

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 23 June 2015**

(7.00pm – 8.45pm)

Present:

Tony Lock – Chairman
Kris Castle
Peter Gubbins
Terry Ledlie
Mike Lock

Pauline Lock
Graham Oakes
Wes Read
David Recardo
Manny Roper

Also Present:

Andrew Pugsley South Ward
Alan Tawse Town Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

9/2 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meetings held on 31 March and 19 May 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9/3 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Darren Shutler and Rob Stickland.

9/4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Manny Roper declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 (Yeovil Shopmobility) by virtue of his appointment to represent the Town Council on the Management Committee of the organisation.

Terry Ledlie declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 11 (Allotments) owing to his wife being a tenant of a Town Council allotment plot.

Manny Roper and Andrew Pugsley both declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the same item in view of their respective tenancies of Town Council allotment plots.

9/5 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

9/6 **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID**

(a) Wessex Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre

RESOLVED that a grant of £200 be awarded towards the funding of massage and reflexology sessions. (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence).

(b) Golden-Oldies

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the application and, in line with the grants policy, a number of matters were proposed for inclusion in a Service Level Agreement with the Council.

RESOLVED that a grant of £702 be awarded towards hall hire, mileage and travel costs (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence) subject to the following matters being included in a Service Level Agreement between the Applicant and the Town Council for the forthcoming year:

- Details of the Group's sessions in the Yeovil Town area being posted on the Town Council's Community Noticeboards and Website; and
- The inclusion of the Town Crest on leaflets and posters promoting the Group's activities in the Yeovil Town area.

9/7 **YEOVIL SHOPMOBILITY**

(Manny Roper, 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 Town Clerk (Agenda item 6 refers).

The Chairman referred to the meeting that he had attended, along with the Town Clerk, with representatives of Yeovil Shopmobility, and he pointed out that the Town Council had not made the suggestion set out in the correspondence subsequently received from the organisation, which was attached to the agenda.

He added that, in line with the previous views of the Committee, the merits of the organisation charging the same level of annual membership fee (£10) - but making it compulsory - had been raised by the Town Council at the meeting, and that reference had also been made to the approach taken by a number of other Shopmobility schemes in the area, which offered much lower hire fees to members thereby creating a bigger incentive for users of the service to take up membership and greater potential to generate a higher level of fixed income from their activities.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was again made to the importance of the organisation developing a sustainable approach to its future funding arrangements – including the setting of membership fees and hire charges, and the appropriate use of reserves.

It was noted that these issues had been raised with the organisation following the Committee's initial consideration of their application, and Members were disappointed that the suggestion of introducing a compulsory membership fee – which would help spread the cost of providing the service amongst all the

active users of the service and provide a larger regular amount of fixed income – did not appear to have been explored.

Whilst it was noted that the revised charging proposals put forward by the applicant were estimated to raise an additional estimated annual income of £1,442, the organisation's suggestion of continuing the current voluntary membership arrangements whereby only 51 (6.6%) of the 767 active users paid the annual £10 membership fee was regarded as unsustainable and a missed opportunity to develop a more effective and sustainable charging policy.

Attention was also drawn to the relatively small level of funds generated from fundraising activities, which had raised £69 in 2013 and £6 in 2014. It was noted that the cost of fundraising activities in these two years were £82 and £100 respectively, which had resulted in a loss in both years. It was felt that this was another area of potential income that the organisation needed to explore along with staffing costs, which currently amounted to almost 70% of annual expenditure.

Reference was also made to the level of the organisation's Accumulated Fund, which currently stood at £26,807 and which, according to the latest set of audited accounts, included unrestricted funds of £12,026. Whilst it was acknowledged that the development of a new and more sustainable charging policy would take time to develop and implement, it was felt that this balance would enable the organisation to continue to fund its operations as it moved towards the adoption of a more sustainable approach to its future funding arrangements.

RESOLVED

- (1) that no further action be taken regarding this application, it being noted that the organisation has an Accumulated Fund of £26,807; and
- (2) that Yeovil Shopmobility be advised that whilst they are welcome to submit a future grant application, if deemed necessary, any such application would need to demonstrate that the organisation has adopted a more sustainable approach to the funding of its operations.

9/8 **CAPITAL FUND**

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

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the progress of the outstanding matters relating to the disposal of the former Goldcroft allotment site.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the position concerning the Capital Fund and the General Reserve be noted;
- (2) that the current position regarding the rolling programme of play area improvements be noted; and

- (3) that arrangements be made for the Town Council's Property Agent to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss ways of expediting the outstanding matters relating to the disposal of the former Goldcroft allotment site with a view to it being re-marketed at an early date.

9/9 **CHEQUE SIGNATORIES**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the following additional members be appointed to act as cheque signatories, and the Town Council's bank mandate be amended accordingly:

*Pauline Lock
Andrew Pugsley
Manny Roper*

9/10 **SOUTH SOMERSET TOGETHER**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted; and
- (2) that Kris Castle be appointed to represent the Town Council at the 2015 Annual General Meeting of South Somerset Together.

9/11 **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – FEBRUARY/MARCH 2015**

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.

9/12 **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.

9/13 **ALLOTMENTS**

(Terry Ledlie, Andrew Pugsley and Manny Roper, having each 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 confidential report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 9 refers).

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the benefits of providing appropriate signs next to each standpipe to remind allotment tenants of the new restrictions.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that approval be given to the recommendation set out in the report subject to the costs involved being initially met from the Allotment Water Mains Refurbishment/Repairs budget with any additional costs being charged to Contingencies; and
- (3) that approval be given to the provision and installation of the above-mentioned signs.

9/14 **STAFFING ISSUES**

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

RESOLVED

that approval be given to the recommendations set out in the report.

9/15 **INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 13 refers).

RESOLVED

that approval be given to the recommendations set out in the report.

Chairman