

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the **GROUND AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on **Monday 2 November 2009**

(7:00pm – 9.05pm)

Present:

Dave Greene (Vice Chairman – in the Chair)
J Vincent Chainey
Pete Goodman
John Grana
Steve Hawker
Wes Read
Jon Trevett (co-opted non-voting)

Also Present:

Alan Tawse – Town Clerk
Sarah Hunt – Assistant Town Clerk
Steven Barnes – Play and Youth Facilities Officer – SSDC
Jay Lewin – Young People’s Officer – SSDC
Chris Cooper – Streetscene Manager – SSDC
Matt Breach-Greer – Streetscene Technical Officer - SSDC

Public Comment

There were no comments from members of the public.

7/186 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 September 2009, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7/187 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Dave Gooding and Alan Smith.

7/188 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

J Vincent Chainey declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 as he was an allotment holder at one of the sites bidding for additional budget allocation.

7/189 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

7/190 **PLAY AND YOUTH FACILITIES UPDATE**

The Play and Youth Facilities Officer, Steve Barnes reported that play areas in the town continued to be maintained and monitored. Members requested that he investigate rusty fencing on Howard Road, where big gaps had developed as result of vandalism. Steve confirmed that broken equipment at Kingston Recreation Ground had been removed from the site and would be repaired.

RESOLVED

that the matters be noted.

7/191 **YEW TREE PARK PLAY AREA**

Steve explained that he was expecting completed tenders back by 3 November and the next step would be for representatives from the District Council and the Town Council to consider the submissions. Steve explained that there would be a 6 to 8 week lead in period for the purchase of play equipment and it was anticipated that work would commence in January 2010 and be completed in March. The Town Clerk highlighted that the Steering Group had agreed, as the Town Council had requested, to include a quote for perimeter fencing as part of the tender bid.

Steve was hopeful that the project would progress well, particularly as the Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer, was now back at work following extended sickness absence.

Reference was made to the previous decision of the Committee to appoint the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman (or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman) of the Committee and the Chairman of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee to liaise with the District Council regarding the tender acceptance process.

RESOLVED

that the matters be noted.

7/192 **OPEN ACCESS HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the report of the Young People's Officer (Agenda item 7 refers).

Jay Lewin reported a 25% rise in the number of young people attending Holiday Activities programmes in three targeted areas of Yeovil, namely Birchfield, Westfield and Milford. Three Community Associations had been created and thanks to partnership working, crime had also decreased in these areas. Jay described a selection of activities undertaken, which included jewellery and fashion design, roller discos and day trips. She felt that the activities were particularly successful because those taking part could take newly learned skills away and use them at home.

Jay asked for £8,210 from the Town Council to match fund for 2010/11. Jay was hopeful that the amount of contribution required in future years would

reduce as there would be more emphasis on bidding for various government grants.

In response a to a query about the level of activities for the older age groups, Jay explained that the programme was aimed at young people between 3 and 18 years old. She added that thanks to a greater number of facilities this year, such as a climbing wall, there were more older children taking part and efforts would continue to get a greater number of young people interested. She emphasised that it would take time for youngsters to come round and take part in the opportunities provided.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters be noted; and
- (2) that the setting of a budget of £8,210 to match the District Council's budget for the provision of a free open access Holiday Activities Programme for young people in targeted areas of Yeovil be supported and considered later in the meeting as part of the 2010/11 budget-setting process.

7/193 DOG BIN PROVISION IN YEOVIL

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 8 refers) which included the legal responsibilities for dealing with dog fouling.

Chris Cooper, accompanied by his colleague Matt Breach-Greer, gave Members a comprehensive overview of the duties and responsibilities of South Somerset District Council's Streetscene service. He showed the Committee a map of Yeovil, showing the location of every bin maintained by the District Council. There were over 400 bins in Area South and West, with the majority being in Yeovil town centre.

The relatively expensive and complex logistics of bin and dog bin emptying were discussed, including waste vehicle weight limits and the frequency of trips required to the nearest waste tip at Dimmer, near Castle Cary. Chris was hopeful that a waste tip would soon open near Chard, which would cut down on the number of long trips from Areas North and West.

Chris advised that the town centre bin-emptying round was currently at maximum capacity and any requests for additional dog bins needed to be carefully scrutinised. Existing dog bins were mainly located in green 'corridors' and in public parks. He explained that he had developed a formal procedure for assessing dog bin need, which seemed to be working well. Dog and litter-bins were interchangeable as all waste was taken to Dimmer and put into landfill.

Chris said that regular enforcement (which would be helped by the incoming Dog Control Orders legislation), a robust sweeping regime and regular removal of fly-tipping and graffiti were essential and effective. He was planning a programme of bin replacement to ensure that all bins were fit for use for both dog and general litter. Waste collection vehicles would soon be fitted with weighing equipment, to ensure maximum collection capacity.

Members commended Chris on his presentation and for all the work he and his team were doing for the Town. Chris said he would welcome greater liaison between the various tiers of local government regarding drain emptying.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that the Town Council adopt the following procedure for dealing with future requests for additional dog waste bins:
 - (i) that any future requests for dog waste bins be referred to the Streetscene Manager for investigation;
 - (ii) that following the investigation, appropriate enforcement action be carried out by the Streetscene Manager to address the reported problem, and his findings and action be reported to the person making the request;
 - (iii) that should it be deemed necessary to move an existing waste bin to resolve the problem, a recommendation to that effect be made by the Streetscene Manager to the Town Clerk, and the proposal be considered and determined in consultation with the relevant ward members; and
 - (iv) that, in future, the dog waste bin budget be used to meet the cost of replacement bins.
- (3) that the Head of Streetscene Service liaise with the Country Rangers regarding the perceived fly-tipping problem at the bottom of Lovers' Lane; and
- (4) that the Head of Streetscene Services advise the Town Clerk of the number of fixed penalties that are issued on an annual basis.

7/194 ALLOTMENT MAINTENANCE WORK

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

Jon Trevett referred to the importance of ensuring that the quality of allotment maintenance work was monitored and, in the event that an acceptable level of service was not delivered, that alternative options be considered.

The Chairman referred to the matters considered at a recent meeting between Members, Officers and representatives of the current contractor, at which a number of issues had been discussed including the quality and timing of allotment maintenance works. He added that as a result of this meeting, various changes had been introduced to improve their delivery.

He also drew attention to the recommendations to the Committee, which provided for the delivery of the service to be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis and for alternative methods of delivering the service to be considered if these proved to be unsatisfactory.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the developments in this matter be noted;
- (2) that the proposed improvements in the regular timing of allotment maintenance works be supported; and
- (3) that the effectiveness of the revised arrangements be monitored and reviewed and, in the event that the new arrangements prove to be unsatisfactory, other options for procuring this work be considered.

7/195 **NON CORPORATE ALLOTMENT MAINTENANCE BUDGET BIDS**

(J Vincent Chainey, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, left the room during its consideration and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon).

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

Members noted that the number of submitted bids exceeded the remaining budget allocation of £907 by £435.

The Town Clerk indicated that there might be sufficient funds available in January to meet all the requests received due to possible savings in the Corporate Allotment Maintenance budget. To progress matters, he proposed that the bids be prioritised to enable the most urgent requests to be met ahead of the January meeting, and for the remaining bids to be considered at that meeting when the level of any anticipated underspend would be known.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the aims and objectives of the Non-Corporate Allotment Maintenance budget and how the pooling of funds part-way through the year had assisted active sites to secure funding to carry out additional maintenance work, which if underspent would be returned to balances.

It was acknowledged that there were now more allotment holders and that the demand for skips had risen. However, the Town Clerk indicated that he was currently looking at ways to encourage recycling on allotments to reduce the number of skips required on each site, and that a report on the matter would be submitted to the next meeting.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that approval be given to the allocation of the remaining budget of £907 towards the costs of providing 5 skips and that the additional costs of providing the 3 remaining skips (£435) be considered at the next meeting when the level of any anticipated underspend in the current Corporate Allotment Maintenance budget would be known;
- (3) that to help prioritise the need for requested skips, the Assistant Town Clerk write to all the relevant site representatives asking them whether any delay in providing a skip until after the January meeting of the Committee would present a problem and, if so, to ask that they state their case in writing; and

- (4) that in the event that the number of requested urgent skips exceeds the 5 which may be immediately hired using the unallocated balance of the Non-Corporate Allotment Maintenance budget, the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to consider and determine upon the requests received from the stated cases made.

7/196 **WATER REFURBISHMENT WORKS**

The Committee considered the supplementary report of the Assistant Town Clerk.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that an indicative quotation be obtained for the proposed refurbishment works at Hillcrest Allotment Site, and the anticipated costs involved be reported to the next meeting at which consideration be given to their funding in the present financial year.

7/197 **COMMITTEE REVENUE ESTIMATES – 2009/10**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the budget strategy drawn up by the Finance Working Group be noted and supported; and
- (2) that the draft estimates attached as an appendix hereto be supported and referred to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for approval.

7/198 **FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 2009**

The Committee considered the report of the Finance Administrator (Agenda item 12 refers).

RESOLVED

that the Financial Statement for August and September 2009 be noted.

Public Comment

There were no comments from members of the public.

Chairman

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL - ESTIMATES

GROUNDS AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE											
		<u>YEAR 2008/09</u>				<u>YEAR 2009/10</u>				<u>YEAR 2010/11</u>	
NOTES		Item	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	1/2 year spent 30.09.09	Full year estimated spend to 31.03.10	Estimated		Estimated required	To be allocated
								over spent	under spent		
		INCOME 2009/10									
		Materials and equipment	2,270	2,169	2,380	829	2,000		380	2,040	
		1/2 Year to 30/09/09									
		Water Mains Refurbishment/Repairs	1,600	0	1,680	0	1,680			1,720	
		Water charges	1,780	1,541	1,870	206	1,870			1,910	
	800	Lease Allotment Maintenance (SSDC)	6,700	5,088	7,000	4,384	7,000			7,140	
	23	Taps & Keys Allotment Maintenance (Tenants)	3,300	3,034	3,000	1,654	3,000			3,060	
	9782	Allotment rents Allotments - Fence Repairs	1,650	165	1,740	285	1,740			1,780	
	10605	1/2 Year Milford Hall - Materials and equipment	1,030	1,423	1,080	749	910		170	1,100	
		Leases	250	300	250	0	300	50		300	
		Goar Knap - Building	1,236	1,134	1,300	636	1,300			1,330	
		ESTIMATED INCOME									
		Newsletter	150	75	160	0	160			160	
		2009/10									
		Best Kept Allotments Competition	360	204	380	104	200		180	210	
	45	Taps & keys Labour	17,000	16,145	18,375	7,995	16,000		2,375	15,000	
	9782	Rent Vehicle	3,200	3,202	3,360	1,718	7,350	3,990		900	
	1600	Lease Protective clothing	150	130	160	87	160			160	
	11427	Est 2008/09 Dog Bins	640	0	500	74	500			510	
		Open spaces:									
		Open Spaces	163,109	163,109	168,000	78,450	168,000			171,360	
		Enhancements	0	0	0	0	0			3,000	
		ESTIMATED INCOME									
		Milford Park (including services)	19,130	7,760	19,130	0	15,000		4,130	19,520	
		2010/11									
		Play and Landscape Officer	10,500	10,500	10,500	0	10,500			10,710	
		Holiday Playscheme contribution	5,000	5,000	7,765	0	7,765			8,210	
	45	Taps & Keys Door Step Green	500	212	300	180	300			310	
	9782	Rents Yew Tree Park - Gate Opening	1,340	1,086	1,340	595	1,340			1,370	
	1600	Lease Flagship Play Area - Maintenance	0	0	1,500	0	1,500			1,530	
	11427	Est 2009/10									
		Total expenditure	240,895	222,277	251,770	97,946	248,575	4,040	7,235	253,330	0
		Notes:									
									Estimated underspend (-)		-3,195
											250,135
		1 Budget prepared on a year on year basis, with adjustments made for previous year's accruals							Estimated 2010/11 income		11,427
		2 Water mains refurbishment/repairs budget allocated to meet planned programme of phased improvements									238,708
		3 Income of £1,600 pa receivable from lease of land at Higher Ryalls							+ contingencies @ 6%		14,322
		4 Enhancements expenditure of £12,000 pa capitalised in 2006/07									253,030
		5 Open Spaces budget includes contribution of £27,650 towards maintenance of Yeovil Country Park and £10,300 towards play area repairs/enhancements									