

## TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2013 at 7.00 pm in the Council Committee Room, 4 York Road, Torpoint.

PRESENT: - Councillor B Hobbs (Chairman), M N Pearn (Town Mayor) Councillors J F Creek, Miss J L Kinsman and Mrs C I A Trueman plus the Town Clerk.

### **40-13FGP Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors M J Crago, P Edwards and Mrs R A Southworth.

### **41-13FGP Declarations of Interest relating to items on the Agenda**

Non pecuniary interests were declared by:-

Town Mayor (Councillor M N Pearn MBE) – Agenda item 8(b) (Torpoint Archives) – as a member of the Committee.

Councillor J F Creek – Agenda item 8(b) (Torpoint Archives) – as being related to a member of the Committee.

### **42-13FGP Minutes of the previous meeting**

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

### **43-13FGP Matters arising from the minutes**

a) Use of the Annex:-

Pursuant to minute 30-13FGP (a) the Clerk reported receipt of a letter from the Town Mayor enclosing a copy of the original letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> January 2013 requesting that the Town Council re-consider the Torpoint Archives use of the currently vacant Annexe. The Clerk reported that he had had no further contact with the party that had previously indicated an interest in renting the Annexe. Following a brief discussion it was **recommended** that the letter is referred to Council for further consideration and discussion.

b) Town Clock:-

Pursuant to minute 30-13FGP (b) the Clerk reported receipt of a letter from the St James PCC on proposals to involve the retired engineer in the annual maintenance arrangements on the clock. The letter enclosed the relevant extract from the management agreement confirming that this Council would enter into a contract with a recognised organisation in this field and considered that a local arrangement was departing from the agreement and whilst raising no objection to discussing the proposals concerns were raised at any health and safety implications. The Chairman observed that the recognised organisation had failed to rectify the problem with the clock and that the retired local engineer had resolved the problem. It is **recommended** that the Clerk pursue this matter further with both the retired engineer and also the PCC to resolve this matter.

c) To consider the Council Risk management Plan:-

Pursuant to minute 32-13FGP the Clerk updated members on the toilets. It was confirmed that the steel gates had now been fitted and that the town Administrator is arranging a date to sign off the snagging work including pursuing Cornwall Council to fit the disabled door handle. The Clerk has also requested Cornwall Council resolve the issue with the tree roots in the drains as a matter of urgency.

### **44-13FGP To Consider Policies Delegated to this Committee**

a) Audio Recording Policy:-

The Committee considered the budget monitoring policy (as circulated) following which it is **recommended** that the Council adopt the policy. The Chairman spoke on the benefits of having this policy should a controversial

matter be raised the use of the equipment in the presence of the Town Administrator could be of benefit. The Clerk reminded members that the current system and widely used in councils of hand written minute taking was perfectly adequate in the vast majority of situations and whilst the audio recording method had some benefits preferred the current system.

#### **45-13FGP To consider the Council Risk Management Plan**

The Committee considered the Council financial systems and noted the close involvement and monitoring of the systems by the Internal Audit Working party. The Council had two important documents that were considered during the year and these were the Council Risk Management Plan that included all aspects of Council activity including finances and the Financial Risk Management Plan that concentrated on the financial aspects. The internal audit working Party meets to discuss the current procedures and controls and makes any recommendations to Council that would improve them. The Clerk drew attention to the transparency with Council finances with all expenditure being presented for approval and the monthly financial comparison that demonstrated the current revenue expenditure against budget. The Internal Auditor underpinned the Internal Audit Working party by confirming that the systems had been implemented and that the External Auditor (currently Grant Thornton LLB – previously the Audit Commission) confirmed the whole process and signed off the accounts. The Clerk confirmed that the Council insisted that Internal Auditor has always had to have a recognised accounting qualification (minimum of AAT) and the firm of Tamar Accounting had been used for some years. The Committee confirmed the quality controls in place. The Clerk then referred to a quotation from an accounting software package that would introduce accruals into the financial comparison. The quotation amounted to £1,654 to introduce accruals although the Clerk understands from the Town Administrator that the organisation were suitably impressed with the current financial systems in place at the council and did not think the system on offer “would improve” the current system. It was therefore **recommended** that the Council proceed with the current system with the Town Administrator taking on the financial function with the possibility of introducing an accrual column from principally the purchase ledger into the financial comparison.

#### **46-13FGP Items referred to this Committee**

None.

#### **47-13FGP Correspondence**

a) David Forsyth – Street Naming.

Noted. It was confirmed that the author was suggesting the Town Council might consider naming a street or road after Captain James Lind RN who was closely involved with the discovery and cause of scurvy. The Town Mayor noted that the connection with the area was by way of the Edgecumbe family with no direct links to Torpoint. It was therefore **recommended** that the letter is forwarded to Maker with Rame parish council for their consideration.

b) J Jackson – Tennis Courts, Thanckes Park.

Noted. The Town Mayor reported in his capacity as a Cornwall Councillor that officers from the principal authority were investigating and pursuing this matter. The Mayor reported that the surface was suitable for casual play but not for matches and that he was trying to obtain tennis nets to facilitate casual play.

#### **48-13FGP Planning Applications**

None

#### **49-13FGP Accounts for payment**

The Committee approved the accounts for payment for August 2013 and these are attached to this paper.

Other payments:-

PAYEE	REASON	GROSS	(VAT)	NETT
BUNZL	Toilet Cleaning Materials	28.07	4.68	23.39
Clifford Motors (C Bence)	Petrol Lawn Mower	7.53	1.25	6.28
BNP Parabas	Photocopier (Quarterly)	486.72	81.12	405.60
Nisbets	Buffalo Water Boiler	95.98	15.99	79.99
BUNZL	Toilet Cleaning Materials	58.49	9.75	48.74
Don Benson	Clock Winding	28.00	0.00	28.00
JD Studio (M N Pearn)	Repairs to Mayoral Chain	40.00	0.00	40.00

The Clerk sought a response from members on the treatment of Millennium coins and Making of a Cornish Town books that were in the Council possession. Following discussion it is **recommended** that Millennium coins are granted to the Torpoint Town Partnerships to be used in pursuance of projects in the town. It was further recommended that the Making of a Cornish Town books are noted and an effort is made to clear them at the Gorsedh event next year. It is understood that copies have been donated and the Mayor reported a small stock at Mount Edgecombe Country Park. It was suggested that an arrangement is made with the Torpoint Town Partnership that some of the proceeds of sales made by this organisation are retained by them.

**50-13FGP Date of next meeting**

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

**51-13FGP Any business that has been disclosed to the Chairman and members prior to the meeting.**

None.

Meeting closed at 7.40 pm .....Chairman