

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Monday 29 June 2009 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillors P C H Rendle (Chairman)
C A Dennis (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors F Granger
R M Lawrence
M Lovegrove
R A Mann
J Ruhmund

10. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – were received from

Councillors R Lewarne, J F Moreland, D Nebesnuick, S J Reed and H Worth.

11. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

12. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2009**

Having been circulated, it was

RESOLVED that the Chairman sign the Minutes as a true and correct record.

13. **PENWITH RURAL TRANSPORT FORUM**

Councillor Lawrence reported that he had attended this meeting which was the first that had been held for some time and undertook to circulate the minutes from it when they were available.

14. **BENDIGO SISTER CITIES NEWSLETTER**

The Chairman drew members' attention to the newsletter which was attached to the agenda, thanking the town for their contribution towards a bench in recognition of the losses suffered by Bendigo in the February 2009 bush fires.

The Town Clerk advised that having spoken to Councillor Freeman, who had been in contact with the Bendigo Twinning Committee, they were extremely pleased with the gesture and were making good progress in repairing and reinstating the City.

15. LARGER COUNCILS COMMITTEE OF CALC

The Chairman advised that he and the Town Clerk had attended the meeting held on 24 June 2009 and reported the following:-

Councillor Hayward from Redruth Town Council had circulated a paper regarding the concerns surrounding the transfer of assets to community ownership which had produced a scenario where the asset was lost if the finances of the community group did not allow it to continue.

Members discussed the ramifications of this in the context of the Quirke Report and it was noted that this report only had relevance to the metropolitan areas where no Town or Parish Council existed to receive the transfer of assets.

Ultimately, the group agreed that the Head of Service at Cornwall Council in charge of asset transfer be invited along to a Larger Council's Committee meeting to discuss devolution of assets and any asset transfer information be forwarded to CALC for submission to NALC who are currently gathering the information for further consultation with Central Government.

Councillor Kennedy of Bodmin Town Council raised the issue of non-policing of 20mph speed limit zones, given that Devon and Cornwall Constabulary had no policy in this regard. Members agreed that CALC would submit a motion to the NALC Larger Council's Committee requesting that Police Authorities should be required by law to enforce 20 mph zones.

Discussion continued on the subject of the Planning Liaison Group which had been set up by CALC to liaise with Planning Officers of Cornwall Council on such areas as local development order, pilot projects, planning system and delegated approvals and local development boundaries.

Members referred to several emails from smaller parishes expressing concern over CALC's involvement with this group and indicating that they considered CALC was not providing them with best value, given that they should be representing the views of the towns and parishes rather than working with Cornwall Council, and some parish councils had gone as far as alluding to potentially withdrawing their subscription from CALC and forming a separate group within Cornwall. Additionally, some members had expressed their views that to only deal with councils with "Quality Status" had disenfranchised a large number of towns and parishes throughout the County and had formed the impression of elitism.

The Town Clerk added that he had asked the group to consider using the criteria of inviting those towns with larger populations to the meeting but Sarah Mason had informed him that Cornwall Council had requested these criteria and were keen not to form a larger and, in their view, unwieldy, liaison group.

Ultimately, CALC decided that the notes of the Planning Liaison Panel be circulated as soon as possible after the meetings and that a request would be made that at least three clear days for consultation on planning recommendations of Case Officers was given.

Additionally, training for Cornwall Council members would be opened up to town and parishes and Cornwall Council officers should attend Parish and Town Council meetings to familiarise themselves with the role of Local Councils in the planning system.

The Town Clerk added that, although the request for three clear days would be made, this would still not allow the Town Council to convene a meeting of its full Planning Committee and, therefore, he would be proposing to the Town Council on 13 July that they consider giving delegated authority to the Vice-Chairman and named member of the Planning Committee, in consultation with the Town Clerk, to determine those decisions made by the Town Council contrary to the Case Officer. The reason for not including the Chairman of the Planning Committee was that Councillor Lewarne was a member of the Western Area Sub-Committee and, as such, would be in a position of pre-determination in the circumstances.

Following this report, members discussed the issues raised at length and, ultimately, it was

RESOLVED – that the Town Clerk write to the Cornwall Association of Larger Councils to oppose the criteria set down for inclusion on the Planning Liaison Group, with a request to Phil Mason and Tom Flannigan of Cornwall Council that they reconsider these criteria to allow, certainly in the first instance, larger towns to become involved in these discussions.

Following on from this discussion, Councillor Dennis raised the point of Licensing Hearings, reporting that a Licensing Hearing which materially affected a part of her ward would be held at a venue in Camborne, following Cornwall Council's insistence that the Guildhall in St. John's Hall was not suitable given its poor disabled access.

Members expressed their concern that this would potentially disenfranchise and disadvantage many local people who would wish to attend.

The Town Clerk undertook to write to the Chairman of the Strategic Licensing Committee, along with the Lead Officer, expressing these concerns, particularly given the fact that Committee Room No. 1 at York House, St. Clare was fully DDA compliant and appeared to have been overlooked.

The meeting closed at 7.47 p.m.

Chairman
14 September 2009