

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE HELD ON 22nd DECEMBER 2010 AT 10.45 a.m.
AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD**

Present: Cllr R Coates
Cllr Mrs P Cole
Cllr J Gaywood
Cllr J Minns
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby
Cllr B Ramsay (Chairman)
Cllr V Sewell

In attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr L Abraham, Cllr C Alford, Cllr A Barnett and Cllr Mrs Burns.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 1st December 2010 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Parish Office lease

It was reported that the Council's solicitor had been advised of the undertaking agreed by Hartley Parish Council at a meeting held on 13th December 2010 that,

"Hartley Parish Council gives an undertaking to meet the legal and professional costs of Kent County Council, up to the previously agreed limits of £1,050 for surveyors fees and £1,500 plus disbursements for legal fees payable whether or not the matter proceeds to completion, on the understanding that should Kent County Council withdraw from the negotiations Hartley Parish Council would not be responsible for meeting those costs".

RESOLVED: That, the report be received and noted.

5. Hartley W.I. Hall

The Committee was advised of an informal meeting held with Mr and Mrs Gooch, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council on 17th December 2010 at which both parties re-confirmed their desire to progress the Transfer of the Hartley W.I. Hall to Hartley Parish Council. Mr Gooch confirmed that the funds remaining in the Charity account would be

handed over to the new Trustees upon completion of the Transfer. Mrs Gooch reported that the Trustees of the Charity intended to give notice to the W.I. membership of the Transfer at their meeting to be held on 5th January 2011 and that the Resolution would be put to the W.I. membership at their meeting on 2nd February 2011. The Council's legal advisor has advised that the Transfer will be complete upon the passing of the Resolution by the Hartley W.I.

The Committee considered an e mail dated 15th December 2010 from solicitors acting on behalf of the Hartley W.I.

RECOMMENDED: That,

- (1) Hartley Parish Council confirms its willingness to take on all repairing obligations and responsibilities in respect of the Hartley W.I. Hall as seen and on the basis of a building inspection undertaken by the Hook Consultancy on behalf of Hartley Parish Council on 29th November 2007, attached as appendix 1 to these minutes;
- (2) the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, be authorised to deal with any matters arising in order to complete the Transfer of the Hartley W.I. Hall to Hartley Parish Council;
- (3) the Hartley W.I be advised that Hartley Parish Council does not require a fire risk assessment to be undertaken or copies provided of a fire safety policy, as this matter will be taken up by Hartley Parish Council following completion of the Transfer;
- (4) the Hartley W.I. be advised that Hartley Parish Council does not require information concerning any Building Regulations passed in respect of the works to the toilet and the kitchen in the W.I. Hall

RESOLVED: That, a working group consisting of Cllrs Gaywood, Mrs Oxtoby and Ramsay be established to investigate and report back its findings to the Council on any action required to be taken by the Council before the completion of the Transfer and to investigate and make recommendations to the Council on the future arrangements for the management of the Hall.

6. Order of business

RESOLVED: That, pursuant to Standing Order 5 (a) (vi) the order of business be altered so that agenda item 12 Hartley Youth Club be taken as the next item of business.

7. Hartley Youth Club

The Committee received a report on the two meetings of the Hartley Youth Club on 24th November 2010 and 8th December 2010 in the Hartley W.I. Hall. Twelve young people had attended on 24th November and fifteen young people had attended on 8th December. The Committee was advised that there had been some behavioural issues at the meeting on 8th December 2010, but the Youth Worker would be putting in place strategies to deal

with these issues. At the last meeting of the HAWK Youth Partnership the Youth Worker had reported on difficulties regarding access to part-time staff to support the Project, but he confirmed a number of new part-time staff had been appointed and that they should be taking up their positions in the New Year.

The Committee was informed that the Hartley Youth Club was likely to be cancelled tonight due to the snow and ice.

The Committee was advised that the Hartley District and Social Club had thanked the Council for its article in the December edition of the Hartley Herald. The Committee was informed that the Longfield and Hartley Scout Group was donating a table tennis table and air football table to the Hartley Youth Club.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted and a vote of thanks be recorded to Cllr Sewell for his work to establish the Hartley Youth Club.

Cllr Sewell left the meeting at 11.30 a.m.

8. New Burial Ground

There was nothing to report.

9. Review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit

The Committee was advised that Cllrs Abraham, Mrs Oxtoby and Ramsay would be meeting in the New Year to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

10. Longfield Sorting Office

The Committee considered correspondence from the Royal Mail and the Department for Business Innovation & Skills in respect of the proposed closure of Longfield Sorting Office. Assurances had been given that Royal Mail was committed to continuing to provide efficient deliveries six days a week and to provide convenient facilities for customers wishing to collect undelivered mail in Longfield.

RESOLVED: That, the letters dated 2nd December 2010 from the Department for Business Innovation & Skills and 6th December 2010 from Royal Mail in respect of the proposed closure of the sorting office in Longfield be received and noted.

11. Cheque signatories

The Committee was advised of the Government's proposals to allow local councils to make use of the range of modern payment methods now available, should they wish to, which would require changes to legislation, in particular the repeal of the provision contained in the 1972 Local Government Act requiring cheques to be signed by 2 members. To accommodate this amendment in the legislation a consultation was being undertaken on proposed changes to the "Practitioners Guide for Local Councils in England" covering payment arrangements. The Committee felt that no comment should be made at this stage until further guidance and advice had been provided by NALC.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted and no further comment be made at this stage.

12. NHS West Kent

The Committee considered correspondence from the Chief Executive of the West Kent Primary Care Trust outlining actions to be taken to prioritise treatments.

RESOLVED: That, the letter dated 3rd December 2010 from the Chief Executive of the West Kent Primary Care Trust be received and noted.

13. Supply of Salt

The Committee considered an offer from Kent County Council to supply 1 tonne of salt to parish and town councils.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be asked to investigate the cost of storage and distribution of 1 tonne of salt for distribution in the parish as directed by Hartley Parish Council and to report back to the Council these costs in advance of the Council meeting to be held on 10th January 2011.

RECOMMENDED: That, Hartley Parish Council declines the offer from Kent County Council for the supply and delivery of 1 tonne of salt for distribution in the parish.

14. Date of the next meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 12.05 p.m.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee