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## WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) held on Monday 27 July 2009 at 6.30 pm

**Public Participation:** The Meeting opened for public participation at 6.30 pm. As there were no members of the public wishing to speak, the meeting commenced at 6.30 pm.

**PRESENT:** The Mayor Cllr Mrs Lawrence; the Deputy Mayor Cllr Sims; Cllr Green in the Chair; and Cllrs Mrs Cox; O'Dell; Oliver; Farmer; Wegg, and Wright.

**In attendance:** Erbie Murat Town Clerk, and Clerk to the meeting; and Cllr Mrs Macrae.

#### 10. Apologies

An apology was received from Cllr Meekins – Holiday

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr O'Dell the above absence was APPROVED.

#### 11. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest

#### 12. Minutes

On a proposal from Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr Sims the minutes of the special meeting of F&GP held on Tuesday 26 May were noted, having been agreed and signed on 29 June 2009 at Town Council.

#### 13. Windows

Members noted that the top sash on the window in the Clerk's office had broken, causing much damage, and needs urgent repair. Members also noted that the estimate on the cost of repairs to the windows would now need to take into account the likelihood that all the windows would need top sashes replacing as a minimum and that to undertake the works would require scaffolding. This would mean a greater cost than originally anticipated and would require setting aside in the region of £5,000, necessitating the use of up to £3,000 from reserves in this financial year, or delaying the works until the next financial year.

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr O'Dell it was AGREED that the Clerk's office window should be repaired as a matter of urgency, and that the Clerk obtains further quotes for members to consider, to carry out full repairs to all the windows along the front of the Council Chamber and offices (being six windows).

#### 14. Banking

On a proposal from Cllr Sims and seconded by Cllr Mrs Cox it was AGREED that the Town council changes its banking to National Westminster bank on the following basis:

##### **Current account**

*Including a cheque book, paying in book and monthly bank statements.*

*It would also include an Automatic transfer system to be set up between the current account and an instant access savings reserve account to keep the current account at nil at the end of each working day.*

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**Instant Access Reserve account** - instant access savings account, no minimum balance, interest at 0.05% gross pa, being a competitive rate in the present climate.

**Bonus Saver account** - designed as instant access, but if there is no more than 1 withdrawal per quarter then the interest rate increases from 0.05% to 1.05% gross p.a.

### 15. Casual Vacancy

The Clerk reported that a Casual Vacancy has occurred, and that Simon King is no longer a member of Wisbech Town Council. Members noted that he is still a member of Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. Appropriate notices have been posted, giving electors until 10 August to call for an election. If no election is called the Town Council may co-opt a member or leave the seat vacant.

### 16. Economic Development

Members noted the following initiatives from FDC to help businesses:

*'A co-branding partnership set up between Jobcentre Plus and Fenland District Council to promote recruitment and training incentives. First promotion advertisement attached.*

*A co-branding partnership set up between EEDA and Fenland District Council to co-brand their Business Support Map ([www.bizmapeast.co.uk](http://www.bizmapeast.co.uk)) The FDC branding will give a more local flavour to business support. Fenland branded map attached. These are currently being printed in A1 size and will be disseminated through business centre and one stop shops. 'Fenland flavour' map attached.*

*A business support flyer that has gone out to every business premises on the Non-domestic Business Rate register. Flyer attached.*

*FDC are also running business, briefings and workshops at the Boathouse, Wisbech in partnership with Business Link East. Topics covered are; Sales & Marketing, Public Sector Tendering, Legislation, IT & E commerce, Starting a Business, Taxation & VAT, Marketing your Business, Accounts & Book-keeping and Communication & Presentation skills to name but a few!*

*They have also now set up a new partnership with Business Link East, NWES, Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce and Fenland District Council to have monthly networking meetings to improve business to business activities and quarterly business breakfasts with topical speakers.*

Finally, Clive Gibbon, FDC's Economic Development Officer is now organising an event looking forward to the up-turn in the economy as 'surviving the recession' topics are now very negative and old hat, all reports reflect a bottoming out of the economic slowdown.'

### 17. Charging Structure

On a proposal from Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr O'Dell members agreed to the first part of the pricing structure as follows, and the Clerk was asked to prepare a detailed pricing structure for private functions, functions requiring staff on site, requiring use of kitchen and where costs will (may) be incurred:

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**During office hours**

*Charities and Voluntary organisations - £10 per hour or part hour.*

*Statutory bodies i.e FDC, CCC, PCT. - £15 per hour or part hour.*

*This is to be for the use of the Chamber. Where the kitchen is to be used to prepare for a function - a one off cost of £10 is to be charged. Tea/coffee is to be charged at 50p per person with the organisers making it themselves.*

*Where the Council makes arrangements for food. This should be bought in as sandwiches, savouries and fruit and charged at £5.00 per person to cover costs.*

*Free use of the Chamber should be given to: WOPWA, Twinning, Youth Council, WisARD, civic events or charitable events for Wisbech Town Council and charitable meetings or events organised by the Mayor of Wisbech.*

**18. Quarterly Accounts**

Members noted that the Government has increased employers pension contributions from 17% to 18.2% which has significantly increased expenditure on pensions (requiring an additional £2,000 in a full year). Members also noted that this will be further increased to 19.3% in the next financial year, and additional budget provision will need to be made.

On a proposal from Cllr O'Dell and seconded by Cllr Mrs Lawrence members AGREED the quarterly budget.

The meeting closed at 7.05 pm

Signed .....

Dated .....