

MINUTES of the POLICY COMMITTEE of ST JUST-IN-PENWITH TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, 1 Chapel Street, St Just on Wednesday 10 June 2009 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor M Nicholls - Mayor
Councillor M Thomas – Deputy Mayor

COUNCILLORS

Ms P S Angove
B F Angwin

D Stevens

TOWN CLERK

Elaine Baker

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None received.

PC.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

PC.2 REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Committee considered a review of the existing committee structure to better reflect the operation of the Town Council. A copy of a note from Councillor James which set out a number of suggestions for improvements to the present structure was circulated to all members of the Committee with the agenda.

All members of the Committee agreed that amendments to the current structure were required, particularly full Town Council meetings. It was proposed that the Planning Committee be replaced with a full Town Council meeting which would enable there to be more balanced agendas. Two meetings would be held a month which would allow greater flexibility for dealing with Council business. Councillors also agreed that the Annual Town Council Meeting should be combined with the Annual General Meeting which it was hoped would stimulate greater public interest in the work of the Town Council.

Councillors agreed felt that finance matters should continue to be handled by the full Town Council, but that the Internal Audit Committee should be scheduled to meet on a quarterly basis so that effective scrutiny of the Council's financial procedures could be undertaken.

With regard to the Footpath Committee members of the Committee agreed that there was little benefit in continuing with a separate committee and suggested that the Tourism Committee's terms of reference be expanded to include footpaths and that it be renamed the Environment & Tourism Committee. This committee would also take on responsibility for the editorial work in connection with the "Just a Word" publication.

The Committee also agreed that it was important that a Staffing and Premises Committee be formed to deal with such issues. No change was proposed for the Policy Committee.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that if these changes were endorsed by the Town Council consequential amendments would need to be made to the existing standing orders. It was also proposed that the name of the Standing Orders Committee be renamed to the Constitutional Review Committee as this better reflected the nature of the committee's work.

Following detailed discussion of the issues, it was

RECOMMENDED:- that

- (a) Two full meetings of the Town Council be held on 2nd and 4th Monday's of each month commencing at 7.15 p.m, (one replacing the Planning Committee).
- (b) With effect from 2010 the Annual Town Meeting be incorporated into the Annual Meeting of the Town Council;
- (c) Four meetings of the Internal Audit Committee be timetable in each municipal year to ensure effective scrutiny of the Town Council's financial procedures and processes;
- (d) A new Staffing & Premises Committee be constituted;
- (e) The Tourism Committee be renamed the Environment & Tourism Committee to include responsibility for footpaths and production of Just a Word;
- (f) The Footpath Committee and Working Party be disbanded;
- (g) The Standing Orders Committee renamed the Constitutional Review Committee;
- (h) Following Town Council endorsement of the recommendations a meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party be held to make recommendations to the Town Council on the terms of reference and constitution of the new committees and to recommend consequential amendments to the Standing Orders;
- (i) That an extraordinary Annual General Meeting of the Town Council be held to formally adopt the new committee structure and to make appointments to the new committees; and
- (j) A new timetable of meetings is produced based to reflect the proposed new timetable for the remainder of this municipal year.

(Action by : Elaine Baker)

PC.3 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - that in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the identified paragraphs of Part I, Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

PC.4 TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The Committee considered the opening hours of the Town Council offices in the light of recent staffing changes.

The Committee felt that public access to the offices should be maintained and recommended the Town Council to approve the following opening hours as far as practicable with effect from 1 July 2009.

RECOMMENDED : That the Town Council approves the office opening hours as set out below

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 08.00 – 16.00 hours and Wednesday 09.00 – 14.00 hours.

(Action by : Elaine Baker)

Meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

Town Mayor