

## 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 30 September 2008**

(7.00pm – 8.10pm)

### **Present:**

Tony Lock - Chairman	Dave Greene
Philip Chandler	Steve Hawker
Bridget Dollard	Pat Martin
Tony Fife	Tom Parsley
Dave Gooding	Wes Read
John Grana	David Recardo

### **Also Present:**

Alan Tawse – Town Clerk

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no comments from members of the public.

### 7/114 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 July 2008, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 7/115 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Clive Davis, Andrew Kendall and Alan Smith.

### 7/116 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All Members declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8 (Members' Allowances) in view of their membership of the Town Council. It was noted that in accordance with Paragraph 10(2)(c)(iv) of the adopted Code of Conduct, this interest did not constitute a prejudicial interest.

### 7/117 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

### 7/118 **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID**

#### (a) **Yeovil Football and Athletic Club Ltd**

Members were advised that, having previously indicated their availability to attend the meeting, the applicant had indicated

earlier that day that they were unable to be represented at the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that in view of the failure of the applicant to attend the meeting on two successive occasions to clarify a number of issues relating to the application, the application be refused.

(b) **South Somerset Mind**

During the ensuing discussion, Members referred to the need for the applicant to identify the costs of the proposed kitchen improvements and to draw their attention to the availability of other potential sources of funding – including the Somerset Community Foundation and individual County Councillors' Local Initiative and Community budgets – to help fund the project.

**RESOLVED** that the application be deferred pending the above-outlined information being obtained from the applicant.

7/119 **CAPITAL FUND**

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

The Chairman referred to further recent developments regarding the disposal of the former Goldcroft Allotment Site and the marketing of the former Yeovil Ski and Activity Centre, and indicated that an update would be given to all Members at the forthcoming Town Council meeting when it was expected that a number of related issues would have been clarified.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) that the current position concerning the Capital Fund be noted; and
- (2) that the intention to provide an update on further recent developments regarding the impending disposal of the former Goldcroft Allotment site and the marketing of the former Ski and Activity Centre at the forthcoming Town Council meeting, be noted.

7/120 **ALLOTMENT EQUIPMENT**

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

During the ensuing discussion, attention was drawn to the legal obligations placed upon local authorities regarding the maintenance of communal areas of land within allotment sites.

Members discussed the merits of alternative ways of disposing of the Town Council owned machinery previously used by tenants for this purpose, including offering the equipment for sale to the District Council or to interested allotment tenants for use on their plots.

## RESOLVED

- (1) that the decision of the Town Council; the further advice of the Health and Safety Officer and the further views of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee on this matter be noted;
- (2) that, bearing these in mind, the Town Council be recommended to adopt the following deferred recommendations of this Committee subject to Recommendation (4) being reworded (by adding the suggested bold text) to distinguish between the areas for which tenants are individually responsible for maintaining (the let plots) and the areas that the Town Council is responsible for maintaining (the unlet plots and those areas not forming the lets plots) and to incorporate the views of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee on the standard of maintenance work, and Recommendation (5) being reworded (by removing and substituting the suggested bold text) to seek expressions of interest from South Somerset District Council:
  - (4) *that, subject to the approval of the Town Council, all allotment maintenance work **to areas within allotment sites that do not form the plots let to tenants** involving the use of machinery be undertaken **to a satisfactory standard** by suitably qualified and experienced contractors only, and the Town Clerk be requested to explore the options available with a view to putting the necessary additional maintenance arrangements into effect; and*
  - (5) *that, in the event of (4) above being supported, the Town Clerk seek early expressions of interest ~~from horticultural machinery dealers~~ **from South Somerset District Council** for the disposal of the existing equipment at best consideration.*

## 7/121 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

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

During the ensuing discussion, attention was drawn to the fact that the recommendations being put forward were the outcome of a review undertaken by an independent panel, and that the costs necessarily incurred by Members of the Town Council in carrying out their duties have risen substantially since the last review.

## RECOMMENDED

- (1) that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be noted;
- (2) that the level of the current Parish Basic Allowance be increased by the recommended amount of £205 per annum (£3.94 per week) for each Member with effect from 1 April 2008;

- (3) that the anticipated overall additional costs of £3,000 in 2008/09 be met from Contingencies, and additional provision be made in the Costs of Democracy budget to meet these costs in future years;
- (4) that, the level of travelling and subsistence allowances be set at the recommended rates, subject to the mileage allowance for motor cars being fixed at £0.40 per mile irrespective of engine size;
- (5) that the present arrangements whereby these particular allowances may only be claimed in respect of approved duties undertaken *outside* the parish of Yeovil Town (with the exception of parking fees) be continued; and
- (6) that provision be made for an annual uplift of the Parish Basic Allowance paid to Members of the Town Council by the same percentage as the equivalent negotiated APT&C pay award for officers.

#### 7/122 **INTERNAL AUDIT**

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

#### **RESOLVED**

that the successful completion of the 2007/08 Internal Audit be noted.

#### 7/123 **FINANCE WORKING GROUP**

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

#### **RESOLVED**

- (1) that the Finance Working Group be re-appointed for the forthcoming budget exercise with the following remit:

*To help develop the Council's capital and revenue funding and expenditure plans, and to make recommendations on such matters to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee; and*

- (2) that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and Wes Read be appointed to serve on the Working Group.

#### 7/124 **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – JUNE/JULY 2008**

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

### 7/125 **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.

### 7/126 **STAFFING ISSUES**

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

The Chairman extended his congratulations to the Assistant Town Clerk on her recent examination success, and this was echoed by the Committee.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the possibility of the Town Council extending work experience opportunities to students wishing to gain experience in manual work.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (1) that approval be given to the recommendations outlined in the above report;
- (2) that the congratulations of the Committee be conveyed to the Assistant Town Clerk on her recent examination success;
- (3) that the arrangements for the filling of the post of Licensing/IT Administrator be noted, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and Wes Read be appointed to serve on the Appointments Panel along with the Town Clerk; and
- (4) that the Town Clerk look into the possibility of the Town Council extending work experience opportunities to students wishing to gain experience in manual work and report back on his findings to a future meeting.

Chairman