

The Properties Committee recommended acceptance of the draft fees for the cemetery charges for 2010/2011, increased in accordance with Council policy by 5%. Cllr A Johnson asked if there were any other figures to compare Tavistock Town Council's Cemetery charges with other authorities. It was agreed that appropriate comparison costings would be sought and submitted at the next Properties Meeting.

539. MINUTES OF THE STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st January 2010. In accordance with Minute 446d draft job descriptions of the Market Reeve, Town Hall Manager and Assistant Facilities Manager were tabled. Concerning minute 446. d. *'It was hoped that in due time full council might wish to discuss the viability of a Town Centre Manager, and how it could fit in with the Town Council, and perhaps review the matter in no more than 6 months.'*, Cllr Govier asked for clarification of this sentence. Cllr B Trew explained that the minute related to continuing with the perceived status quo of the current manning of the Town Hall and Pannier Market by adopting the management structure of option 3. This option, allowed for a review, in 6 months time by the Staffing Sub-Committee. This review would address the feasibility of having a Town Centre Manager. Cllr D Whitcomb confirmed this to be his understanding, explaining the concept of the potential modernisation of the management of the town, especially with Tavistock Town Council's recognised commercial arm. It was stated that the strategic objectives working party could consider the feasibility of the Town Centre Manager role.

540. ASSISTANT TO TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

Members noted the report. The proposed expenditure on the Town Council's website was discussed at length. After much debate it was agreed that the Assistant to the Town Clerk would investigate potential new service providers with accurate costings in relation to the service level agreement. Finance and General Purposes Committee, on receipt of all the collated data, would agree the appropriate way forward for the enhancement of the website.

541. MINUTES OF THE TaVi DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Members noted the minutes of meeting held on the 21st January 2010. Members felt it may be ill advised to provide any more financial support. Concerns were raised reference the reduction in the organisations funding provision and the resignation of various Members. Clarification is to be sought as to when the last TaVi AGM was held.

542. MINUTES OF THE TAVISTOCK PARKING FOCUS GROUP

Members noted the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th January 2010. Reference Item 5, in relation to alterations to the roundabout at the bottom of Drake Road. Clarification with regards to the concept was needed, to understand the anticipated route. Officers were instructed to contact DCC, Brian George, to seek clarification of the potential works and the anticipated route and drop off points for the coaches. The issue of taxis using the bus station car park without purchasing tickets and using disabled spaces were discussed. Reference the police use of Guildhall car park, members commented that marked and un-marked police cars were using the public car

parking bays for long periods when they had already been allocated free parking spaces. Officers were instructed to send a letter to the police about this matter.

543. MINUTES OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Members noted the minutes of the meeting held on the 8th February 2010.

544. MINUTES OF THE DAPC LARGER COUNCILS SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted the minutes of the meetings held on the 18th February 2010

545. GENERAL FINANCE

a. Accounts Members considered the monthly accounts for submission to the next Council Meeting, a copy of which is at Annex A. It was **RECOMMENDED** that they be passed for payment. The costs of repairs to the Church Clock were discussed with the on-going problems with maintenance considered. It was agreed that the process for maintenance of the clock be reviewed, to report back at next Properties Meeting.

b. Outturn. Members noted the phased budget reporting system print to 28th February 2009.

c. Grants. Members considered an application from the DCC Devon Games to inspire group for a grant towards their activities. It was noted we had £1,000 left in the grants budget for this financial year. Cllr P Sanders and Cllr Mrs M Govier declared a personal interest in the matter. Councillors debated the grant application at length. A Recommendation of a grant of £1000 was tabled, with 5 for and 4 against the recommendation. The above would be debated further at Full Council.

546. TOWN CRIER

Minute 493 referred. Council referred back to this committee the discussion of what financial arrangements should be made for any new Town Crier. In particular the cost of the uniform (allow £1,700) and annual expenses (currently £250 a year) needed a recommendation. The Lions Club had informed us that they did not wish to contribute any money towards a Town Crier's uniform. We were informed the Round Table and Rotary think the same; therefore it appeared the Town Council were on their own in funding this project. Under these circumstances Members were asked if they still wanted the Lions Club to continue with the competition? The Chairman had asked for a 'lifetime' costing for this post. This would appear to be:

<u>Year 1.</u>	Uniform	1,700	
	Expenses	250	
	Competition	200	
	Officer time	250	£2,400
<u>Year 2 and on</u>	Expenses	250	
	Officer time	50	£ 300

Over 10 years cost to Council would be £5,100.

The above was noted, Cllr D Whitcomb stating that the figures showed good value for money. Cllr A Tossell felt that a Town like Tavistock must have a Town Crier. Members Recommended *nem com* to implement the above proceedings.

547. CORE STRATEGY AND VOTING

a. Cllr Harper wished the following matter to be fully discussed and a course of action voted upon. At copy of the Standards Board guidance with reference to ‘Dual-Hatters’ and voting at different local authorities was tabled. The Code of Conduct guidance stated that

"... at district level, declare a personal (but not prejudicial) interest arising from your membership of the parish council which has already expressed a view on the matter, and make it clear that the parish council's view does not bind you and that you are considering the matter afresh."

It was Cllr Harpers contention that the WDBC vote on the Core Strategy is invalid as no ‘Dual-Hatted’ councillors declared their interests before voting began. This being the case then the vote should be taken again with all councillors following the Standards Board guidelines.

After Cllr Harper’s statement, Members debated the topic at length. Discussions reference declaring registered interests were undertaken and whether a personal or prejudicial interest should be declared at the start of the meeting. Cllr M Harper proposed, seconded by Cllr D Whitcomb, that Tavistock Town Council should publicly write to WDBC, stating that it was their belief that the voting by WDBC Councillors on the core strategy should be nil and void due to a breach of the code of conduct. It was agreed that a recorded vote be undertaken on this proposal. The Recommendation was carried with Cllr Smith, Cllr Tossell, Cllr Whitcomb, Cllr Mrs A Johnson, Cllr I Jennings and Cllr M Harper **FOR**, and Cllr Mrs M Govier, Cllr Mrs J Metcalf and Cllr P Sanders **ABSTAINING**.

b. The guidance also stated that although "...there is no objection, in principle" on voting on proposals that have a direct impact on a particular location, and gives the example of the District Councils Development Plan, "...you must still consider if you have a prejudicial interest arising from the impact of the proposals on your well-being or financial position." With the Town Council already voting unanimously against the Core Strategy based upon its effect on the well-being of Tavistock as a whole. It was Cllr Harper's opinion that this does give rise to prejudicial interests for the Tavistock Town Council 'Dual-Hatters'

Cllr Mrs M Govier stated that agenda item 14. b. was inaccurate as it stated that the Town Council had voted unanimously against the core strategy, but as a point of information, she had abstained on this vote. The above was again debated at length in respect to Tavistock Town Council 'Dual-Hatters'. Cllr B Trew stated that he believed it would be for the electorate to decide at the next local elections. Cllr P Sanders stated that he had consistently opposed the core strategy as he was against certain sections of the document but felt it was essential to have a strategy in place. Debate on Dual hatters representing their wards interest was undertaken. Cllr M Harper felt that it was a waste of the taxpayer's money to sanction a consultants report on the core strategy, and then for it to be ignored at borough level by dual hatters. It was agreed that the report was of great value, was not ignored and that it was considered carefully by all Members. It was agreed that, currently, there was no way to resolve the matter. Any review of standing orders, would require the above to be considered in detail.

548. HONORARY TITLES

a. Prior to local government reorganisation in 1974 a number of cities and boroughs exercised by charter, custom or by statute powers of appointment of local officers of dignity. Among the honorary appointments so made were those of sheriffs, high stewards, honorary recorders, honorary freemen and honorary aldermen. Where, as a result of local government reorganisation, the area of an existing city or borough became a parish in England or a community in Wales having a separate council, any powers to appoint local officers of dignity became exercisable by the parish or community council (Section 246(3) of the Local Government Act 1972).

b. After local government reorganisation in 1974 a number of local authorities were given the power to admit honorary aldermen and freemen pursuant to section 249 of the 1972 Act. However, that power was not extended to parish councils in England or community councils in Wales. The position was partially rectified by the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 which permitted any parish or community having by grant under the royal prerogative the status of city and any parish or community entitled by such grant to be called and styled a royal town to admit honorary freemen. Prior to 12 January 2010, only 10 local councils had the standing to confer the title of honorary freeman.

c. On 12 January 2010, the 2009 Act amended the above provisions of the 1972 Act to enable all local councils to confer honorary titles. Now all local councils may exercise powers to confer the title of “honorary freeman” or “honorary freewoman” to persons of distinction and those who, in the council’s opinion, have rendered eminent services to the council’s area. The 1972 Act as amended provides that the admission of an honorary freeman or honorary freewoman must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full council specially convened for such purpose and passed by no less than two-thirds of the Members of the council. A local council may spend a reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person on whom it has conferred the title of honorary freeman or honorary freewoman.

d. Prior to the changes in the law set out above, some local councils who wanted to honour local residents who rendered notable service to their town or community or who achieved national fame, conferred the titles “Honorary Citizen” or “Honorary Townsman” or “Honorary Burgess.” Given the express powers given by the 2009 Act to admit “Honorary Freeman” and “Honorary Freewomen” we had been advised that it will no longer be necessary (or even possible) for local councils to confer other titles such as Honoured Burgess.

e. Members noted the above and accepted it as future procedure.

549. STANDING ORDERS

For our General Committee Standing Orders we currently use the NALC model, amended where necessary to cater for legislation changes, and these dating back in parts to May 1968. NALC had just published revised Standing Orders in two parts. The first part concerned law and procedure for local councils and was available only on a book form. The second part deals with the organisation and transaction of Council business, and would replace our Standing Orders Part 1, General Committee Orders. This is available (free) from NALC as a web download, and a copy was tabled for Members perusal. It was suggested that a small Working Party be provided with a suitably amended draft for subsequent recommendation to full Council. Discussions were undertaken reference the submission to Councillors of large documents with the overall consensus that documents which were of a detailed nature should be sent to Councillors at the earliest opportunity to allow them sufficient time to scrutinise them. It was noted that the NALC model Standing Orders also mentioned the dissemination of documents via e-mail.

Recommended: A working party should be appointed at full council consisting of councillors and appropriate officers.

550. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed to consider that the press/public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business.

551. BACKDATED PAY

Cllr Trew wished to raise the matter of making backdated payments under certain circumstances to those employees/ex-employees, in relation to bank holidays not taken as leave, on a pro-rata basis based on contracted hours/hours worked, as per confidential brief at Annex G. This subject was discussed at length and it was agreed to backdate the pay for bank holidays not taken, to April 08. On taking Human Resources advice it is standard practise to rectify the situation from the point of knowledge, Nov/09, or back to the start of that financial year, April 09. Tavistock Town Council **Recommended** unanimously to go above and beyond the professional advice given and review the pay back to April 08. It was decided who should be in receipt of such payments. Refer to Confidential File Note S2 for further details on this matter.

552. DEBTORS

Members noted the list of all those who had a debt to the Council dating from earlier than the last quarter day.

553. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED that the public and press be re-admitted to the Meeting.

554. URGENT BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN.

Rising 9.05 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....