

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on Monday 6th April 2009 in the June Rennie Room, The Pump House, Faringdon

PRESENT: Cllrs. S. Leniec (Chairman)
Mrs. J. Boulton
J.C.W. Gillman
A.V. Hickmore
D. Price
M. Wise

In Attendance: The Town Clerk

20/09 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Mrs. M. Barker, Ms. J. Farmer and A. Marsden.

21/09 Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

22/09 Minutes of Last Meeting : 11th March 2009

The Minutes were signed as a correct record.

23/09 Matters Arising

Cllr. Leniec proposed that, as this was an extraordinary meeting, this item be deferred to the next scheduled meeting, and this was AGREED.

24/09 Public Speaking Time & public Question Time

There were no members of public present, and no questions had been received.

25/09 Venues bookings software

A request was received from the Venues Committee to purchase a bookings software programme at a cost of £1,000 plus £399 training costs. The sum of £1,000 was included in the Office & Establishment 2008/09 budget, but was unspent at year end. Cllr. Price proposed that the bookings programme should be purchased, funded from reserves, and that the training costs be taken from the 2009/10 training budget, which was seconded and CARRIED.

26/09 The Corn Exchange

Members received advice from the Council's Solicitor on the terms of the draft Contract in an email dated 27th March 2009 and the following responses were given:

Para. 1 The members felt that Clause 16 in the agreement covered this.

Para. 2 Yes.

Para. 3 Members agreed that (a) to (c) should be included, plus a deduction for any capital gains tax/stamp duty land tax payable at the time of sale.

Para. 4 The members felt that searches should be undertaken, unless the VWHDC could produce evidence of the searches carried out in the 1970s when they had purchased the Corn Exchange from the Faringdon Rural District Council. The Clerk was asked to ascertain from VWHDC whether the property is listed with the Land Registry.

Para. 5 : The members felt that their comments under Para. 3 above should cover this, and it was AGREED that an independent valuation should be carried out in the near future.

Agreement Clauses 3.3.2 and 5.4.2 : It is important to ensure that payment for works carried out is paid to the Town Council, who will pass this on to the contractors concerned. The members asked for clarification of the meaning of Clauses 8.1, 11.2.1 and 15.

Costs: The Committee accepted the Solicitor's estimate of costs, however, if searches are needed the Clerk was instructed to obtain the additional cost of these.

27/09 Staffing

Members received and considered the recommendations from the Staffing Working Party meeting held on 31st March 2009 on the recruitment of a Park Superintendent and relocation of the F.C. & T.I.C. to the Corn Exchange, as set out below:

1. Change Ms. Owers job title to Leisure Services Supervisor;
2. Advertise the post of Leisure Services Assistant as soon as possible in What's On in Faringdon;
3. The position to be advertised at SCP 14-16;
4. Both positions would be subject to a 3 month probationary period, with a salary review upon successful completion for Ms. Owers;
5. The salary range for the Leisure Services Supervisor would be amended to 17-21;
6. New job descriptions would be drawn up for each post, which would be ratified by the Finance Committee.

Cllr. Hickmore also proposed that an ex gratia payment be made to Ms. Owers in recognition of her hard work over the past 9 months during the Park Superintendent's illness.

It was proposed, seconded and CARRIED that the above recommendations be approved. The Clerk tabled her suggested wording for the advertisement for the Leisure Services Assistant. Some amendments were made, and following these amendments the advertisement was APPROVED for publication.

The Working Party's recommendations for the relocation of the F.C. & T.I.C. to the Corn Exchange were considered, together with an estimate for the cost of alterations required in the sum of £2,500. Cllr. Hickmore proposed that the Working Party's recommendations be accepted, and that the sum of up to £4,000 be released from reserves to fund the relocation. This was seconded and CARRIED.

The Clerk raised her concerns about the conduct of the bar franchisees, and asked that the Venues Committee address the problem. It was AGREED that this should be discussed further by the Staffing Structure Working Party in the first instance.