



Yeovil Town Council

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The Meeting... **Buildings and Civic Matters Committee**

The Time... **7.00pm**

The Date... **Tuesday 19 January 2010**

The Place... **Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil**

If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please ring 01935 382424



Alan Tawse

Alan Tawse
Town Clerk

12 January 2010

Buildings and Civic Matters Committee

Please contact Sarah Hunt at the Town House for more information about this meeting

To: All Members of the Buildings and Civic Matters
Committee

J Vincent Chainey

Philip Chandler (Ex-officio)

John Cruddas

Clive Davis

Bridget Dollard (Chairman)

Tony Fife

Dave Gooding

Pete Goodman

Peter Gubbins

John Hann

Steve Hawker (Vice-Chairman)

Andrew Kendall

Tony Lock

Wes Read (Ex-officio)

A G E N D A

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 minutes)

1. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 November 2009.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**

5. **REQUEST FOR LIGHTING AT BIRCHFIELD PARK**

To consider report by South Somerset District Council's Community Development Officer attached at pages 2 and 5.

6. **BUS SHELTER UPDATE**

To consider an update report from the Assistant Town Clerk at page 6.

7. **LOADING/UNLOADING PROHIBITION IN SOUTH STREET**

To consider a report by the Assistant Town Clerk attached at page 7.

8. **PROMOTIONS AND ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE**

To consider a report from the Town Clerk, attached at pages 8 and 9.

9. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

To receive the Financial Statement for the period 1 October 2009 to 30 November 2009. See attached Financial Statement at pages 10 to 17.

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 minutes)

5. REQUEST FOR LIGHTING AT BIRCHFIELD PARK

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Strategic Director – Place and Performance
Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Assistant Director - Communities
Service Manager: Kim Close, Area Development Manager - South
Lead Officer: Natalie Ross, Community Development Officer
Contact Details: natalie.ross@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462956

Purpose of the Report

Request funding towards the installation of lighting in Birchfield Park and towards improvements to the pathways across the park.

Recommendation(s)

(1) That members agree to allocate funding towards the project.

Background

The Birchfield Park is situated on a former landfill site known as Birchfield Disused Landfill Site and is owned by South Somerset District Council (SSDC) and managed by the Council's Environment Department. The site is a large area of predominantly open space divided into two parts by Lyde Road at the eastern end of Yeovil. Historically this land formed a valley that was used as a landfill site, the last tipping occurring around 1984. Through this period the valley was filled in an easterly direction and in some places the refuse is some 17m deep particularly at the lower end (east) of the site.

SSDC acquired the site from Somerset County Council (SCC) over 20 years ago for use as open space and playing fields, although eventually ground conditions proved unsuitable for the latter. The site is used extensively as open space and connects with the Country Park at the eastern end of the site adjacent to the River Yeo.

Project Detail

There have been recent member, public and agency concerns regarding lighting at Birchfield Park. In response a recent meeting has taken place between officers and SSDC members to explore the situation and suggest a potential way forward.

Birchfield Park forms an important green corridor on the eastern side of Yeovil separating two densely populated residential areas, around Lyde Road and Cavalier Way, and between Lyde Road and Birchfield Road.

Pedestrian routes have been established through the park and now form an important part of the footpath network for residents, linking homes, shops, schools, pubs and other community facilities.

These routes are well used, as they provide direct links to all the facilities described above, and the alternative routes around the road network are less direct.

Lighting on the two principal east west and north south routes has been provided by the council, but the lighting is susceptible to vandalism and is concentrated around the school area.

The result is there are frequently lights that are not working, and when they are repaired they often are broken shortly after. The paths themselves are adequate but narrow in places and the surface would benefit from improvement.

In July 2008, the Birchfield community survey identified the need for:-

- More lighting at night and more bins
- Bigger and better playground
- Lights near the park
- Birchfield Park to be cleaned and new equipment

The local beat manager has also confirmed that these issues have been raised during his beat surgeries with residents. The lack of appropriate lighting in the area increases residents' fear of crime.

This project will enhance the local path network around this vital pedestrian link for the local community, as shown on the plan attached at page 5. Whilst there are existing paths and lighting in the area this is predominantly in the eastern end of the Park around the school and play area. This infrastructure was put in place some 30 years or so ago and is in need of updating. The paths are relatively narrow and the lighting is subject to vandalism, which is not helped by the design of the columns and the lantern heads.

The proposal will provide a shared surface pedestrian/cycle route running west to east along the spine of the park and will link in with the local services at Birchfield Road and the new infrastructure including cycle paths from the Lyde Road key site, the construction of which is underway at the moment.

It will also improve two of the existing paths running north to south and provide new more robust lighting to these paths.

Maintenance costs (potential settlement) for the first 3 years have been built into the project costs and shown in the appropriate area of this document.

With regards to the issue of siting the lamp columns on the landfill site, the risk is considered low by designing out the hazard. The main hazard and therefore risk would be for landfill gas to permeate from the ground and up into the lamp column at levels considered to be a hazard. On switching on/off a spark could be produced igniting this gas. This potential pathway would be designed out by sealing both the lamp column and the ducts serving the lamp and therefore would remove the need for intrinsically safe switchgear. The new cable runs will be where possible out of the landfill site area and therefore reducing the risk further.

Anticipated Benefits

The project would have the following benefits: -

- Encourage people to travel between school, homes, shops, medical centre and community facilities on foot rather than take the car.
- Reduce fear of crime and improve community safety in the area.
- The lighting would be designed to minimise vandalism.
- This investment would demonstrate further commitment to this part of Yeovil which is going to complement the work done in the community to start the Community Association, and the investment that will take place in the play area shortly.
- Schools are increasingly being used outside of school hours for after school clubs etc and this will provide a well lit path to the school for this purpose.

- The scheme sets out to provide a shared surface pedestrian / cycle link between the school and Lyde Road. The benefits of a cycle route are in terms of health and well-being, off road cycling and linking to the proposed cycle route to be produced by the Lyde Road key site development.

Total Project Cost: -

Phase 1

1. To widen/tidy edges of north to south path to east of school
Cost around **£6,500**
2. To widen/tidy edges of the north to south path to north of school
Cost around **£2,000**
3. To provide a shared surface cycle path in front of school
Cost around **£32,000**
4. To replace the existing lights with new columns and lanterns
Cost around **£13,000**

Total Phase 1 **£54,000**

Phase 2

1. Extending the shared surface (cycle & pedestrians) path above including lighting

Total Phase 2 **£40,000**

Funding

£2,000 from County Councillor Budget – secured
 £86,000 SSDC capital grant – requested
 £2,000 Area South Community Safety Action Panel – requested
 £4,000 – This application

A contribution from Yeovil Town Council would help to increase the likelihood of the SSDC capital bid being successful, as bids with external funding sources score much higher than those relying solely on SSDC capital funds.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Background Papers: None

6. BUS SHELTER UPDATE

Three bus shelters have been ordered from the supplier (Minute 7/203 refers) and delivery is due in mid-February 2010.

The budget covers the purchase and installation of three bus shelters :

1. West Coker Road (Windermere Close)
2. Preston Road (top of Watercombe Lane)
3. Yeovil Hospital (bottom of Roping Road)

South Somerset District Council are still hoping that the bus shelter outside the Conservative Club at Kingston will be replaced and the SSSDC Communications Officer has been liaising with the local bus company, but to date, there have been no further developments.

The Parish Clerk has written to advise that Brympton Parish Council does not believe that a large number of residents from Brympton Parish would currently benefit from the installation of a bus shelter at White Mead and therefore do not feel it is appropriate to contribute £1,000 towards the purchase and installation of a bus shelter. The Parish Clerk enclosed a copy of the parish boundary with her letter to show that most Brympton bus users would use the bus stop in Stourton Way.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the report.

(Sarah Hunt, Assistant Town Clerk – 01935 382421)

7. LOADING/UNLOADING PROHIBITION IN SOUTH STREET

Colin Fletcher (Somerset Highways) has confirmed that there are sufficient funds in the traffic management budget to process the above traffic order (Minute 7/206 refers).

Colin plans to advertise the South Street extended loading ban within the next month and will forward a copy of the public notice and draft order to the Town Council to make available for public inspection.

If there are no objections to the proposals, it is proposed that the Order be confirmed and implemented by the Highways Authority.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the report.

(Sarah Hunt, Assistant Town Clerk – 01935 382421)

9. PROMOTIONS AND ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Introduction

At the last meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee, reference was made to the merits of disbanding the Promotions and Activities Committee and the potential savings that might arise therefrom.

It was proposed that the matter be considered during the January cycle of meetings to give all the committees that would be affected by such a change an opportunity to consider the matter and express their views to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee before a decision was made by the Town Council.

History

The Promotions and Activities Committee was established by the Town Council in May 2004, and was allocated a number of subsumed duties from other committees of the Council which continue to exist. The following extract from the current Delegation Scheme sets out the Committee's current terms of reference and highlights the previous arrangements. It is assumed that should the Committee be disbanded, these would be returned to their originating body:

- (v) **Promotions and Activities Committee**
 - (a) *Yeovil in Bloom. (GGM)*
 - (b) *Development of Town Centre initiatives, activities and events. (NEW)*
 - (c) *Yeovil Town Centre Partnership. (PRF)*
 - (d) *Town Centre Streetscene development. (NEW)*
 - (e) *Festive Lights. (PRF)*
 - (f) *Publication of town guide and other promotional literature. (BCM)*
 - (g) *Customised Souvenirs. (BCM)*
 - (h) *Policy on Banners in the Town Centre and use of the Entertainments Area. (P&L)*
 - (i) *Town Crier - appointment, conditions of service, uniform and the Annual Town Criers' Competition. (BCM)*
 - (j) *Policy on requests for the use of the Town Crest. (NEW)*

As indicated above, two *new* responsibilities were added to the Committee's remit upon its inception, namely:

(b) *Development of Town Centre initiatives, activities and events*

(d) *Town Centre Streetscene development*

The following *additional* responsibility was subsequently added at the suggestion of the Committee:

(j) *Policy on requests for the use of the Town Crest*

Should the Promotions and Activities Committee be disbanded, these would need to be transferred to an alternative committee's remit.

Costs

A detailed analysis has been carried out of the costs of administering the Promotions and Activities Committee, which has taken into account the additional costs that would be incurred should it be disbanded and its responsibilities dealt with by the other four committees of the Town Council.

Estimated savings in staff overtime of £305 per annum would be achieved along with £300 in administrative costs (including stationery, postage, photocopying, heating and lighting) which equates to an overall total of £605 per year.

Budgetary Issues

It is assumed that should the Committee be disbanded, the relevant budgets would be incorporated into the appropriate committee which takes on the allocated responsibilities.

The proposal, if implemented, would cause no problems for the Town Council's SAGE financial reporting and monitoring system and again, the relevant budget headings and income and expenditure would be incorporated into the appropriate committee's spreadsheets, which are presented to members on a regular basis.

Way Forward

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to consider the matter and to express its views to the forthcoming meetings of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee and the Town Council.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)