

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 3 November 2008**

(7:00pm – 9.55pm)

Present:

Alan Smith - Chairman
Pete Goodman
John Grana
Dave Greene
Steve Hawker
Wes Read
Jon Trevett (Co-opted Non-voting)

Also Present:

Peter Gubbins - Central Ward Member
Tony Lock - East Ward Member
Tom Parsley - South Ward Member
Steve Barnes - Play Area and Youth Facilities Officer, SSDC
Jay Lewin - Young People's Officer, SSDC
Alan Tawse - Town Clerk
Sally Bing - Assistant Town Clerk

Public Comment

There were no comments from members of the public.

7/117 MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 September 2008, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7/118 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Dave Gooding and Simon Hester.

7/119 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

7/120 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

7/121 PLAY AND YOUTH FACILITIES UPDATE

The Committee considered the verbal update from the Play and Youth Facilities Officer who explained that repairs and inspections continued and detailed some of the specific works carried out at Milford, Howard Road, Yew Tree Park and Westfield play areas.

RESOLVED

that the matters be noted.

7/122 YEW TREE PARK PLAY AREA

The Play and Youth Facilities Officer explained to the Committee that the Yew Tree Park Play Area Steering Group had met on 21 October and discussed three concept designs which had also been taken to Holy Trinity School for consultation.

Concept 1 had been chosen as the appropriate design to move forward with some aspects of concepts 2 and 3 being integrated into the scheme.

Steve Barnes outlined the arrangement of the play equipment and the proposed design to the Committee. He also explained that the pathways through the site had been purposely placed to encourage local residents to walk through the park to increase general use of the area. Steve Barnes also informed the Committee that the Wellbeing Trust had pledged a donation of £5,000 which would be put towards the purchase of a buddy swing for the new play area.

In answer to a query from the Committee, Steve explained that an extensive consultation process had taken place out of which the project brief and then the design brief had been drawn up.

The Town Clerk explained that the refurbishment of Yew Tree Park was next in line in a rolling programme of redevelopment of play areas throughout the town. He added that the project sum of £160,000 with an £80,000 contribution from the Town Council, had been discussed, agreed and minuted. However, he explained that the Town Council intended funding its pledged contribution from a capital receipt and, in the absence of that receipt, agreement in principle had been given to it being funded via a loan instead and that the amount and duration of which to be considered by the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee and determined by the Town Council.

Concern was raised by Members present that the proposed play area might not be in line with the requirements of the community. It was therefore suggested that Ward Members be given the opportunity to discuss in more detail the design proposals, the project brief and the public consultation undertaken to ensure that the aspirations of local residents for the type of play area required in this location would be suitable and in proportion.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters and the concept design be noted;
- (2) that the Ward Members meet with the Play and Youth Facilities Officer and the Town Clerk in advance of the next Policy, Resources and Finance Committee meeting to discuss the proposed designs, project brief and the public consultation undertaken in more detail; and
- (3) that the outcome of the above meeting and the proposals be referred to the next meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for further consideration along with the proposed funding arrangements.

7/123 OPEN ACCESS ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

Jay Lewin, Young People's Officer, outlined to the Committee the work carried out in three areas of Yeovil; Milford, Birchfield and Westfield. She explained that her goal for the scheme was to empower local communities to take on delivery of the schemes by establishing their own community associations.

She was pleased to inform the Committee that Milford had already drawn up proposals to take on the delivery of the scheme and Westfield would be working in the near future on establishing their own association. She added that funding was currently requested for year two of the Open Access Activity Programmes and by year three she hoped that the community groups would be established and able to deliver their own play schemes, applying for funding in their own rights.

The Chairman outlined that within the proposed budget estimates - to be discussed later in the meeting - £4,000 had been allocated for funding the Open Access Holiday Activity Programme as at the time that the Finance Working Group met, the requested amount being sought by the District Council from the Town Council for this initiative had not been received.

The Committee was therefore requested to make a decision on whether the Open Access Holiday Activity Programme was to be supported in principle with the total request for funding being considered during the later discussions about the proposed Grounds and General Maintenance 2009/2010 budget.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters be noted;
- (2) that the Open Access Holiday Activity Programme be supported; and
- (3) that the requested funding of £10,075 for 2009/2010 to match the same amount in the District Council's budget for the provision of a free Open Access Holiday Activity Programme for young people in targeted areas of Yeovil be supported in principle, on provision that matching savings be found elsewhere in the Grounds and General Maintenance budget to increase, the proposed allocation of £4,000 in the 2009/2010 budget estimates to that level.

7/124 REQUEST FOR DOG BINS AT BIRCHFIELD PARK/MEADOW ROAD

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that 50% funding (£370) be provided for the provision of replacement dog bins at Birchfield Park and Meadow Road.

7/125 MILFORD HALL CHARGES 2008/2009

The Committee considered the report of the Senior Leisure Facilities Officer (Agenda item 9 refers).

Discussion took place regarding the facilities at the Hall and the Town Clerk informed those present that a report would be received at the forthcoming Buildings and Civic Matters Committee detailing potential improvements and redevelopment of the older part of the Hall.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters be noted; and
- (2) that the increase in charges for Milford Hall with effect from 1 April 2009, as set out in the report, be supported.

7/126 COMMITTEE REVENUE ESTIMATES

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 10 refers) and comments were made regarding the following line items in the budget estimates:

- With regard to Allotment Maintenance (SSDC) it was suggested that maintenance costs of allotment sites may go up as the Council had recently concluded that following advice from the District Council's Health and Safety Officer, tenants be prohibited from using machinery on areas of the allotment site not subject to a tenancy agreement. Concern was raised that the increased burden falling on the contractors to maintain these areas would increase costs. It was suggested that due to the 100% take up of allotment plot, overall costs of maintenance on allotment sites could be reduced.
- An explanation was sought with regard to Allotment Maintenance (tenants) and the Town Clerk explained to the Committee that this was to cover the cost of provision of hired skips on allotment sites to assist in the removal of waste which could not be composted.
- It was clarified that the Milford Cleaning budget was for cleaning materials.

- With regard to the costs for gate opening at Yew Tree Park, the Town Clerk was requested to look into the possibility of installing a motorised bollard in that location to save on ongoing costs of opening and closing the gate.

Jon Trevett highlighted to the Committee the estimated income for the forthcoming year explaining that he felt it was ambitious to expect 100% take up of plots for the whole year and would be prudent to use an estimated income figure of 80/90%.

The Committee turned to cost savings throughout the budget in an attempt to find the £6,075 required to meet the recommendation from the District Council for funding of the Open Access Holiday Playscheme contribution as discussed earlier in the meeting. A suggestion was made to reduce the estimated required amount for the Water Mains Refurbishment, however the Committee felt that the £1,680 proposed allocation for 2009/2010 should remain to ensure a sum of money be available to enable refurbishment of the water supply at an allotment site to take place in the forthcoming financial year and/or that funds be available for replacement/repair should it be required.

The Town Clerk explained to the Committee that he had spoken to the Landscape Officer regarding the open spaces budget who had indicated that he was seeking an increase of 3% in this budget, which amounted to provision of £168,000 in 2009/2010.

Discussion also took place regarding the Flagship Play Area Maintenance and as it was anticipated that the flagship play area would not be open to the public until the end of the first quarter of the financial year, the proposed estimated required was reduced proportionately to £1,500. These two adjustments resulted in a combined cost saving of £3,765 which added to the £4,000 proposed estimate required for the Holiday Playscheme contribution resulted in an increased allocation of £7,765 for the Open Access Holiday Playscheme contribution. It was therefore proposed that these three changes be made to the Grounds and General Maintenance budget estimates for 2009/2010 and referred to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for approval.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the budget strategy drawn up by the Finance Working Group be noted and supported; and
- (2) that the budget strategy and draft estimates (amended copy attached) subject to the following adjustments be supported and referred to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for approval;
 - (i) that the proposed Open Spaces Budget allocation be adjusted from £171,265 to £168,000;
 - (ii) that the proposed Holiday Playscheme contribution be adjusted from £4,000 to £7,765; and

- (iii) that the Flagship Play Area Maintenance budget allocation be adjusted from £2,000 to £1,500.

It was noted that these adjustments made no difference to the overall proposed budget for 2009/2010 for the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee but that in accordance with the policy, cost savings had been found in two areas to provide additional funds to support the Open Access Holiday Playscheme contribution which had been supported in principle by the Committee.

7/127 **NOTES ON BUDGET ESTIMATES**

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

RESOLVED

that the notes on budget estimates be noted.

7/128 **ALLOTMENT TENANTS WORKING GROUP**

Jon Trevett explained to the Committee that the Allotment Tenants Working Group was proposing to form an association which it was felt would provide a stronger voice for allotment tenants in the Yeovil area.

He also expressed the Working Group's concern at recent changes to the allotment maintenance arrangements and to an agreed increase in allotment rents, and the Town Clerk reiterated the reasons for these changes.

Reference was made to a suggestion made at a previous meeting of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee that a public forum for allotment tenants be held to allow all allotment tenants an opportunity to voice their opinion on allotment issues.

Jon stated that the Allotment Tenants Working Group would be happy to arrange such an event subject to the support of the Town Council in providing a means of communication to all allotment tenants.

It was therefore agreed that Greenfingers would be sent out earlier than the due date of February 2009, to allow communication to all allotment tenants about the proposed public forum for allotment tenants and the change in policy on the use of allotment equipment.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matters be noted;
- (2) that the Allotment Tenants Working Group arrange a public forum for allotment tenants to discuss allotment issues and that information regarding the date and venue be forwarded to the Assistant Town Clerk for inclusion in the next edition of Greenfingers;

- (3) that the recent change in policy on the use of allotment equipment on allotment sites already conveyed to the relevant site representatives be included in the next edition of Greenfingers;
- (4) that the next edition of Greenfingers be brought forward from the due date of February 2009 to ensure that these communications be sent out to all allotment tenants as soon as is practical; and
- (5) that the outcome of the meetings of the Allotment Tenants Working Group held on 15 July, 5 August and 2 September 2008 be noted.

7/129 **FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR PERIOD AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2008**

The Committee considered the report of the Finance Administrator (Agenda item 13 refers).

RESOLVED

that the Financial Statement for August and September 2008 be noted.

Chairman

SB/JW
05/11/08

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL - ESTIMATES

GROUNDS AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE										
		YEAR 2007/08			YEAR 2008/09				YEAR 2009/10	
NOTES	Item	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	1/2 year	Full year	Estimated		Estimated required	To be allocated
					spent	estimated	over	under		
					30.09.08	spend to	spend	spent		
						31.03.09				
INCOME 2008/09	Material & equipment	2,200	2,589	2,270	1,214	2,270			2,380	
1/2 Year to 30/09/08	Water Mains Refurbishment/Repairs	1,550	3,150	1,600	0	0		1,600	1,680	
	Water charges	1,725	1,611	1,780	271	1,780			1,870	
Lease	800 Allotment Maintenance (SSDC)	6,700	5,153	6,700	2,576	6,700			7,000	
Taps & Keys	45 Allotment Maintenance (Tenants)	3,200	3,680	3,300	1,770	3,300			3,000	
Allotment rents	6994 Allotments - Fence Repairs	1,600	959	1,650	0	1,650			1,740	
1/2 Year	7839 Milford Hall - Cleaning	1,200	1,018	1,030	556	1,030			1,080	
	Leases	250	250	250	0	250			250	
	Goar Knap - Building	1,200	979	1,236	609	1,236			1,300	
ESTIMATED INCOME	Newsletter	250	140	150	75	150			160	
2008/09	Best Kept Allotments Competition	350	298	360	137	360			380	
Taps & keys	90 Labour	16,500	15,349	17,000	7,857	17,000			18,375	
Rent	7100 Vehicle	3,100	3,473	3,200	1,647	3,200			3,360	
Lease	1600 Protective clothing	140	131	150	28	150			160	
Est 2008/09	8790 Dog Bins	620	654	640	0	640			500	
	Open spaces:									
	Open Spaces	160,030	160,027	163,109	82,184	163,109			168,000	
	Enhancements	0	0	0	0	0			0	
ESTIMATED INCOME	Milford Park	19,130	7,825	19,130	2,850	19,130			19,130	
2009/10	Play and Landscape Officer	10,500	10,420	10,500	2,625	10,500			10,500	
	Holiday Playscheme contribution	7,500	2,288	5,000	5,000	5,000			7,765	
Taps & Keys	100 Door Step Green	0	0	500	81	500			300	
Rents	9635 Yew Tree Park - Gate Opening	1,300	990	1,340	561	1,340			1,340	
Lease	1600 Flagship Play Area - Maintenance	0	0	0	0	0			1,500	
Est 2009/10	11335									
	Total expenditure	239,045	220,984	240,895	110,041	239,295	0	1,600	251,770	0
Notes:								Estimated underspend (-)		-1,600
										250,170
1	Budget prepared on a year on year basis, with adjustments made for previous year's accruals							Estimated 2009/10 income		11,335
2	Water mains refurbishment/repairs budget allocated to meet planned programme of phased improvements									238,835
3	Income of £1,600 pa receivable from lease of land at Higher Ryalls							+ contingencies @ 6%		14,330
4	Water mains refurbishment/repairs budget allocated to meet planned programme of phased improvements									253,165
5	Enhancements expenditure of £12,000 pa capitalised in 2006/07									
6	Open Spaces budget includes contribution of £26,850 towards maintenance of Yeovil Country Park and £10,000 towards play area repairs/enhancements									
7	Proposed contribution towards maintenance of new Flagship Play Area in Yeovil Recreation Ground - due to open in 2009/10									

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL - ESTIMATES

8	Holiday Playscheme provision to help meet anticipated shortfall in partnership funding arrangements								
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