

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 24 November 2009**

(7.00pm – 9.05pm)

Present:

Steve Hawker - Chairman
Philip Chandler
Clive Davis
Bridget Dollard
Tony Fife

Andrew Kendall
Pat Martin
Tom Parsley
Wes Read
David Recardo

Also Present:

Alan Tawse – Town Clerk
Tony Lock – Yeovil East Ward

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

7/205 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 September 2009, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7/206 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

7/207 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

7/208 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

7/209 **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID**

(a) Yeovil Music Centre

RESOLVED that a grant of £800 be awarded towards the costs of various music projects (S.145 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

(b) The Young Musical Theatre Group

RESOLVED that a grant of £500 be awarded towards general setting-up costs (S.145 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended).

- (c) Yeovil Olympiads Athletic Club

RESOLVED that no action be taken regarding the application.

- (d) Breatheability

RESOLVED

- (i) that a grant of £1,000 be awarded towards the costs of insurance and the hire of premises for meetings. (S.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 – as amended); and
- (ii) that, given the stated benefit of the respiratory equipment to patients living in and around Yeovil, the applicants be encouraged to also seek financial support from the District Council and from neighbouring parishes in the future.

7/210 **CAPITAL AND REVENUE RESERVES**

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

The report drew attention to the current level of capital and revenue reserves and indicated that there was some scope within the Capital Fund to finance additional items of a capital nature. However, it was pointed out that this would increase following the capital receipt that would arise from the planned sale of the former Goldcroft Allotment Site.

The Committee was reminded that earlier that month, the Town Council had agreed that approval be given to the acceptance of the highest bid received for the disposal of the site subject to the bidder providing formal satisfactory evidence within the next two weeks of their ability to fund the acquisition.

It was noted that the bidder had been advised of the Council's decision and a formal response was awaited from their solicitor and would be reported to Members upon receipt.

It was pointed out that another potential source of funding was the former ski and activity centre should the Town Council decide to dispose of the freehold as part of the redevelopment proposals.

The Committee was informed that Alder King had been instructed to market this site on behalf of the Town Council and, following a meeting between the appointed representatives of the Town Council and Alder King, arrangements had been made for a revised draft development brief to be produced and submitted to the July 2008 meeting of the Town Council for consideration. The final brief had been adopted at that meeting and the property had been marketed and expressions of interest invited.

Details of those received had been reported to the Town Council in March 2009, and Members had approved a process for assessing these bids and

reporting back on their respective merits with a view to a final decision being taken by the Town Council in due course on how best to proceed.

All expressions of interest received had now been considered by the Steering Group set up to give initial consideration to the matter, and details of the bids received along with their views had been submitted to the September 2009 meeting of the Town Council, at which it had been agreed that the bid put forward by the Yeovil Community Church for the redevelopment of the site as a creative arts centre, which met the development brief, be supported in principle. The financial aspects of the bid were under active consideration and negotiations had commenced with representatives of the Church.

It was indicated that alternatively, revenue provision could be made for schemes in the relevant Committee's estimates, and that any funding beyond these sources would need to be from the General Reserve or in the form of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), applications for which were considered on their individual merits and subject to funding availability.

Members were reminded of the successful approach that had been made to South Somerset District Council regarding the joint funding of capital improvements to play areas owned by the District Council and managed by the Town Council on its behalf.

It was pointed out that at the January 2009 meeting of the Committee, the current position regarding the rolling programme of play area improvements had been noted and it had been agreed that the matter would be 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.

The District Council had subsequently indicated that these figures were based on anticipated match-funding of 50% from the Town Council and that the revised list was a result of a districtwide prioritisation exercise that took into account the overall finance available.

At the May 2009 meeting of the Committee, attention had been drawn to a recent planning consent in the vicinity of the Monks Dale Park Recreation Ground, which included a condition that the developer made a S106 contribution towards the improvement of play and youth facilities in the area. It was hoped that the contribution could be used to help meet the overall costs of the proposed upgrade of play equipment in the Recreation Ground.

It had also been 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 had been 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.

The Committee had subsequently agreed that consideration of a contribution by the Town Council towards the proposed upgrade of the play area at this 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 be explored, thereby enabling savings to be achieved by both authorities that could be used to fund additional play area upgrades, and that the outcome be reported to a future meeting.

This matter had been raised with the District Council's Senior Play and Youth Facilities officer, who had responded by pointing out that such contributions were only used to meet the cost of mitigating the play area demands generated by the increase in population arising from the building of new properties - in order to enable extra play provision to be made rather than subsidising existing demands.

He had since confirmed that the developer of a nearby new housing scheme had allocated £11,170 towards capital improvements, which when added to the combined pledged allocation of £30,000 from both authorities would enable an enhanced scheme in the overall sum of £41,170 to proceed. He had further indicated that, owing to pressure of other work, the implementation of the proposed scheme had been delayed until 2010/11 and that the District Council's contribution carried forward to that financial year.

The Senior Youth and Play Facilities Officer had also confirmed that the £20,000 funds allocated by that Authority towards the upgrading of the play areas at Milford Park in 2010/11 could be carried forward into the following financial year if the Town Council was unable to allocate match-funding in 2010/11.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the position concerning the Capital Fund and the General Reserve be noted;
- (2) that, as a matter of policy, it be agreed that a minimum balance of £80,000 remains uncommitted in the General Reserve to meet any unexpected revenue needs beyond those which could be funded from contingencies over the forthcoming financial year;
- (3) that the current position regarding the rolling programme of play area improvements be noted;
- (4) that arrangements be made for the Town Council's contribution of £15,000 towards the planned upgrade and enhancement of the play area at the Monks Dale Recreation Ground at an estimated overall cost of £41,170 in 2010/11 to be met from the anticipated capital receipt arising from the planned disposal of the former Goldcroft Allotment Site and, in the event that the receipt is delayed, the contribution be met instead from the General Reserve; and
- (5) that the position concerning the planned upgrade of the play areas at Milford Park be noted and, in light of the current availability of capital funding, the District Council be requested to carry forward their allocation of £20,000 towards this project into 2011/12.

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

The Chairman drew attention to the Budget Strategy drawn up by the Finance Working Group and explained the reasons for its suggested adoption.

To help coordinate the overall budget process, each Committee had once again been asked by the Working Group to keep their expenditure within the suggested maximum limits, with any proposed increases beyond those suggested being matched by reductions elsewhere in their respective draft budgets.

The Working Group had felt this approach would ensure that a balanced and sustainable budget was set for 2010/11. The Chairman indicated that all Committees had agreed to follow this suggested approach.

He added that the Working Group had also proposed that contingencies continued to be included in a separate budget and that bids for the use of these funds be considered once again by the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. This approach was consistent with the way in which unspent revenue balances were now dealt with and it ensured that all Committees had the same opportunity to put forward bids for additional expenditure during the year.

The Finance Working Group had also provisionally included an allocation of £20,000 in the 2010/11 estimates towards new initiatives, and had proposed that the service committees put forward bids for the use of this new fund during the January 2010 cycle of meetings.

Members expressed their support for the adoption of the above outlined strategy and, bearing this in mind, considered each of the Service Committees' draft revenue estimates taking into account the following bids for growth:-

Grounds and General Maintenance Committee

Open Spaces (additional provision) £3,360

To ensure allocated contribution by Town Council towards costs of maintaining open spaces keeps pace with inflation.

Holiday Play Scheme (additional provision) £445

To help meet anticipated overall costs of schemes planned for 2010/11 on a matching basis with the District Council.

Enhancements (new provision) £3,000

To help meet costs of enhancements to open spaces and amenities in Yeovil Town – schemes to be agreed by the Town Council

Promotions and Activities Committee

Yeovil in Bloom (additional provision) £710

To ensure allocated contribution by Town Council towards costs of Yeovil in Bloom initiative keeps pace with inflation.

Buildings and Civic Matters Committee

CCTV (additional provision) £3,250

To ensure allocated contribution by Town Council towards costs of Town Centre CCTV system keeps pace with inflation and meets necessary equipment repairs and replacements.

Town House – Repairs and Maintenance (additional provision) £2,000

To meet the anticipated costs of the external repainting of the Town House in 2010/11.

During the ensuing discussion, 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 to consider the matter and express their views to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee before a decision was made by the Town Council.

In response to a query, the Town Clerk gave a breakdown of the Open Spaces budget expenditure, and undertook to discuss with the Streetscene Manager ways by which the financial reporting of this and related expenditure could be improved in future to assist with financial monitoring and review.

Reference was also made to the future funding of Christmas Lights, and the Town Clerk outlined the progress of negotiations that he was undertaking with the current suppliers with a view to procuring a further year's availability of the existing display at a reduced price.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Budget Strategy drawn up by the Finance Working Group be noted and supported;
- (2) that approval be given to the inclusion of the above-outlined growth bids in the respective Services Committees' estimates;
- (3) that given the anticipated level of inflation and the ongoing negotiations over the future of the former Ski and Activity Centre, the contingencies calculation be maintained at 6%;
- (4) that the PWLB loan repayments budget be transferred from the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee; and
- (5) that the merits of disbanding the Promotions and Activities Committee be considered during the January 2010 cycle of meetings, and all of the committees that would be affected by such a change be consulted on the matter and their views be forwarded to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee and then the Town Council for a decision on the matter to be made.

7/212 **POLICY RESOURCES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REVENUE ESTIMATES 2010/11**

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

The Chairman referred to the current year's budget, which was likely to be underspent by £3,115 (£19,974 after taking into consideration the agreed transfer of the PWLB loan repayments budget), the reasons for which were set out in the report.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the current position concerning the Yeovil Vision given the imminent changes in the management and delivery of the various projects included in the initiative.

To ensure that the Town Council kept all its options open, it was proposed that an appropriate amount be *provisionally* included in the 2010/11 estimates and that a decision on whether to allocate the agreed sum be made following a presentation by the Assistant Director (Communities) (SSDC) and a detailed report setting out the proposed delivery vehicle, constitution of the Management Board and memorandum of understanding.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the reasons for the anticipated underspend in the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee's budget for 2009/10 be noted;
- (2) that the 2010/11 draft revenue estimates for the Committee, as submitted and amended to include the transfer of the PWLB loan repayments budget and a *provisional* allocation of £10,000 towards the Yeovil Vision, be supported;
- (3) that a decision on whether to allocate the agreed sum to the Yeovil Vision be made following a presentation by the Assistant Director (Communities) (SSDC) and consideration of a detailed report setting out the proposed delivery vehicle, constitution of the Management Board and memorandum of understanding; and
- (4) that the 2010/11 draft revenue estimates for the various Service Committees of the Council, summarised below and attached as spreadsheets to these Minutes be supported and recommended to the Town Council for adoption.

Committee	Revenue Estimate
Planning and Licensing	£2,629
Grounds and General Maintenance	£255,150
Promotions and Activities	£81,690
Buildings and Civic Matters	£91,690
Policy, Resources and Finance	£342,316
Total	£773,476

7/213 **AUDIT OF ANNUAL RETURN 2008/09**

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

RESOLVED

that the successful completion of the 2008/09 External Audit be noted and welcomed.

7/214 **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2009**

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.

7/215 **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.

7/216 **STAFFING ISSUES**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that approval be given to the adoption of Option (B) in respect of Agenda item 11(a); and
- (2) that the other proposals set out in the above report be noted and supported.

Chairman

25/11/09
AT

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL - ESTIMATES

GROUNDS AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE											
		YEAR 2008/09				YEAR 2009/10				YEAR 2010/11	
NOTES		Item	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	1/2 year		Estimated		Estimated required	To be allocated
						spent	Full year estimated spend to 31.03.10	over spent	under spent		
						30.09.09					
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	
Lease	800	Allotment Maintenance (SSDC)	6,700	5,088	7,000	4,384	7,000			7,140	
Taps & Keys	23	Allotment Maintenance (Tenants)	3,300	3,034	3,000	1,654	3,000			3,060	
Allotment rents	9782	Allotments - Fence Repairs	1,650	165	1,740	285	1,740			1,780	
1/2 Year	10605	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	
Taps & keys	45	Labour	17,000	16,145	18,375	7,995	16,000		2,375	17,000	
Rent	9782	Vehicle	3,200	3,202	3,360	1,718	7,350	3,990		900	
Lease	1600	Protective clothing	150	130	160	87	160			160	
Est 2008/09	11427	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	
Taps & Keys	45	Door Step Green	500	212	300	180	300			310	
Rents	9782	Yew Tree Park - Gate Opening	1,340	1,086	1,340	595	1,340			1,370	
Lease	1600	Flagship Play Area - Maintenance	0	0	1,500	0	1,500			1,530	
Est 2009/10	11427										
		Total expenditure	240,895	222,277	251,770	97,946	248,575	4,040	7,235	255,330	0
Notes:									Estimated underspend (-)		-3,195
											252,135
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									240,708
3		Income of £1,600 pa receivable from lease of land at Higher Ryalls							+ contingencies @ 6%		14,442
4		Enhancements expenditure of £12,000 pa capitalised in 2006/07									255,150
5		Open Spaces budget includes contribution of £28,200 towards maintenance of Yeovil Country Park and £10,510 towards play area repairs/enhancements									

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL - ESTIMATES

PROMOTIONS AND ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

		YEAR 2008/09		YEAR 2009/10		YEAR 2010/11					
NOTES	Item	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	1/2 year	Full year	Estimated		Estimated required	To be allocated	
					spent	estimated	over	under			
						30.09.09	spend to	spent	spent		
						31.03.10					
INCOME 2009/10	Town Centre Partnership	19,570	19,568	19,570	9,784	19,570				19,960	
1/2 Year to 30/09/09	Christmas Lights	18,000	35,485	19,000	34	19,000				19,380	
Festive Lights	Yeovil in Bloom	34,205	34,206	35,230	17,619	35,230				35,940	
SDDC	11,000	Town Crier	850	767	875	0	875			890	
Traders	0	Yeovil Open Town Crier Competition	1,650	1,384	1,740	1,673	1,740			1,770	
Sponsorship	500	Customised souvenirs	300	175	500	0	500			510	
Souvenirs	0	Town Guide/promotional publications	600	150	600	0	300		300	310	
	11,500	Town Centre Environmental Improvements	10,000	10,000	8,000	0	8,000			8,000	
		Christmas Lights Competition	60	0	60	0	60			30	
ESTIMATED INCOME	Yeovil Flower and Gardeners' Market	3,100	2,514	3,800	3,613	3,613			187	3,700	
2009/10	Yeovil Country Park Fayre	700	184	0	0	0				0	
Festive Lights	South West in Bloom Presentations	0	0	495	608	608		113		0	
SDDC	11,000										
Traders	1,000										
Sponsorship	1,000										
Souvenirs	50										
	13,050										
Estimated Income											
2010/11											
Festive Lights											
SDDC	11,000										
Traders	1,000										
Sponsorship	1,000										
Souvenirs	50										
	13,050	Total Expenditure	89,035	104,433	89,870	33,331	89,496	113	487	90,490	0
Notes:											
								Estimated underspend (-)			-374
											90,116
1	Christmas Lighting - Expenditure in 2009/10 offset by anticipated contribution from SDDC									Estimated 2010/11 income	13,050
2	Town Centre Environmental Improvements budget previously used to help meet costs of Middle Street and Princes Street Enhancement Schemes									+ contingencies @ 6%	4,624
3	Yeovil Town Centre Flower and Gardeners' Market - maximum guarantee against loss (offset by income from stalls and sponsorship)										81,690
4	South West in Bloom Presentations - costs of PA and transport provision										

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL - ESTIMATES

BUILDINGS AND CIVIC MATTERS COMMITTEE											
NOTES	Item	YEAR 2008/09		YEAR 2009/10			Estimated		YEAR 2010/11		
		Allocated	Spent	Allocated	1/2 year spent 30.09.09	Full year estimated spend to 31.03.10	over spent	under spent	Estimated required	To be allocated	
INCOME 2009/10	Yeovil Town Band - Sponsorship	4,000	4,000	3,500	3,500	3,500				3,500	
1/2 Year 30/09/09	Litter bins	960	244	600	0	600				610	
Monmouth Hall 2,963	Monmouth Hall	20,600	18,818	21,630	11,950	20,000		1,630		17,000	
SCC deleg functions 0	Town House (excluding services)	4,920	5,001	5,170	2,485	5,170				5,270	
Library 0	Town House - business rates	8,000	7,970	8,400	5,018	8,400				9,200	
	Town House - water charges	230	209	250	138	280	30			290	
1/2 year 2,963	Town House - electricity	1,240	1,782	1,700	454	1,800	100			1,840	
	Town House - gas	1,030	1,453	1,365	830	1,600	235			1,630	
	Town House - repairs and maintenance	2,350	9,586	3,000	1,731	3,000				5,060	
	Civic Items (Town Twinning)	570	6	400	39	200		200		210	
ESTIMATED INCOME	Sports Development Officer (SSDC)	2,000	2,000	2,000	0	2,000				2,000	
2009/10	War memorials	260	2,975	280	0	280				290	
Monmouth Hall 4,700	Public noticeboards	260	312	280	0	280				290	
SCC deleg functions 4,000	Community safety	5,290	2,761	4,290	112	4,290				4,380	
Library 3,000	CCTV	22,350	22,350	26,750	0	26,750				30,000	
	Millennium Clock	490	577	600	340	340		260		250	
Yr to 31/03/10 11,700	Transport support	5,300	68	4,000	0	4,000				4,080	
	Public toilets	0	0	18,000	2,289	14,000		4,000		18,360	
ESTIMATED INCOME											
2010/11											
Monmouth Hall 4,935											
SCC deleg functions 4,000											
Library 3,100											
Est. 2010/11 12,035											
	Total expenditure	79,850	80,112	102,215	28,886	96,490	365	6,090		104,260	0
Notes											
								Estimated underspend (-)			-5,725
											98,535
1	Transport Support budget to meet cost of contributions towards new bus shelters and related matters							Estimated 2010/11 income			12,035
2	Public toilets budget to meet ongoing costs of servicing and maintaining replacement public toilets in Peter Street Car Park										86,500
3	£5,232 carried forward from 2008/09 Transport Support Budget							+ contingencies @ 6%			5,190
											91,690

