



Yeovil Town Council

**Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ**

Phone 01935 382424

Fax 01935 382429

E-mail alan.tawse@yeovil.gov.uk

Policy, Resources and Finance Committee

The Meeting... **Policy, Resources and Finance Committee**

The Time... **7.00pm**

The Date... **Tuesday 28 September 2010**

The Place... **Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil**

If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please ring 01935 382424



Alan Tawse

Alan Tawse
Town Clerk

22 September 2010

Please contact Alan Tawse at the Town House for more information about this meeting

To All Members of the Policy, Resources & Finance
Committee:

J Vincent Chainey
Philip Chandler (Ex-officio)
Clive Davis (Ex-officio)
Bridget Dollard
Tony Fife (Vice-Chairman)
John Grana
Steve Hawker
Andrew Kendall
Mike Lock
Tony Lock
Ian Martin
Pat Martin
Wes Read
David Recardo (Chairman)
Alan Smith

A G E N D A

1. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 July 2010.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**

PAGES

5. **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID**

(Circulated separately)

6. **CAPITAL FUND**

7. **NEW INITIATIVES BUDGET**

8. **COUNCIL TAX REFERENDUMS**

9. **FINANCE WORKING GROUP**

10. **INTERNAL AUDIT**

11. **AUDIT OF ANNUAL RETURN - 2009/10**

12. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT – JUNE/JULY 2010**

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee will be requested to pass a resolution excluding the press and public 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.

12. **STAFFING ISSUES**

(Circulated separately to Members only).

6. **CAPITAL FUND**

A copy of the updated Capital Fund statement is attached at page 5. The sum of £5,503 is currently available for allocation to new capital schemes.

Former Goldcroft Allotment Site

Future sources of funding include the proceeds arising from the sale of surplus land at the former Goldcroft allotment site.

Last November, the Town Council agreed that approval be given to the acceptance of the highest bid received for the disposal of the above site subject to the bidder providing formal satisfactory evidence within the next two weeks of their ability to fund the acquisition.

The response was reported to the December meeting of the Town Council at which it was agreed that the disposal to the highest bidder be permitted to proceed.

The disposal of the site is proceeding as expected and, following completion of the S.106 agreement, the Planning Authority issued a planning certificate on 23 July 2010 granting outline planning approval for the residential development of the site. In accordance with the agreed disposal arrangements, a draft contract has been prepared by the Town Council's solicitor and submitted to the purchaser's solicitor. Contracts are expected to be exchanged in the near future whereupon the purchaser will apply for detailed planning consent or reserved matters approval within the following two months.

Former Ski and Activity Centre

Another potential source of funding is the former ski and activity centre should the Town Council decide to dispose of the freehold as part of the redevelopment proposals.

Alder King have 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 were 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 was adopted at that meeting and the property was marketed and expressions of interest invited.

Details of those received were reported to the Town Council in March 2009, and Members have 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 to date have 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 have been submitted to the Town Council.

Although the bid put forward by the Yeovil Community Church last September for the redevelopment of the site as a creative arts centre was supported in principle, the proposal was unable to be progressed at that time owing to factors beyond the Church's control.

In May, the Town Council agreed to concentrate on remarketing the property following a review of the current development brief, which will be submitted for Members' consideration following the conclusion of the planned investigation by the Council's Property Agent. Arrangements have been made for the outcome of this exercise to be reported to the October meeting of the Town Council.

Other Sources

Any funding beyond these sources will need to be in the form of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board, applications for which are considered on their individual merits and subject to funding availability.

Redevelopment of Milford Hall

Tenders have been received for the delivery of this project, and the appointed contractor began work on site earlier this year. The redevelopment works are expected to be completed by Autumn 2010, and their delivery is being overseen by a Project Management Board, on which the Town Council is represented by Andy Kendall and the Town Clerk.

Members will recall that the Town Council has agreed to contribute £85,000 (including VAT) towards the project, which will be funded from part of the loan granted by the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) towards several key capital projects.

Play Areas

The District Council has confirmed that it has committed the following capital funding at the present time:

Play Area	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Totals
Turner's Barn Lane						NIL
Yew Tree Park		£80,000				£80,000
Monks Dale Park			£15,000			£15,000
Milford Park				£20,000		£20,000
Summerhouse View						NIL
Preston Park				£12,500		£12,500
Howard Road Park						NIL
Total	NIL	£80,000	£15,000	£32,500	NIL	£127,500

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

Monks Dale Park Play Area

It has also confirmed that the developer of a nearby new housing scheme has allocated £11,170 towards capital improvements at the Monks Dale Park play area which, when added to the combined pledged allocation of £30,000 from both authorities, will enable an enhanced scheme in the overall sum of £41,170 to proceed.

A working group, which includes representatives of the local community and ward members, has been set up to oversee the delivery of this project and a public consultation exercise has been held at Preston Community School to seek the views of local people on the planned upgrade of the site. A further consultation exercise

has also taken place at Preston Primary School and the final designs put forward by the Steering Group were agreed by the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee earlier this month.

Tenders have been sought for the work and the bids received are currently being scrutinised by the SSDC Play and Youth Facilities Team. The Town Clerk, Chairman of the Steering Group and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee will be consulted on the appointment of the preferred contractor prior to acceptance. The work is expected to start in October and be completed within six weeks.

The Town Council has agreed that its share of the cost of this particular scheme will 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.

Yew Tree Park Play Area

The planned upgrade of the Yew Tree Park play area is now completed, despite the adverse weather experienced earlier in the year, and a formal opening successfully took place on 22 May 2010.

The total recharge to the Town Council to date of the works involved amounts to £77,742. The Play and Youth Facilities Officer (SSDC) has identified a number of essential additional works, which are required to be carried out – including the installation of steps leading up to the new feature slide; the installation of additional litter bins and the pointing up of the new dry stone wall to prevent the stones being dislodged. It is anticipated that these will be met from the remaining contingency sum included in the combined £160,000 budget for the project.

These items were reported to the last meeting of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee which has asked for a costed report to be prepared and submitted to their next meeting.

Recommendations

Members are **RECOMMENDED:**

- (1) to note the position concerning the Capital Fund; and
- (2) to note the current position regarding the rolling programme of play area improvements.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk - 01935 382424)

CAPITAL FUND (as at 28 September 2010)

Balance of Capital Fund as at 31 March 2009		£26,823
Plus Capital Receipts:		
Breathing Places Project - Phase 4	£2,800	
PWLB Loan (£265,000 less £93 arrangement fee)	<u>£264,907</u>	
		<u>£267,707</u>
Sub-total		£294,530
Less Capital Expenditure:		
Peter Street Toilets - YTC contribution	£100,000	
Roundabout Enhancements	£0	
Milford Hall Redevelopment - Planning application (met from SCC contribution)	£87	
Milford Hall Redevelopment - Architect's fees (met from SCC contribution)	£15,163	
Breathing Places Project - Phase 4	£2,379	
Breathing Places Project - Phase 4 - Grant reimbursement	£421	
Yew Tree Park - YTC contribution	£77,742	
Milford Hall Redevelopment - YTC contribution	<u>£85,000</u>	
Sub total		<u>£280,792</u>
New Balance of Capital Fund		£13,738
Less Commitments:		
Yeovil Country Park - contribution to signage	£180	
Sunningdale Doorstep Green (Phase 3)	£2,415	
Roundabout Enhancements	£3,382	
Yew Tree Park - YTC contribution	<u>£2,258</u>	
Total		<u>£8,235</u>
New Balance (unallocated)		£5,503
Notes		
1	All future Cemetery capital improvements to be met from revenue contributions to capital by the Joint Burial Committee	
2	Essential play area repair work beyond routine maintenance budgets to be charged to capital (subject to matching contributions from SSDC)	
3	Capital commitments totalling £165,000 (£80,000 towards the upgrade of Yew Tree Park Play Area and £85,000 towards redevelopment of Milford Community Hall) agreed. Costs involved to be met from the Remaining balance of the £265,000 PWLB loan.	

7. NEW INITIATIVES BUDGET

Introduction

Mindful of the need to develop the range of services that we deliver to the people of Yeovil Town, the Town Council has agreed to include an allocation of £20,000 in the 2010/11 budget towards new initiatives.

It was agreed that all the service committees would be invited to put forward bids for the use of this new fund, and that the Town Council would decide how this new fund will be spent.

Earlier this year, the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee were asked to give guidance on the process to be followed, and it was agreed that all services committees be reminded of the need for this budget to be used for *new* initiatives.

They also agreed that, to allow sufficient time for ideas to be drawn up and developed, the proposals that emerge be considered at the September meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee and referred to the October meeting of the Town Council for determination.

This enabled all suggestions that were identified during the July cycle of meetings to be investigated and costed by the officers, and for their findings to be reported back to the service committees during the September cycle of meetings, and for each committee's priorities to be agreed and put forward to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee.

Proposals

All of the proposals identified by each of the service committees during the July cycle of meetings have been investigated by the officers and the outcome of their investigations reported back to the relevant committees earlier this month. As a result of this exercise, the following bids have been made by the service committees, details of which are attached at pages 7 to 9:

Buildings and Civic Matters Committee

- *Provision of a new noticeboard in each ward
(Woodland Oak board option – locations to be agreed)*

Grounds and General Maintenance Committee – none

Planning and Licensing Committee - none

Promotions and Activities Committee

- *New gazebo style temporary cover for appropriate events in the entertainments' area
(design, construction and operational options still under discussion)*

Recommendation

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to consider the bids made by the service committees and to make recommendations to the Town Council on the possible funding of supported bids from the New Initiatives budget.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

Buildings and Civic Matters Committee

Proposal

At the last meeting of the Committee, Members also requested that the cost of procuring a notice board for each ward be investigated and the officers' findings be reported to this meeting.

Information

The cost of a wood effect notice board with two doors, size 992mm x 726mm, similar to the one pictured below would be approximately £1,200 each.



Or a Woodland Oak board with two doors, size 1270mm x 868mm, similar to the one pictured below would cost approximately £1,100 each.



Both of these boards would display 8 x A4 posters/notices.

Other considerations would include installation and cleaning and maintenance (which would be higher for the real wood boards). It would also be necessary to consider who would be keeping the information in the boards up to date, either a Ward Member, or a member of staff, and the costs involved would depend on the frequency of the information and notices being changed.

Taking the cost of the first example above, which would require less maintenance, the total purchase of a board for each ward would be £4,800. The cost of installation of the boards (depending on the surface re-instatement) would be approximately £50 each, making the total initial cost approximately £5,000.

Recommendation

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the above information and to consider whether it wishes to support this proposal going forward to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee and the Town Council for further consideration and possible funding from the New Initiatives budget.

(Sally Freemantle, Assistant Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

Promotions and Activities Committee

Proposal

At the last meeting of the Promotions and Activities meeting it was agreed to investigate the feasibility and cost of procuring a gazebo style temporary structure to be used to cover the entertainments area for appropriate events in that location.

Information

The estimated cost of a 12m x 12m aluminium framed marquee with PVC (flame retardant, UV resistant and anti fungicidal protected) roof sections and walls, is £9,650. The marquee would have bay widths of 3m, be 2.1m to the eaves and have an apex height of 4.89m.

It is estimated it would take four persons 2 hours to put the marquee and 2 hours to take it down. It would also be necessary to consider a storage location for the marquee when it is not in use – there would be 8 x 6.4m lengths of aluminium, many 3m lengths of aluminium and the total weight of all materials would be 1000kgs.



This illustration is to show the style of the marquee only.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the matter and to consider whether the proposal for a gazebo style temporary structure/marquee to be used to cover the entertainments area, be forwarded to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for consideration.

(Sally Freemantle, Assistant Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

8. **COUNCIL TAX REFERENDUMS**

Earlier this month, the Council considered a consultation paper recently issued by the Government, which set out proposals to introduce referendums to veto excessive council tax increases by all precepting authorities – including town and parish councils – as an alternative to capping by central government.

It was noted that the estimated cost of carrying out a referendum in Yeovil Town would be £10,000 and that the cost would fall on the Town Council.

In addition to agreeing arrangements for responding to the consultation paper, Council agreed to the need for the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee to be kept aware of developments, as part of the budget-setting process, and assuming that the proposals were implemented, for arrangements to be made for the Town Council to set its precept *after* the Secretary of State had announced the set of principles.

A copy of the final response, which was drawn up by the Town Clerk - in consultation with the Mayor and the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee, has been circulated to all Members. The consultation period ended on 10 September, and the outcome is awaited.

In the meantime, the District Council's Responsible Finance Officer has agreed to a request by the Town Clerk for an extension to the deadline for the Town Council formally notifying the District Council (in its capacity as the collection authority) of its precept for 2011/12. The new deadline, which has set at 31 January 2011, gives the Town Council scope to determine its precept *after* the Secretary of State has announced the set of principles.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note these matters and await further developments.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk - 01935 382424)

9. **FINANCE WORKING GROUP**

Following on from the last meeting, the Finance Working Group has met and has carried out an analysis of the Town Council's income and expenditure over the past five years.

The results of this exercise will help to inform the Working Group as they move to the next stage of their work, which will be to review the income and expenditure for the first six months of the current financial year and to draw up proposed draft estimates for each committee to consider during the November cycle of meetings.

The Finance Working Group will also be reviewing the current financial control policy and will be developing a strategy to guide committees on how to approach the 2011/12 budget-setting process.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the matter.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

10. INTERNAL AUDIT

The qualified independent internal auditor appointed by the Committee has undertaken and completed an internal audit of the Town Council for the financial year 2009/10.

The work has been carried out in accordance with regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 which requires all local authorities to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit.

This helps to protect the Council as it manages risk, by ensuring that the systems of financial and other controls are effective.

I am pleased to report that the Internal Auditor has issued the Council with a signed annual return drawn up in accordance with the SLCC Practitioner's Guide on Governance and Accountability in England and Wales, and the CIPFA Code of Internal Audit Practice.

The return confirms that all of the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

A small number of minor improvements in existing practices and procedures have been suggested by the Internal Auditor, which will be implemented within an agreed timetable.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the successful completion of the 2009/10 Internal Audit.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

11. **AUDIT OF ANNUAL RETURN - 2009/10**

The External Auditor's report on the 2009/10 Audit of Annual Return has been received. This new report replaces the annual audit of accounts following previously reported changes in local council audit procedures.

For the sixth time, the external audit has been undertaken by Moore Stephens – Chartered Accountants who are based in Bath and who were initially appointed by the Audit Commission as the Town Council's external auditors for a period of two years (which was subsequently extended).

I am pleased to report that the report confirms that the information contained in the annual return is in accordance with the Audit Commission's requirements and that no matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the report be noted and welcomed.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk - 01935 382424)