

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE/PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING** held in The Mayor's Parlour, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at 7.00 pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor M.R. Cotton (Chairman)  
Councillor J.H. Dixon (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors     R.A. Mann  
                      S.J. Reed  
                      C.A.C. White  
                      H. Worth

22. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors D.J. Axford, M. Freeman and J. Ruhmund

23. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were required to be made.

24. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008**

Having been circulated, it was

**RESOLVED:** that they should be signed as a true and correct record.

25. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

(a) **The 'Credit Crunch'**

(i) **Cornwall Pension Fund**

The Town Clerk advised that the Pension Fund Section at County Hall had issued an information note to advise that the value of the fund had fallen by 20 percent but that, in the short-term, there would be little, if any, impact and the note went on to say that the fund has a positive cash-flow from contributions and with no need to sell assets, Fund Managers may see the situation as a 'buying opportunity'. If there was the need for an adjustment to employer's contributions in 2009/10, the Town Clerk advised that it could be covered from council reserves and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(ii) **Protection of Holdings at Barclays**

The Town Clerk reminded members that Barclays were the council's bankers and he had received an assurance from the bank's Business Manager that the bank was in a strong position and had not sought help from the Government during the recent crisis but had secured capital investment from private sources.

Nevertheless, the Government only guaranteed £50,000.00 of holdings in any one group and the Town Clerk was seeking advice from the National Association of Local Councils as to whether holdings should be disbursed amongst several banks, the downside of which would be a considerable reduction in the interest yield from monies held in the deposit account and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that advice from NALC be awaited.

(b) Thank You Letters

The Town Clerk advised that ‘thank you’ letters had been received from the following organisations:-

- (i) Mousehole Male Voice Choir
- (ii) Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust
- (iii) Vitalise
- (iv) Victim Support Cornwall
- (v) Cornwall Blind Association
- (vi) St. Mary’s Haven Day Care Centre

and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that receipt be noted.

(c) ‘Gift’ of the Newlyn Memorial for Fishermen

The Town Clerk reminded members that the ‘hand-over’ ceremony took place on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and advice had been received from the Charity Commissioners that the easiest route for transfer was by way of a Supplemental Deed which would see the Town Council acting as the sole corporate trustee.

The Town Council would now provide insurance and maintenance and there would be a requirement for an annual nil return to the Charity Commissioners and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(d) Penwith/Cuxhaven Twinning Association

The Town Clerk advised that a letter had been received from the Twinning Association offering thanks for the agreed annual grant in the sum of £500.00.

The letter went on to advise that the back-bone of the Twinning was the annual Week of Sport and the 35<sup>th</sup> week had been held in Cuxhaven this year and alternates between the two communities.

The exchange had been taken on by Penwith District Council in 1975 and operated through a Twinning Sub-Committee but in the late 1990s a separate Twinning Association had been established with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the District Council being President and Deputy President.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, the organisation would be renamed the Penzance/Cuxhaven Twinning Association with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor becoming the President and Deputy President and with a new constitution on which the Town Council would be consulted and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(e) Local Government Services Pay Update

The Town Clerk advised that the annual pay settlement had yet to be agreed and had been referred to ACAS for arbitration.

In the meantime, the employer's side had indicated that the settlement would not be less than 2.45 percent and had authorised payment to be made in the month of October pending final agreement and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(f) Update re. Skate Park Ramp, Wherrytown

The Town Clerk advised that the work on the skate ramp at Wherrytown had now been completed save for the removal of the access steps and the contractor was arranging a safety inspection before fencing was removed and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(g) Christmas – Closure of Office

It was agreed that the Town Council Office would remain open until Christmas Eve and would then close until Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

All staff had leave which had to be taken by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 and this would entail each member of staff taking 3 days leave during that period and it was

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Christmas closure arrangement.

(h) Staff Matters

The Town Clerk confirmed that the part-time Retail Assistant post at Penlee House had been advertised with a closing date of the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and had drawn an extremely good response.

Interviews would be carried out by the Chairman of the Penlee House and Park Committee, the Director and the Shop Manager on the 1<sup>st</sup> December and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

The Town Clerk advised that he had tendered his resignation to the Mayor on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and would leave the Council at the end of April 2009.

In the first instance, the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and Chairman of Finance would meet with the Town Clerk to agree a timetable for the appointment which the Town Clerk felt should be completed by the end of January 2009 to allow a suitable notice period, if required, for the new appointee to give to his/her current employer.

In terms of the long-listing, short-listing and interview process, the initial proposal was that this should be conducted by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chairmen of the 4 standing committees.

Members felt that an interview panel comprising the full council would be somewhat unwieldy and the above reflected the process used by the governing bodies at secondary schools which were of similar size in membership to the Town Council. Part of the process could be a presentation to all members with feedback to Panel members ahead of the formal interviews and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the above proposal be taken to full council for consideration.

(i) Update re. Penzance Football Club Proposals

The Town Clerk advised that revised plans were still awaited from the Football Club and that, in the meantime, he was dealing with issues relating to the roof of the present building and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

26. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The committee considered its finances to the 30th September 2008 and it was

**RESOLVED:** to note the position.

The committee also considered payments made in the months of August and September 2008 and it was

**RESOLVED:** to approve such payments (see Appendix 'A' for both financial position and payments made).

27. **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT**

(a) Minor Awards

(i) Penwith Peace Foundation

It was

**RESOLVED:** not to make an award.

(ii) Tom Bawcocks Eve – Lantern Workshops

It was

**RESOLVED:** to make a grant of £200.00.

28. **BUSINESS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

The Chairman referred to the paper which had been sent to all members of the Penlee House and Park Committee relating to proposals to revise car park charges at Penlee House Car Park and the impact of the proposed changes would be reported to the council through the upcoming budgetary process. The paper containing the notes of the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October would be copied to all other members for information and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

7.50 pm

Chairman  
4<sup>th</sup> December 2008