

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the **POLICY, RESOURCES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on **Tuesday 27 January 2009**

(7.00pm – 9.00pm)

Present:

Pat Martin – Vice-Chairman (in the Chair)	Andrew Kendall
Bridget Dollard	Tom Parsley
Tony Fife	Wes Read
John Grana	David Recardo
Dave Greene	Alan Smith
Steve Hawker	

Also Present:

Alan Tawse – Town Clerk
Simon Hester – Yeovil South Ward

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

7/142 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 November 2008, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7/143 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Philip Chandler, Clive Davis, Dave Gooding and Tony Lock.

7/144 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Bridget Dollard, and Andrew Kendall each declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item 6 (Yeovil Twinning Association) by virtue of their membership of the organisation. Tom Parsley declared a personal interest in the same agenda item in view of his appointment as a Town Council representative on the Management Committee of the Association.

Tony Fife explained that, whilst he had previously declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter by virtue of his membership of the Association, he was no longer a member.

7/145 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

7/146 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

- (a) South Somerset Mind

RESOLVED that a grant of £1,000 be awarded towards the organisation's core running costs (S.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

- (b) Yeovil Opportunity Group

The Chairman drew attention to a grant application that had been made to South Somerset District Council for the same purpose, which appeared to suggest that sufficient funding was already in place to meet the balance of the costs of purchasing a minibus.

RESOLVED that the application be deferred pending clarification of the funding situation.

- (c) St Margaret's Somerset Hospice

During the ensuing discussion, Members expressed concern at the apparent failure of the organisations involved in the design and construction of the relatively new building to reach agreement on responsibility for the repairs to the roof.

RESOLVED

- (i) that no action be taken; and
- (ii) that given the nature of the building and the public interest in its ongoing maintenance, the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and the Vice-Chairman, write an appropriate letter to the applicant outlining the Committee's concern at the current situation and wish that the matter be satisfactorily resolved by further discussions with the parties concerned at an early date.

- (d) Wessex Higashi Karate Kai

RESOLVED that a grant of £1,500 be awarded towards the purchase of competition mats and the general expenses of the organisation. (S.19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 – as amended).

7/147 YEOVIL TWINNING ASSOCIATION

(Bridget Dollard and Andrew Kendall, each having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the above matter, left the room during its consideration and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon).

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 6 refers).

Graham Voizey, Chairman of the Association, spoke in support of the application and explained the reasons why the Association were seeking ongoing financial support from the Town Council.

He emphasised that the Association was taking a long-term view of its role in co-ordinating twinning activities and wished to secure adequate resources to ensure its continuance. He added that the Association had already increased its member subscriptions by 150% in recent years to help achieve this objective.

During the ensuing discussion, Members expressed their support for the grant application, which it was acknowledged would help secure the Association's planned activities over the coming year and provide the organisation with increased financial stability.

Attention was drawn to the benefits of twinning activities and the educational opportunities that such activities brought to citizens across Europe to learn more about each country's language, history, food and culture.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that a grant of £3,000 be awarded to assist with the costs of providing appropriate activities and functions for visitors from Taunusstein and Herblay during inward visits in 2009. (S.144 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended);
- (3) that the request by the Association for the Town Council to make an annual contribution of £2,000 towards its activities be referred to the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee, it being noted that if the request was supported by that Committee, it would need to be included as a bid for growth and considered during the 2010/11 budget setting process; and
- (4) that the ongoing role of the Town Council in relation to town twinning be referred to the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee for initial consideration, and their recommendations be referred to this Committee for further consideration and then onto the Town Council for determination.

(John Grana requested that his vote against the passing of the above resolutions be recorded)

7/148 **CAPITAL FUND**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 7 refers).

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the need to clarify the District Council's funding intentions for the play area improvements identified in the programme of planned works for 2009/10 before deciding on how any contribution that the Town Council might make would be funded.

It was noted that works totalling £80,000 had been identified for that year and that the anticipated contribution from each authority would be £40,000.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the position concerning the Capital Fund be noted;
- (2) that the further developments regarding the disposal of the former Goldcroft Allotment Site and the marketing of the former Ski and Activity Centre, be noted; and
- (3) that the current position regarding the rolling programme of play area improvements be noted and further considered at the next meeting following clarification of the District Council's funding intentions for the play area improvements identified in the programme of planned works for 2009/10.

7/149 **BREATHING PLACES**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 8 refers).

The Town Clerk gave details at the meeting of a proposed bid that had been drawn up by the Countryside Services Manager, which involved the development of a three-day project to create a woodland story and play zone within Yeovil Country Park.

During the ensuing discussion, Members expressed their support for the proposed project, which it was estimated would cost £2,800 and would be the subject of a 100% grant bid.

Reference was also made to the control of dogs within the Country Park, and it was suggested that the current provisions be discussed at a future meeting.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that a bid for 100% grant assistance be made to the Big Lottery Breathing Places Grants Programme to meet the estimated costs of £2,800 to deliver the proposed project;
- (3) that, given the tight timescales involved, the Town Clerk – in consultation with the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, the Mayor and the Countryside Services Manager be authorised to finalise and submit the grant application;
- (4) that all Members of the Committee be provided with a copy of the submitted grant application for information; and
- (5) that the present arrangements for controlling dogs in the Country Park be investigated and referred to a future meeting for discussion.

7/150 **QUALITY COUNCIL STATUS**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 9 refers).

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that approval be given to the adoption of the proposed Statement of Training Intent.

7/151 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2008

The Committee considered the report of the Finance Administrator (Agenda item 10 refers).

RESOLVED

that the Financial Statements and payments therein for the above months be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

7/152 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

7/153 TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 11 refers).

The Town Clerk gave an update at the meeting on various matters on which he had sought clarification concerning the proposals and anticipated implications set out in the letter annexed to the report.

During the ensuing discussion, Members gave detailed consideration to the proposals. However, it was felt that additional information needed to be obtained and further points clarified before a response could be made to the letter.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that the Town Centre Manager be requested to give a presentation to the March meeting of the Town Council setting out the following matters:
 - Role of Town Centre Manager
 - Achievements
 - Future Plans - with particular reference to current economic climate

- (3) that the Head of Area Development (South) be requested to submit a detailed report to and attend the next meeting of the Committee to clarify a number of issues relating to the matters under discussion, and the structure and constitution of the Town Centre Partnership, following which a response be submitted to the issues raised in the letter annexed to the report.

7/154 **STAFFING ISSUES**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 12 refers).

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group in relation to the remuneration request be supported and approved; and
- (3) that approval be given to the Town Council meeting the cost of the annual subscription referred to in the report.

Chairman

28/01/09
AT