

## NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Monday 28 November 2011 at the Market House Newent at

Present: Cllr L Lawton (Chairman), Cllr Mrs J Bevan, Cllr E Wood, Cllr D Blick, Cllr R Pilkington, Cllr Mrs M Duncan, Cllr J Celino, Cllr J Clissold

Apologies: -

---

7.00 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's Announcements

7.1 Business

7.1.1 To give consideration to monthly accounts

Cllr Lawton proposed acceptance of the monthly accounts which was unanimously agreed.

7.1.2 Hire Charges – Circus

The Clerk advised that a small Circus had applied to utilise the Recreation Ground next Summer and had enquired about the hire charge. The Clerk advised that on such an occasion last year when another small Circus had applied, the Council agreed to reduce the fee from that charged to the local annual Fair, given their differing circumstances and that a fee had been charged at the time of £350.00. Given the overall 3% increase in hire charges since that time it was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Circus be charged £360.00. The Clerk advised they anticipated being on site for just under one week which included for setting up and dismantling the Circus as well as performances.

7.1.3 To give consideration to use of a Government Procurement Card

Cllr Pilkington proposed consideration be given to the use of a Government Procurement Card. He referred Members to the recent purchase of new Computers for the Council and reminded them that in order to obtain best value, an on-line supplier had been chosen. This had caused difficulties in that a cheque was not acceptable to pay for the goods and that he had done so with his own payment card ensuring that the invoices and all related paperwork was directed to the Council. He also advised that backup software purchased required the use of a card to trigger its use and had ultimately been returned to the store as it could not be used by the Council. Cllr Pilkington advised that this had led him to investigate the possibility of the Council obtaining a Government Procurement Card, the use of which would avoid problems as

recently experienced. He advised that the card was not a credit card, but a charge card which would require payment in full each month. He further advised that he had discovered a Parish Council – Danbury in Essex and similar in size to Newent used such a card and the Clerk had made contact with them who advised the card was used in conjunction with their financial regulations to the satisfaction of the Auditor. Cllr Pilkington went on to add that the cards were available via both local banks in the town and the cost of which would be nil to the Council. The Clerk advised she had spoken with the Council's own Auditors who were to refer to the NALC for their advice.

Cllr Lawton seconded Cllr Pilkington's proposal and it was agreed to investigate the matter more fully with a view to obtaining such a card, subject to confirmation from the Auditors of their approval.

Cllr Lawton took the opportunity to formally thank Cllr Pilkington for his kind assistance in obtaining the new computers on the Council's behalf.

#### 7.1.4 To give consideration to 2012/13 Budget

Cllr Lawton clarified that the wish-list items that Members' had put forward would be discussed at the next meeting of the Council when all Members would have the opportunity of having an input to the budget. He advised that he together with Cllr Mrs Bevan (Deputy Chair) and the Clerk had gone through the budget and proposed a set of draft figures. He proposed that the Committee run through the figures to ascertain if agreement could be reached on the figures put forward. This was duly done and agreement was reached on a reduction in figures as follows:- Christmas lights – reduce by £1000 to £4000, Emergency Planning – reduce to Nil, Tools reduce to £500. Members also considered the budgetary heading for the Citizens Advice Bureau bearing in mind the Bureau's recent letter advising of possible withdrawal of service due to lack of funding, and asked Cllr Beard to look into the possibility of the Bureau using the facility of the Community Centre which would reduce their rental costs of utilising the Library as was the current arrangement.

#### 7.1.5 Any Other Business

There were no items of Any Other Business and the meeting was declared closed at 8.35 pm.