls and the staff worked as a team to make sure that the event was not a disaster.

## 7. FINANCE

### (i) To receive financial statements for September 2018.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the financial statements for September 2018 is deferred until the next meeting to allow Councillors more time to read through them. Proposed Cllr Mike Thompson, seconded Cllr James Buczkowski.

### (ii) To receive notice of completion of 2017/18 external audit: Noted

### (iii) Budget funding priorities: to consider consultation with parishioners to establish funding priorities to include youth provision funding: Draft survey circulated and discussed.

**RESOLVED:** That, following amendment to identify which services the Council is required to fund and which it has taken over from other authorities, the draft survey is circulated, via email, to all committee members. Once the Committee members are happy with the survey it will be circulated to all Councillors for approval and then published using Survey Monkey with hard copies available from the Council office and other outlets.

**NOTE:** The Committee acknowledged that it would be more effective if the survey form could be hand delivered to every household in the parish but appreciated that, due to budget drafting timescales, it would be not possible this year.

### (iv) Grants: To consider grant applications: The Committee was advised that there is £350 remaining in the "Grants" budget plus an additional £200 that the Committee agreed to use for grants that had been received from the sale of boxing equipment in lieu of unpaid rent for JT Centre (Minutes 18 September 2018 Item 7).

**RESOLVED:** That grants are approved as follows:

Organisation	Purpose of grant	Amount requested	Grant paid 2017.18	Recommend grant 2018.19
1 <sup>st</sup> Cullompton Rangers	To purchase resources to implement the new programme which was recently launched. It is the biggest overhaul that has ever happened and the new programme will give the Rangers the chance to discover and develop their interests, skills and confidence.	£150.00		£150 with the proviso that additional information is provided about what resources they intend to buy. (Proposed Cllr James Buczkowski, seconded Cllr Gordon Guest)
Unite Carers in Mid Devon	Adult carers, including bereavement, counselling, IT support and home visits. Run support groups which	£1,000.00		Nil

	carers can attend to meet other people in a relaxed atmosphere.			
Bread of Life	Community project originally set up to assist the street homeless in Exeter. Based in Cullompton and we have assisted 4 people presenting as street homeless in Cullompton.	No amount specified		Nil – but suggest that they reapply for a specific item. (Proposed Cllr James Buczkowski, seconded Cllr Iain Emmett)
St Andrews Church Youth Work	Looks to inspire, encourage and nurture the young people of our community through a diverse range of activities and events. Would like to take their work to another level both in terms of quantity and quality. Significant lack of activities for young people in Cullompton and determined to change this.	No amount specified		Nil – but suggest that they reapply for a specific item. (Proposed Cllr James Buczkowski, seconded Cllr Iain Emmett)
Life Education Wessex	Visit to Willowbank School over 3 days in November to see approx. 300 children – independent charity delivering health, well-being and drug prevention programme.	£825.00		Nil (Proposed Cllr Gordon Guest, seconded Cllr Mike Thompson).
Cullompton Family Centre	To purchase comfortable nursing chair and smaller seats to allow for more chairs as more families coming into the centre (at present big old sofas).	£250.00	£250.00 (May 2018)	Nil as they have already received a grant in this financial year. Suggest that they reapply in April 2019.
Friends of Cullompton Library	To provide cover for the outside area of the café. This will enable visitors all year round use.	500.00	85.00 (October 2017)	Nil as it was considered that the café is a commercial venture
<b>Total</b>				<b>150.00</b>

**NOTE:** It was thought that the aim of the grant scheme was to assist with small occasional grants rather than for long term projects. It was suggested that the Council considers a separate budget line for long term project grants.

- (v) **Grants for community events: To consider draft policy:** Revision to the Council's current draft policy was considered.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council's Grants Policy is revised to enable the Community Wellbeing Committee to provide grants from the Community Events budget.

## 8. YOUTH SERVICES

- (i) **Youth Services Working Group: To receive summary of meeting held on 14 September 2018:** Noted

### NOTE:

1. It was suggested that the funding survey contained in the summary could become a next stage in the budgeting consultation process if youth services was shown to be a priority in the initial survey.
2. Concern that the original intention, when setting up the working group, was to find alternative sources of funding for youth services in order to make youth services self-funding and this aim does not appear to have been achieved.

- (ii) **Draft Youth Strategy: To review:** Cllr James Buczkowski explained as follows:

- It is not a "strategy document".
- It does not acknowledge that Cullompton Town Council has NO statutory duty to provide any form of youth service.
- It does not acknowledge that Devon County Council DOES have a duty to secure sufficient services and activities for 13 to 19 year olds and young people under 24 with learning difficulties (Section 507B Educations and Inspections Act 2006) and that they are currently failing in discharging that duty in Cullompton.
- It focuses on 11-18 years (why not all young people, say from school age or statutory provision age of 13-19) it is convenient that 11-18 is the current service age of the current youth clubs.
- It has not been created as a result of consultation with:
  - a. Users/potential users of the services (young people) other than the users of the JTC.
  - b. Youth activity providers (Other than the JTC).
  - c. Partner Agencies (MDDC, DCC, VOYC, YMCA, Young Devon, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, to name a few).
- It does not contain up to date research or best practice, indeed it was written in 2016 for Exeter City Council and published by Exeter City Council in 2017 as "EXETER: A young people friendly city"; the bulk of the content has been merely cut and pasted.
- It does not acknowledge the fact that the Town Council does not have an appropriately qualified member of staff to advise on the provision of a youth service, from a local authority perspective.

It was suggested that, If the Council is going to follow Exeter's example, it is only fair that members also peruse <http://committees.exeter.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=38581>

This is the supporting and background information that goes with the "EXETER: A young people friendly city" and actually contains the strategy, I would also note (and a key part of this) is that, it is a fundamental part of the said strategy is that DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL make financial

contributions.

You will note the strategy is actually a much shorter piece of work.

I would also suggest that

<https://www.tenterdentowncouncil.gov.uk/image//Youth%20Policy%20Final%20Dec15.pdf>  
is more appropriate for a Town Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council writes to Cllr John Hart as the Leader of Devon County Council (copy to Cllr John Berry) pointing out that Devon County Council has a duty to provide services and activities for young people. Cullompton is a growing town with a growing population with substantial youth needs and the Council would like a meeting with Cllr John Hart and an officer specialising in youth work to discuss this matter. Proposed Cllr Gordon Guest, seconded Cllr Iain Emmett.

9. **STAFFING AND TRAINING MATTERS**

(i) **Update Report:** Noted

(ii) **Financial Software:** To approve training programme.

**RESOLVED:** That the programme for the financial software training is approved. Clerk to arrange training, Councillors welcome to attend. Proposed Cllr James Buczkowski, seconded Cllr Gordon Guest.

(iii) **Town Clerk's appraisal: To agree date**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairman and Cllr Gordon Guest carry out the Town Clerk's appraisal, date to be arranged as convenient, and report back to the Committee for approval. Proposed Cllr Iain Emmett, seconded Cllr Gordon Guest.

10. **TRANSPARENCY ACT REVIEW: To agree date for meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee has an extraordinary meeting on Wednesday 31 October at 2pm to review the Transparency Act review findings.

11. **HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT: To receive report**

**RESOLVED:** That the report is noted and the Town Clerk and former Councillor Richard Thorne are thanked for all their hard work.

12. **WEBSITE AND IT: Any website matters:** As there had been a problem uploading an agenda file due to it being too large the website provider had been contacted to find out how this problem can be overcome in future. Their response is as follows:

*"The standard upload limits on our website system are; for Minutes 8mb and for other files 4mb. If you are wishing to upload larger files than this on a regular basis then at no charge we can set you with a ftp account (file transfer protocol). This essentially uploads files through a different route to your website file store. There is no limit to the file upload through the ftp account.*

*If you would like this set up for you just let us know or contact me if you have further questions.*

*The reason for the limit size for files on our website is not cost related and is aimed at encouraging good practice around not placing large files on the a website if not required”.*

**RESOLVED:** That the Council’s website host is asked to provide the Council with an ftp account in order to upload large files and also find out about increasing the upload size quoting the Litchfield Town Council website.

**13. CORRESPONDENCE: Any correspondence received after the date of this agenda.** None.

**14. DATES FOR MEETINGS: To agree date for extraordinary meeting to review staffing levels.**

**RESOLVED:** That the extraordinary meeting to discuss staffing matters and staffing levels to be held on Monday 5 November at 10am.

**RESOLVED:** that due to the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed, the following items are dealt with as Part 2 business and, in accord with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public are requested to leave at this point and the next section of the meeting is conducted in private. Proposed Cllr James Buczkowski, seconded Cllr Iain Emmett.

**RESOLVED:** That, as the time is now 12noon, the meeting is extended in order to deal with item 15 on the agenda. The remaining items to be deferred until the next meeting.

**15. STAFFING**

**(i) To receive staffing report:** The staffing report was discussed

- **Deputy Town Clerk:** The Town Mayor and Town Clerk confirmed that they had carried out a satisfactory appraisal for the Deputy Town Clerk and are happy to recommend that her appointment is made permanent.

**RESOLVED:** That the Deputy Town Clerk becomes a permanent member of staff.

- **Work Experience:** Letter and CV received from a Year 10 Cullompton Community College student asking about a work placement 15-19 July.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council is pleased to offer a work placement to a Cullompton Community College student between 15-19 July.

**(ii) To review staff overtime report:** To be considered in more detail at the staffing meeting on 5 November.

**16. OUTSTANDING INVOICES: To receive report:** Deferred until the next meeting

**17. SOUND AND AUDIO SYSTEM: To consider estimates and agree way forward:** Deferred until the next meeting.

**18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 10am at the Hayridge Centre

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

DRAFT