

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **GROUNDS AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on Monday 7 July 2008

(7.00pm – 8.00pm)

Present:

Alan Smith - Chairman
Philip Chandler
Pete Goodman
John Grana
Steve Hawker
Simon Hester
Jon Trevett – co-opted non-voting

Also present:

Sally Bing – Assistant Town Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

7/96 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 and 13 May 2008, copies of which had been circulated were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7/97 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Dave Gooding, Dave Greene, John Hann and Wes Read.

7/98 **DECLARATIONS FOR INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

7/99 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

7/100 **PLAY AND YOUTH FACILITIES UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report by the Play and Youth Facilities Officer (agenda item 5 refers).

RESOLVED

that the matters be noted.

7/101 **YEW TREE PARK PLAY AREA**

The Committee considered the report by the Assistant Town Clerk (agenda item 6 refers). During discussion of the project it was suggested that illustrations of the proposals be presented to the Committee for consideration. The Assistant Town Clerk explained that the Yew Tree Park Steering Group were still in the early stages of the project and were currently working on the selection of a suitable designer. She added that following appointment of a chosen design company, plans would be drawn up based on the preferences summarised in the consultation document. Designs will therefore be available for Councillors to view at a future date.

RESOLVED

that the matters be noted.

7/102 **ALLOTMENT EQUIPMENT**

The Committee considered the report by the Assistant Town Clerk, agenda item 7 refers. Jon Trevett spoke on behalf of the allotment tenants and explained that should the allotment equipment be disposed of, the allotment tenants collectively would like to receive the equipment as a donation and would also be grateful for storage space. Discussion took place regarding the feasibility of allowing the allotment tenants to purchase the eight items of allotment equipment should the Town Council decide to dispose of them. The Committee continued to be supportive of giving allotment tenants the option to hire equipment from local hire companies to ensure fair distribution of resources and ease problems in transporting the relevant equipment to the allotment sites.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters be noted
- (2) that the initiative to allow allotment tenants to hire equipment directly from reputable tool and equipment hire suppliers in the Yeovil area be supported and that the matter be referred to the Policy Resources and Finance Committee; and
- (3) that a recommendation be forwarded to Policy Resources and Finance Committee that the allotment equipment (with the exception of the shredder purchased in 2006) be disposed of to the allotment tenants within the next twelve months.

7/103 **ALLOTMENT TENANTS WORKING GROUP**

The Committee considered the outcome of the Allotment Tenants Working Group held on 7 May 2008, copies of which had already been circulated. Jon Trevett informed the Committee that it was felt that the future purpose of the Allotment Tenants Working Group was to encourage the ongoing safe custody of allotments in Yeovil, especially due to the positive image and current excellent take up of allotment plots. Discussion took place regarding the ongoing need for provision of allotments, particularly in light of new developments.

RESOLVED

that the matters be noted.

7/104 **ALLOTMENT RENT REVIEW**

The Committee considered the report by the Assistant Town Clerk (agenda item 9 refers). Jon Trevett pointed out to the Committee that the report stated that allotment rents already provided an offset income of £7,000 against the overall cost of £26,274 of maintaining allotments across the town. He said that the Town Council was already benefiting from increased income due to the existing 100% capacity on all allotment sites and felt that no allotment rent increase was warranted. Jon stated that there were no tangible benefits to tenants to justify the allotment rent increase. Discussion took place regarding the maintenance of sites and the Assistant Town Clerk confirmed the breakdown of the overall cost of provision of the eleven allotment sites as outlined in the report. It was accepted that irrespective of whether or not an allotment rent increase was introduced from October 2009, the cost of carrying out the existing level of maintenance of the allotment plots would undoubtedly increase. It was also pointed out that a small increase in allotment rents each year may reduce the need for a larger increase in a future year.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters be noted; and
- (2) that no increase on allotment rents be introduced in October 2009 and that this matter be referred to the Allotment Tenants Working Group for their comments for the attention of the Policy Resources and Finance Committee; and
- (3) that in accordance with the delegation scheme the proposal to amend the agreed charges be referred to the Policy Resources and Finance Committee for comment and to full Council for approval.

7/105 **FEEDBACK ON MEMBER'S TOUR OF ALLOTMENT SITES AND OPEN SPACES**

The Chairman explained that he had attended the tour of allotment sites along with Rich Davy, Street Scene Services Co-Ordinator of SSDC and the Assistant Town Clerk. They had visited Milford Dip, Newtown, Hillcrest and

Goar Knap allotment sites and had come across only one outstanding issue which was in hand.

It was suggested that a public forum be held at a future date to allow allotment tenants the opportunity to voice any concerns or issues about the allotment sites. Jon Trevett undertook to consult with allotment tenants to find out whether there were any current issues the allotment tenants would wish to be raised.

RESOLVED

That the matters be noted.

7/106 **FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1 APRIL TO 31 MAY 2008**

The Committee considered the report of the Finance Administrator (agenda item 11 refers).

RESOLVED

that the financial statement for April and May 2008 be noted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

Chairman

SB/HD
09/07/08