

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 26 May 2009**

(7.00pm – 11.00pm)

Present:

Steve Hawker – Chairman
Philip Chandler
Clive Davis
Bridget Dollard
Dave Gooding
Dave Greene

Andrew Kendall
Pat Martin
Tom Parsley
Wes Read
David Recardo
Alan Smith

Also Present:

Tony Lock – Yeovil East Ward
Alan Tawse – Town Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

7/170 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meetings held on 31 March and 12 May 2009, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7/171 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Fife.

7/172 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Bridget Dollard declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item 5 (Applications for Grant Aid – Westfield Community School) by virtue of her employment by Somerset County Council.

Clive Davis declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item 5 (Applications for Grant Aid – South Somerset Disability Forum) in view of his close association and links to the Forum.

Tom Parsley declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item 5 (Applications for Grant Aid – South Somerset Disability Forum) by virtue of his membership of the Board of Trustees of the Forum. He also declared a personal interest, in his capacity as Portfolio Holder for Environment and Property (SSDC) in any matter that might arise at the meeting, which concerned property owned by that Authority.

7/173 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

7/174 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

(a) Yeovil Illuminated Carnival Ltd

The Chairman drew attention to a note that had been circulated to all Members of the Committee, which summarised the outcome of a meeting that had taken place with the applicants to discuss the issues raised at the last meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that the proposed town-centre based route was still under discussion with the Police and the Highway Authority, and was subject to a number of practical clearance checks which were expected to be undertaken in early June.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the need for the organisers to liaise at an early date with organisations and businesses operating along the proposed route to ensure that any potential conflict with their planned activities was avoided. The Town Clerk confirmed that this matter had been drawn to the attention of the organisers.

In response to a query, he outlined the process that the organisers needed to follow to apply for a road closure order and confirmed that, subject to clearance checks, the Christmas Lights display would not be affected by the procession.

During the ensuing discussion, Members reiterated their support for the re-introduction of an illuminated carnival in the Town. However, it was emphasised that the practicality of the proposed route needed to be fully tested and proved, and that all potential conflict issues with planned activities by organisations and businesses along the proposed route needed to be resolved at an early date.

RESOLVED that, subject to the Town Council being identified as a principal sponsor, a grant of £1,325 be awarded to meet the cost of the applicants taking out public liability insurance - to cover the planned event and twenty fundraising events leading up to it. (S.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

(b) Yeovil Olympiads Athletics Club

The Chairman drew attention to a letter and updated accounts that were attached to the Agenda, which summarised the outcome of a meeting that had taken place with the applicants to discuss the issues raised at the last meeting of the Committee.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the potential implications of the Town Council funding staffing costs on an extended basis, and the existence of other funding organisations which supported such costs.

RESOLVED

- (1) that no action be taken regarding this application;
- (2) that the attention of the applicants be drawn to alternative funding organisations which provide grant assistance towards staffing costs on an extended basis; and
- (3) the applicants be encouraged to submit an early application for grant assistance towards the costs of staging of the Annual Yeovil Games 2009.

(c) Good Fellowship Club

RESOLVED that a grant of £250 be awarded towards the transport costs of the organisation. (S.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

(d) South Somerset Disability Forum

(Clive Davis and Tom Parsley, having both 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

During the ensuing discussion, further reference was made to the potential implications of the Town Council funding staffing costs on an ongoing basis.

RESOLVED that a grant of £1,000 be awarded towards the rent, publicity and administration costs of the organisation. (S.142 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

(e) Monday Club Awareness Centre

RESOLVED that a grant of £150 be awarded towards the running costs of the organisation. (S.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

(f) Yeovil Temple Salvation Army Band

RESOLVED that a grant of £1,000 be awarded towards the costs of purchasing various instruments. (S.145 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

(g) Westfield Community School

(Bridget Dollard 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

RESOLVED that no action be taken regarding the application.

(h) South Somerset Women's Refuge

RESOLVED that no action be taken regarding the application.

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

The Town Clerk drew attention at the meeting to a recent planning consent in the vicinity of the Monks Dale Park Recreation Ground, which included a condition that the developer makes a S106 contribution towards the improvement of play and youth facilities in the area. Whilst the contribution had not yet been made, it was hoped that it could be used to help meet the overall costs of the proposed upgrade of play equipment in the Recreation Ground.

He also indicated that the District Council had confirmed that its capital allocation of £15,000 towards the upgrade of this particular play area had been secured on the assumption that match-funding was provided by the Town Council, and that this allocation was available for use in 2009/10.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the desirability of using the S106 contribution to help meet the estimated £30,000 overall costs of this particular upgrade thereby enabling savings to be achieved by both authorities that could be used to fund additional play area upgrades.

In response to a query, the Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council had not yet decided whether it wished to dispose of the freehold of the former ski and activity centre, and that the options available in terms of its redevelopment – including the grant of a long-term lease - would be considered by the Town Council as part of the planned bid assessment process.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the current 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;
- (3) that the timing of the various projects for which approval to borrow had already been granted by the Town Council be noted, and the steps taken by the Town Clerk to secure the necessary funds by way of a fixed-rate loan of £265,000 to be repaid over ten years to fulfil the Council's capital commitments, be noted;
- (4) that consideration of a contribution by the Town Council towards the proposed upgrade of the play area at the Monks Dale Recreation Ground be deferred until later in the year and, in the meantime, the possibility of using the above-identified S106 contribution to help meet the estimated £30,000 overall costs of this particular upgrade thereby enabling savings to be achieved by both authorities that could be used to fund additional play area upgrades, be explored and the outcome be reported to a future meeting; and
- (5) that an update on the funding position regarding the proposed redevelopment of Milford Hall be submitted to a future meeting.

7/176 **YEOVIL IN BLOOM – SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE**

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

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the proposed initiative, and the need for the Committee to assess the impact which the work involved in its operation would have on the staff involved in its administration, before making a final decision on the matter.

In response to a query, the Town Clerk indicated that the Licensing Team (SSDC) had confirmed that the proposed scheme would be eligible for registration as a non-commercial society.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted;
- (2) that the initiative be supported subject to a further report to the Committee outlining the impact which the work involved in its operation would have on the staff involved in its administration; and
- (3) that in the event that the proposal is endorsed, the initial £200 costs be underwritten from contingencies.

7/177 **BREATHING SPACES**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the successful application be noted; and
- (2) that arrangements be made for the planned event to be publicised in local schools.

7/178 **NALC CONFERENCE 2009**

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 attendance of the Town Clerk and a member representative at this year's NALC Annual Conference; and
- (3) that a further report be awaited detailing the arrangements for the submission of motions for debate at the Conference.

7/179 **BEST VALUE**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 10 refers).

The Town Clerk indicated at the meeting that the survey of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by their authority had recently been concluded, and a figure of 51.4% had been achieved. Details of the representative sampling methods used by the Town Council in conducting its surveys were outlined at the meeting.

It had been clear from the responses that the principal reason for this figure had been the level of the 2009/10 precept which, owing to the unforeseen difficulties in disposing of the former Goldcoft Allotment Site at an acceptable price, had included additional revenue expenditure to meet the costs of the Town Council securing the funding necessary to enable three key capital schemes to proceed in the current financial year and the additional operating costs involved. It was noted that had this expenditure been excluded, the increase in the precept would have equated to 2.2%.

The Committee further noted that, taking into account agreed and pledged partner funding contributions, the total capital cost of these three schemes amounted to £974,000. However, through negotiations and discussion with the funding partners and following successful grant applications, the overall cost to the Town Council would be £265,000 – just over 27% of the overall funding costs.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the Committee notes this year's achievements, and sets similar performance indicators for next year.

7/180 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – FEBRUARY/MARCH 2009

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

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the ongoing costs of providing security at the former ski and activity centre, the arrangements for which it was noted had the support of the emergency services.

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.

7/181 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.

7/182 **STAFFING ISSUES**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters be noted;
- (2) that approval be given to the proposals set out in the report subject to the Town Clerk seeking additional quotations for the services referred to therein;
- (3) that, in the event of these services being required ahead of the next scheduled meeting of the Committee, the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to accept the lowest quotation received provided that it met the Council's requirements; and
- (4) that the Mayor and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee be appointed along with the Town Clerk to serve on the Appointments Panel.

Chairman

27/05/09
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