

FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

REPORT (minutes) of the meeting of the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee, held at the Fleur de Lys Council Chambers, Market Square, Hailsham on Monday 18th January 2010 at 7.30 p.m.

Prior to commencement of formal business, a period of not more than 15 minutes was assigned for the purpose of permitting members of the public to address the Committee or ask questions (on matters relevant to the responsibilities under direction of this committee) at the discretion of the presiding Chairman.

FPR/09/
3x/228 **Present:** Councillors J.E. Bentley-Astor (Vice Chairman), J. L. Blake, B.F. Burchmore, W. F. Crittenden, J.N. Ellwood (Chairman), J. H. Garvican, J. Glover, I.G. Haffenden, Mrs. B. Holbrook, J. Puttick and G.G. Rowe.

229 **Officers in Attendance**

Mrs E.G. Jones (Town Clerk), M. Caira (Deputy Town Clerk), R.A. Diplock (Responsible Finance Officer) and D. Saxby (Administrative Officer).

230 **Apologies For Absence** were received from Councillor N. S. Coltman.

231 **Declarations of Interest** – None declared.

Planning for Adverse Weather Conditions

232.1 **Co-operation Agreement with East Sussex County Council**

The Committee Chairman expressed concern that during the recent severe weather conditions there was insufficient salt/grit available to enable the town and district councils to assist in snow clearance of footways, footpaths and some minor roads. He proposed that the Town Council open discussions with ESCC to explore the possibility of there being a storage facility for a small quantity of salt in Hailsham that, with agreement, could be accessed by council staff to carry out clearance operations in agreed areas of the parish.

232.2 **Supply of Salt/Grit Bins**

The Committee Chairman reported that he, along with other members, had been approached by members of the public in respect of gritting of footpaths and roadways during the recent snowy and icy conditions. He explained that the County Council would only supply to recognised bodies such as parish, town or district councils. Members considered that it would not be financially feasible for the Town Council to supply at no charges grit bins on request but considered that if residents wished to either singularly or in neighbourhoods fund the purchase the Town Council could agree the location and apply for a licence. The current cost is £273 including the first fill of grit. A refill is £70.

Discussion ensued.

232.3 **RESOLVED** to recommend

a) to open discussions with East Sussex County Council in respect of a co-operation agreement, and

b) to agree in principle to facilitate provision of salt/grit bins to neighbourhoods or individual residents where they agree to meet the cost.

Hailsham and Hellingly Masterplan

- 233 The Town Clerk reported that the Department of Communities and Local Government and Defra have a new £1m competition fund for masterplanning the sustainable growth of Rural communities. It is aimed at assisting local planning authorities to prepare sustainable masterplans for community extensions to rural market towns and villages at risk from unsympathetic development and homogenous housing estates. Wealden District Council has made a bid to the Rural Masterplanning Fund to help with the next stage of masterplanning for the Hailsham/Hellingly and Uckfield Masterplans.

Precept 2009 – 2010

- 234.1 A summary of proposed budget adjustments was circulated with the Agenda. The summary included items in respect of the Environment and Leisure, Burials and Properties and Finance Policy and Resources Committees.
- A precept analysis for the financial year 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 is appended as Appendix FPR/09/3/234A to these minutes.
- 234.2 Councillor J. Blake proposed that instead of submitting a precept with an increase of 0.10% and amount be drawn from reserves to set a 0% precept. The motion was seconded and carried on voting.
- 234.3 **RESOLVED** to recommend that a precept of £818,660 be requested of Wealden District Council and that the Council tax for a Band D property will be £115.51, which is 1p lower than last year.

Confidential Business

- 235 **RESOLVED** that due to the special and confidential nature of the matters to be discussed, and possible disclosure of commercially sensitive information not in the public interest at the present time, the following items of business be transacted following exclusion of members of the public and press, in accordance with the Council's Standing Order number 5.

- 236 **POS Diplocks Way**

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.31 p.m.

CHAIRMAN