

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
of Saddleworth Parish Council held at
The Civic Hall, Lee Street, Uppermill on **Monday 27th October 2008**

There were present Cllr. Mrs. A. McInnes - Chairman
Mr K. Begley – Vice Chairman

Mrs. B Beeley	Mr. A. Hodgkiss
Mr. R. Birse	Mr. J. Hudson
Mr. M. Buckley	Mr. K. Hulme
Mr. B. Cullen	Mr. B. Lord
Mr. R. Franklin	Mrs. P. Lord
Mr. D. Heffernan	Mrs. D. Shaw

- 686. Apologies for Absence:** Apologies for Absence: Cllrs, Dr. D. Atherton, Mr. P. Bagley, Mrs M. Bingley, Mr. P Davenport & Mrs. A. Parry
- 687. Declarations of Interest – None**
- 688. Greenfield Library –** Councillor Brian Lord informed the meeting Greenfield Library is not earmarked for closure. Oldham Council is looking for an alternative more suitable building hopefully within a multi-purpose community facility.
- 689. Peak Park –** deferred to next meeting
- 690. Voluntary Weekend –** Overall the event went very well, could have done with more visitors over the weekend although the response was better than expected. The event was publicised in the local press, radio and with posters, flyers and “A” boards. Feedback forms have been circulated to all organisations who participated. The sub-group will meet to review the feedback and report to the December meeting of this committee. The weekend was aimed at groups that do voluntary or charitable work in Saddleworth and not a political event. It would be more appropriate to hold a separate event to explain how political activity works, this may involve fringe parties. Representatives of every political party were involved in the Voluntary groups. It was emphasised that at no stage was a decision taken to refuse to include political parties, the Building was already at capacity when the request was made by Chris Davies MEP.
- 691. Parish Plan –** Over 500 questionnaires have been returned. Due to some delivery problems the return date has been extended to 15th November. The results will be shared with Oldham M.B.C.

- 692. Rights of Way.** – Two more training sessions for volunteers have been held. The project has not moved as fast as hoped, mainly due to the adverse weather. Councillor Franklin has made a good start in Diggle and passed a good amount of feedback to Terence Cavanagh at Oldham M.B.C. Two handheld GPS devices have now been purchased, additional ones may be required when the surveys are being carried out. Need to ensure that paths are not lost or blocked whilst construction work is halted due to the “Credit crunch”. The RoW should still exist with only temporary closures in place for construction work. The project will be ongoing with volunteers walking the paths on a regular basis to ensure that the condition does not deteriorate.
- 693. South Pennine Forum** – Awaiting outcome of the meeting of the South Pennine Branch of the Yorkshire Local Councils Association in November.
- 694. Congestion Charging / Transport** – The Parish Council has submitted a response to the consultation. The proposed modification to the charges and rings are on the AGMA website. The fortunes of Saddleworth are linked to Oldham, potential investment in the centre of Oldham is being held back to see whether the Metrolink will run along Union Street. It is estimated that only 5% of people in Oldham will have to pay the charge.
- 695. Pennine Prospects** – The comments about no Parish Council representative on the Leader project have been passed to the Pennine Prospects Board. The Leader bid has been held up but there should be definite proposals in the next couple of weeks.
- 696. Area Committee** – Councillor Beeley outlined the draft proposals for the Area Committee which would consist of seven representatives of the Parish Council appointed annually, 2 co-opted members from Lees and the Oldham MBC councillors. The aim is to avoid duplication in terms of time, effort and resources and give a framework which will in turn gives Saddleworth and Lees a co-ordinated voice. The bulk of the business will be conducted via Sub-committees comprising Parish, Oldham MBC Councillors and co-optees. The sub-committees will be able to invite co-optees where it is felt that they can bring particular expertise and experience. It is proposed that they will continue to be Parish Council only sub-committees and Area Committee only sub-committees, there will also be a series of joint sub-committees covering areas such as Environment, Highways, Transport & Traffic, Youth, Planning Policy (e.g. LDF) and Sports & Recreation. The Health Group will have representatives from both the Parish Council and Area Committee and will continue to be serviced by the PCT. It was agreed that the proposals would be accepted in principle. The final proposals will be presented to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee.

- 697. Civic Hall Modernisation Phase 2** – The sub-group have had an initial meeting with John Barnes. He is going to draw up two scheme for the re-development of the back of the building by the end of November. This will incorporate a “dumb waiter”, food preparation area and additional toilets on the first floor.
- 698. Chain of Office** – the group are currently looking at proposals for the design of the new chain.
- 699. Fuel Poverty in Rural Areas** – it was agreed that Councillor Franklin will represent the Parish Council at the meeting on 3rd December
- 700. The making and enforcement of byelaws** – It was agreed that a sub-group of Councillor Pat Lord, Alma McInnes, Brian Lord, John Hudson & Keith Begley will prepare a response to the proposals
- 701. Budget Monitoring** – The Clerk submitted a report showing the annual budget, expenditure and income to date and the budget remaining. The report was received and accepted.
- 702. I.T. equipment** – The Clerk advised members that a new laptop computer had been purchased as a replacement for the existing one which was beyond economic repair. The information was received and noted
- 703. Accounts for Payment** - The list of Accounts for Payment was approved by the Committee. The total expenditure being £38,670.67 and income being £90,647.87. There were no payments made in accordance with Section 137 and 139 of the Local Government
- 704. Exclusion of Press and Public** – Members voted for the exclusion of press and public from the meeting for the next item.
- 705. Civic Hall staffing** – The Clerk informed members that Kevin Wrigley had retired on ill health grounds. In consultation with the Chairman it had been agreed that Tom Brierley would be appointed to the post of Caretaker from the 1st November. An Assistant Caretaker working 25 hours per week would be recruited, the post will be advertised in the Oldham Chronicle. The remaining budget will be retained to fund additional hours as and when required during the year.