

HAWARDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the MEETING of the STAFF AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 10 NOVEMBER 2014

PRESENT: Chair: Councillor David Hough
Vice-Chair: Councillor Alison Halford

Councillors: As per Council Meeting plus Councillor Helen Brown

Officers: Mr R N Barnes, Clerk & Financial Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

There were none

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

There were none

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 October 2014, be received as a true record and that they be signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

Street Cleaning/Blocked Gullies

The Area Highway Supervisor would be attending the Committee's December meeting.

L'Arche Cornerstone Appeal

Arrangements for the Chair's Charity Race Night on 7 February were in hand. Councillors Brian Williams and Ralph Small were asked to liaise with the Clerk concerning the arrangements.

Highway Traffic Safety Issues in Hawarden

Local organisation and individuals had been asked to provide their views on this matter by 21 November.

TRANSFER OF COMMUNITY ASSETS:

The Chair welcomed Ian Bancroft, Chief Officer for Organisational Change to the meeting.

Mr Bancroft thanked the Council for inviting him to the meeting and for responding so quickly to this issue. He said that Flintshire County Council was keen to have dialogue with Community and Town Councils and the voluntary sector to explore alternative service delivery models for the assets listed, all of which were at risk over the next five years. This was in the light of Flintshire County Council having to find savings of £50m. He said that there was no one prescriptive management model and that the assets could be run as co-operatives/social enterprises etc.

Mr Bancroft said that Flintshire County Council was currently inviting interested parties to complete Expression of Interest forms in relation to assets which had been identified as being available for transfer. On receipt of the forms Flintshire County Council will respond with facts and figures relating to the identified asset(s). Following on from that the next stage would be to agree a Business model to manage the asset. The final stage would see the completion of a legal agreement. It was anticipated that the process would take twelve months to complete.

Councillor Clive Carver questioned what interest there had been so far across Flintshire and referred to the huge effect on Councils' precepts if they were to take assets such as libraries and cemeteries.

Councillor Dave Mackie expressed concern that the Guidance notes suggested that interested parties were being recommended to engage professional assistance for which there was no budget and to encourage voluntary assistance, which was extremely difficult to do.

Councillor Brian Williams sought clarification on what any Service Level Agreement would require the Council to commit to. For instance would it be necessary for a Library to continue as at present or could its opening hours be reduced.

Councillor Emma Preece commented on the Charter Agreement between the County Council and Town and Community Councils which required funding to be transferred with services and expressed concern about double rating.

Ian Bancroft said that he understood the concerns raised by Members and that there would be greater clarity when and if further discussion ensued following submission of Expression of Interest forms. At that stage facts and figures would be made available and meaningful discussion about the management arrangements and funding requirements could take place. He emphasised that the Council would not be committing itself by completing Expression of Interest forms for any of the listed assets but this would enable informed discussion about the future of these 'at risk assets'.

The Chair thanked Mr Bancroft for his attendance.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to submit Expression of Interest forms in respect of the transfer of the following community assets:-

Mancot Youth Centre
Mancot Library
Mancot Bowling Club
Hawarden Library

Wilde Close Play Area, Hawarden
Level Road Play Area, Hawarden
Carline's Park Play Area, Ewloe

POLICE MATTERS:

The Chair thanked PC Martin Price for attending the meeting.

Councillor Hardcastle referred to a distraction burglary which had taken place recently in Hawarden. The incident had stemmed from a visit by a cold caller to the property. PC Price said that such incidents had decreased recently due to a number of arrests which had taken place.

The Clerk gave details of the theft of lead valued in the region of £800 from the bus shelter adjacent to the Glynne Arms, Hawarden. He said that the theft had been reported to the Police Incident Room. PC Price noted this incident, which was not in his area but in Flintshire South and in response to a question concerning the monitoring of scrap yards outlined the checking procedures which the Police now undertook and the stricter rules by which the scrap yards were governed.

PC Price said that he would request an Officer from South Flintshire to attend the Council's December meeting.

COUNTY FORUM:

IT WAS RESOLVED: to note receipt of the minutes of the County Forum meeting held on 16 October 2014, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda.

SPEED LIMITS ON TRUNK ROADS:

The Clerk informed the Committee that the Council had been invited to submit its views to the Welsh Government on speed limits on Trunk Road in its area by 27 November, for consideration by the Review Team in December and the publishing of a report in January 2015. This matter had been considered by the neighbouring Buckley Town Council which 'shared' part of the A494T in Ewloe/Alltami. Buckley Town Council was requesting the imposition of a 40mph limit.

Members concurred with Buckley Town Council's submission noting the unsuitability of the present 60mph limit. Councillor Alison Halford proposed that the Welsh Government also be advised of the need to reduce the speed limit on the A55 to the rear of St David's Park, which, because of construction problems, was extremely noisy.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to

(a) seek a reduction of the A494T in the non dual carriageway section in Ewloe/Alltami to 40mph.

(b) seek the reduction of the speed limit on the A55 to the rear of St David's Park, Ewloe.

CLERK'S REPORT:

The Clerk reported on the following:

- Preparations for the Winter

Flintshire County Council had a stock of salt bins which could be made available to Town and Community Councils for £135 each plus £60 for a refill.

The Clerk clarified that the Council had a small supply of salt left over from the previous Winter, should it be required.

- Flintshire Standards Committee Annual Report

This was available for perusal

MEMBERS' INFORMATION ITEMS:

Councillor Kevin Jones commented on further road works being undertaken in Wood Lane and questioned whether the speed humps were being reinstated. Councillor Mackie said that he believed that they were but he was aware of a small amount of local opposition to their reinstatement. The Clerk undertook to ascertain the Highways Authority's intention.