

Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting

**Tuesday 18th September 2001 at 7.00 p.m.
at Bevan House, Camps Road, Haverhill**

PRESENT: Vice-Chair: Cllr. Gerry Kiernan
Town Councillors: E Bowman, E Goody, L Hancock, Mrs Martin
and A Smith

MINUTES

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Maggie Lee and Millar.

2. Minutes

Cllr Goody proposed and Cllr Mrs Martin seconded that the Minutes of Meeting held 24th July 2001 (previously adopted at Full Council on 31st July 2001), be approved as a true record, all being in favour.

3. Matters arising

a) Hanchett End Surgery

The Clerk reported that no further correspondence had been received regarding the provision of a new Surgery at Hanchett End and that whilst the recruitment difficulties at the Clements Surgery continued it was unlikely that any further plans for Hanchett End would be received.

b) Wednesdays for Women Group

The Clerk reported that a report was being prepared for St Edmundsbury Borough Council recommending that the existing level of funding for the Wednesdays for Women Group be continued, and that additional funding be provided to continue the employment of a fitness instructor. This report would go to Committee in October and, in view of the Group's success, and satisfying the Borough Council's key strategies, it was hoped that Borough Members would agree the Officer's recommendations.

4. Correspondence

a) Suffolk County Council – Nomination of Additional Co-opted Governor Representing Minor Authority – Burton End Community Primary School

The Clerk reported that the term of office for the existing Additional Co-opted Governor representing Minor Authorities at Burton End Community Primary School had come to an end. The Committee agreed that, subject to the agreement of Mrs Orriss, she be renominated to serve for a further period.

b) West Suffolk Borders Primary Care Group – Voluntary Services Directory

The Clerk circulated copies of the Voluntary Services Directory, which had been published by the Primary Care Group, and had been compiled (for the Haverhill and surrounding areas) by the Haverhill Association of Voluntary Organisations. The Clerk advised the Committee that he had complained to HAVO regarding the paucity of information included in the Directory in respect of known Haverhill organisations.

c) Suffolk Health Authority – Suffolk Health Improvement Programme

The receipt of the Suffolk Health Improvement Action Plan was noted. The Clerk reported that he had written to the Chair of the Sub-Committee responsible for reviewing access to facilities by public transport drawing their attention to the lack of a direct service to West Suffolk Hospital, even though County Council subsidised services to/from Haverhill passed the road leading to the hospital.

d) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Temporary Orders, Queen Street

The Committee noted the continuation of the order permitting temporary two-way traffic in Queen Street. It was agreed to monitor the situation and review it by June 2002.

e) West Suffolk Borders Primary Care Group – Clements Surgery

The Clerk reported that he had written to Dr Cornish in his role as Chairman of the West Suffolk Borders Primary Care Group suggesting that Dr Cornish was best placed to hold a meeting at which all those with a potential or actual interest in investing in or supporting the Surgery might be invited in order to assist the Surgery to develop, but had not received a formal response to that suggestion. The Clerk added that he had subsequently supplied information to Dr Platt regarding the possibility of the Surgery being eligible for a Community Services Grant should any future expansion incorporate “additional” services. Cllr Mrs Martin indicated that she was extremely concerned regarding the continuity of patient care for patients registered with the Surgery.

f) Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – Air Quality Strategy

The Clerk reported that a consultation document had been published, inviting comments on the suggestions that the current air quality standards be tightened, and additional measures introduced. The Clerk indicated that he would write asking that measures to control multiple emissions be included. Cllr Kiernan declared an interest as an employee of a company with an Environment Agency licence to discharge emissions.

g) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Cleales Site

The Clerk reported that when the Borough Council had acquired the Cleales site it had not gained full access rights over the access road, and that subsequent negotiations to acquire these rights had been protracted. The Borough Council had therefore decided to proceed with that part of the scheme to demolish the existing buildings and create

additional car parking, with access off the existing car park. The original scheme to create a proper access road with opportunity to extend to Quakers Lane (and beyond) would still be pursued. Cllr Goody enquired regarding the retention of the tree band separating the Cleales site from the car park and the Clerk stated that he would investigate.

h) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Modernisation of Committee Structures

The Clerk reported that the Borough Council was required to establish a Standards Committee responsible for implement and monitoring the New Ethical Framework for all elected Members. The Borough Council was consulting on the Parish/Town Council membership of the Committee. The Committee considered the options and instructed the Clerk to respond accordingly.

i) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Social Impact Study

The Clerk advised that the Consultants appointed by St Edmundsbury Borough Council had held public meetings to report back their findings and recommendations, and that the Town Council had been promised a full copy of the report which he would circulate to all Members.

5. Establishment of Licensing Committee

The Clerk reported that it was necessary to establish a small separate Committee to deal with those contentious licensing applications referred for consideration to the Town Council by the Borough Council. Members of the Committee, which would only meet as required, could not be members of the Planning Committee, and, in the long term, should not be members of the Leisure and Environment Committee either. The Committee agreed that the Committee size should be four, with a quorum of three, and that the membership should initially be drawn from Cllrs Gerry Kiernan, Dunning, Millar, Smith and Trewartha, subject to the agreement of the individual members concerned.

6. Authorisation of payments

Cllr Goody proposed and Cllr Hancock seconded that the payments shown on the lists detailed below were approved for payment, all being in favour.

List Date	Item Numbers	Cheque Numbers	Total Value for List
07.08.01	1-19	3522-3540	£6,506.75
14.08.01	1-19	3601-3619	£9,766.19
21.08.01	1-11	3620-3630	£4,621.98
02.09.01	1-13	3631-3643	£4,954.91
18.09.01	1-7	3644-3650	£6,522.20
18.09.01	1-8	3651-3658	£8,070.46

7. Matters of report

Cllr Bowman advised that the Citizens Advice Bureau had enquired whether the Town Council would be interested in working together to produce a Lottery Bid to fund the creation of a unit capable of housing the Citizens Advice Bureau, and others, on the vacant plot adjacent to the Arts Centre. It was agreed that the Town Council would like to be involved in the initial feasibility studies.

Cllr Bowman asked if enquiries could be made as to whether the number of Housing Benefit fraud allegations leading to the commencement of prosecution had increased this year, as it had come to his attention that the Borough Council was being financially rewarded for being active in this area. Cllr Kiernan advised that he would obtain the information and report back to Cllr Bowman.

8. Closure

The meeting was closed at 8.28 p.m.