



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

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Chairman: Cllr Caroline Parker
Vice Chairman: Cllr Paul Lawrence
Town Clerk: Paul Beckerson



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEIGH-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON WEDNESDAY 9th OCTOBER 2013 AT LEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE, 71-73 ELM ROAD, LEIGH-ON-SEA

Present: Cllrs: Caroline Parker (Chairman) (until Min 62d), Margaret Cotgrove, Syrie Cox, Geoff Crawford, Donald Fraser, Richard Herbert, Jerry Holden, Pat Holden, Paul Lawrence, Carole Mulroney, Cliff Passmore, Patsy Ryan, David Stanley and John Wren.

Also in attendance: Paul Beckerson (Town Clerk) (until Min 65)

Prayers were read by Rev Julia Monaghan (Wesley Methodists).

The meeting opened at 7.35pm

56. OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting, gave a short resume of events attended.

57. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none.

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Mark Bromfield and Alex Coulson

59. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

60. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Question from Cllr John Wren

That with the financial pressure on all Councils, that Leigh Town Council after the big increase in the precept this year, that vanity projects such as Strand Wharf should be either cancelled, and or vastly scaled down. Given the £74,000 set aside for this project, these funds could be better used by Leigh Town Council?

Chairman's Answer: Everyone on the Council was extremely enthusiastic about this project to start with, but this was dampened by the fact that negotiations on the lease encountered problems and that the cost was increasing year on year.

The Chairman believed that in view of the present state of the economy 10 years on, that the project should go out to consultation prior to any expenditure being incurred.

61. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 11th September 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

62. COMMITTEES

- a) Planning Committee – The minutes of the meetings held on the 10th and 24th September 2013 were **noted**.
- b) Allotments Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2013 were presented with one recommendation.

A point of order was raised regarding Minute 23 and the £70 agreed at the meeting for protective clothing this was contrary to SO 5xvii which limits such decisions to £50. This would be noted and adjusted at the next meeting as the actual expenditure was £37.

REVIEW OF RENTS 2014/15

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** a 5% increase in rents.

Cllr Richard Herbert raised a point of order regarding the linkage agreed at a previous Council meeting with setting the rents and budget at the same time. In response it was pointed out that the budget would be considered at the next meeting as part of the budget cycle.

In order to correct this anomaly it is proposed that the Allotment budget in future years would be considered at the September meeting at the same time as the rents are reviewed.

Council **RESOLVED** to agree the 5% increase in rents.

The minutes were **noted**.

- c) Leisure, Foreshore & Environment Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on the 19th September 2013 were **noted**.

The Chairman reiterated the process for the Strand Wharf Project to be followed, subsequent to the question to the Chairman earlier in the meeting. Revised costs were coming to the next meeting and from then it would go to S&TPSC for evaluation regarding best value.

- d) Finance & General Purposes Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on the 1st October 2013 were **noted**.

The recommendation was deferred until the end of the meeting, to be taken under confidential business.

- e) Leigh Community Centre Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2013 were **noted**.

Cllr Richard Herbert spoke to his motions in minute 40. Some concern was raised about the likely cost of an external review. Options and costings would be brought to a future meeting for approval by the Committee.

A query was raised regarding minute 41, this would be addressed at the next committee meeting under approval of minutes.

Cllr Caroline Parker left the meeting to return to Grand Daughter's Wedding Reception

The Vice Chairman took the chair

63. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was **RESOLVED**: that the Income & Expenditure Report 2266/I&E be approved, (Appendix 2 to the agenda).

64. EXCLUDE PUBLIC – The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

RESOLVED; That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the public and press be excluded and instructed to withdraw (SO.1(c)) - (staffing)

Start of confidential business

65. REPORT ON COMPLAINTS DEALT WITH UNDER THE COUNCIL'S COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE Report 2256/TC (Appendix 1 to the agenda)

There was a debate on the use of the complaints procedure and the use of the word disciplinary in the revised report. It was **agreed** that the original wording of the report be reinstated as the complaint had been dealt with under that procedure.

For the sake of clarity it was suggested that PSC could review these procedures once the present grievances had been resolved.

A proposal was put that the item be referred to Personnel Sub-Committee regarding the use of procedures. Proposed Cllr Patsy Ryan, seconded Cllr Carole Mulroney

On being put to the vote the proposal was **lost**.

A further proposal was put forward:

That members have training on Human Resources, Grievance and Disciplinary, Code of Conduct and Complaints procedures. Proposed Cllr Syrie Cox, seconded Cllr Jerry Holden.

Council **RESOLVED** to agree the proposal.

The Town Clerk left the meeting

66. MINUTE 78, F&GPC AUTHORISATION TO PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE TO SPEND UP TO £500 FROM THE GENERAL PURPOSES LEGAL BUDGET AND UP TO £500 FROM RESERVES REGARDING PROFESSIONAL AND LEGAL ADVICE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRENT GRIEVANCES.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to authorise the PSC to spend up to £500 from the General Purposes Legal Budget and **RECOMMENDED** to Council that an additional £500 be made available from reserves if the Legal Budget was insufficient.

It was **RESOLVED** that an additional £500 be made available from Reserves if the Legal Budget was insufficient.

67. TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORT FROM PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD EARLIER AND TO ACTION ANY MATTERS ARISING AS NECESSARY BY REASON OF URGENCY

Cllr Pat Holden proposed that Cllr Margaret Cotgrove be co-opted to serve on the Personnel Sub Committee to assist with the current grievance. The proposal was seconded by Cllr David Stanley. The proposal was **RESOLVED**.

Cllr Pat Holden proposed that Southend Borough Council HR department be engaged to provide advice on procedures and personnel to assist with the current grievances. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Syrie Cox. The proposal was **RESOLVED**.

End of confidential business

The meeting closed at 9.40pm