

Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council Finance and Resource Committee held on Wednesday 22nd September 2010 @ 19.30, Parish Room, Doddinghurst Road, Doddinghurst.

Present: Clr. Mrs Dicker (Chairman), Mrs A Richards, G. Smith, G.W. Bateson, A. Farrow

1. **Apologies for absence.** None absent
 2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 21st April 2010.** Approved and signed.
 3. **Update on actions since last meeting.** All actions completed.
 4. **Review of Standing Orders:** It was noted that a new set of standing orders had been issued by NALC in 2010. The document was in two parts. Part 2 had been issued free of charge whilst Part 1 would need to be purchased. Part 2 dealt with the “rules” by which the council operated whilst Part 1 was a “Best Practice” guide on how the Council functioned. The Clerk had tailored Part 2 to suit Doddinghurst Parish Council and it was agreed that these would be circulated for comment before being put to full council. The Clerk was authorised to obtain a copy of the 2010 Part 1 NALC revised standing orders for reference purposes @ £28.
 5. **Review of Financial Regulations.** The existing financial regulations were reviewed and it was agreed that they would be retained unchanged.
 6. **Review of Hours of employment for Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Groundsman and Cleaner.** The conditioned hours and actual working hours of the council employees were reviewed. It was noted that the Clerks’ actual hours exceeded employed hours (21 hours per week) by an average of 43% and that at present the Clerk was not exercising his option of charging this as overtime. It was also noted that there was no practical opportunity to take this time as leave. For the future three potential risks were identified:
 - The current cost of the Clerk could rise by 43% in future years (+ £7000 p.a.).
 - Future legislation may require all staff to be enrolled in a superannuation scheme leading to a 12% to 15% increase in staff costs. (+ £4,000 - £5,000 p.a.).
 - The next Clerk is recruited with inadequate flexibility to meet the full requirement of working hours.
- The Council recognised the issues and the increasing levels of demand being levied on the Clerk.
7. **Information Peartree Field.** The owners had declined an offer made by the Council to purchase the freehold of Peartree recreation field and had said they would review the matter again before 2016.
 8. **Information: External Audit – update on progress and asset register.** The 2009/10 external audit had been returned without major comment. A discussion with the auditor on the asset register had taken place and action to determine ownership of the Bus Shelters was underway. The 2010 “Practitioner’s Guide” now contained a recommended format for Parish Council’s asset registers and the Council would adopt this for 2010/11.
 9. **Other urgent information.** None raised.

The meeting was closed at 22.00

Signed:

Dated: Oct 2010