

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 31 March 2015**

(7.00pm – 9.05pm)

Present:

Tony Lock - Chairman	John Hann
Martin Bailey	Andrew Kendall
Philip Chandler	Mike Lock
Bridget Dollard	Darren Shutler
David Dollard	Alan Smith
Peter Gubbins	

Also Present:

Alan Tawse Town Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alison Baker of the South Somerset Association for Voluntary and Community Action (SSVCA) indicated that the Organisation was developing closer links with the local community by working two days per week within Yeovil Library.

Steve Haigh of the Radio Yeovil Community Interest Company explained that the Organisation had almost secured the use of a unit in the Quedam Shopping Centre from which to operate, which would complement the accommodation already provided at Yeovil College for training purposes.

8/318 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 January 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8/319 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Fife and Wes Read.

8/320 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Bridget Dollard and David Dollard each declared a personal interest in Agenda item 5 (Grant Applications – St Michael's Scout and Guide Headquarters) in view of the Scout Warrant that they both held.

Tony Lock declared that he had received an unsolicited 'phone call from the applicant for grant assistance towards the Radio Yeovil Community Interest Company (Agenda item 5 - Grant Applications) and that during the discussion he had made it clear to the applicant that he was keeping an open mind on the application, which would be considered and determined by the Committee on its merits.

John Hann declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 (Yeovil Shopmobility) by virtue of his appointment as a trustee serving on the Management Committee of the Organisation.

8/321 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

8/322 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

(a) Yeovil Carnival Committee

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the application having regard to the information provided. It was noted that the Carnival Committee had identified a route that *appeared* to be satisfactory to the Police that a *provisional* date of October had been set for this year.

Whilst Members were supportive of the proposal to reintroduce an annual carnival to Yeovil, it was felt that both of these key factors needed to be confirmed and details provided to enable proper consideration to be given to the application.

Reference was also made to the relatively low level of income that had been raised from fundraising events during 2014, and the absence of any grant applications to other town and parish councils in the Yeovil area. It was suggested that both of these issues needed to be addressed by the Carnival Committee at an early stage to help develop a sustainable approach to future funding arrangements.

RESOLVED that the application be deferred pending clarification of the above-identified matters by the applicant.

(b) Yeovil Child Contact Centre

RESOLVED that a grant of £400 be awarded towards running costs. (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence).

(c) South Somerset Association for Voluntary and Community Action

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the application having regard to the services that the Association provided, its staff costs and its volunteers' expenses.

It was noted that should the Committee be minded to support the application, it would be necessary for a Service Level Agreement to be drawn up.

Attention was drawn to a number of matters in the application on which clarification needed to be sought – including the number of volunteers that it engaged.

Reference was also made to the need for the SSVCA to consider reviewing its membership fee for Furnicare, which it was noted was currently £3 per year, and to explore ways by which the level of Voluntary Income could be increased given the towns and parishes across South Somerset that benefitted from its services but did not contribute towards its operation.

RESOLVED that the application be deferred pending the outcome of a meeting between the Chairman, the Town Clerk and representatives of the SSVCA to explore ways of helping the Organisation to achieve a

more sustainable approach to its future funding arrangements – including the above-identified issues.

(d) St Michael's Scout and Guide Headquarters

RESOLVED that a grant of £1,000 be awarded towards the costs of a new boiler. (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence).

(e) Radio Yeovil Community Interest Company

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the application having regard to the information provided.

Whilst the principle of helping to establish a community radio station in the Town was supported, it was felt that the planned feasibility and impact study needed to be completed, and its outcomes and conclusions evaluated before consideration could be given to granting the level of financial assistance sought.

It was also pointed out that the Town Council's grants policy was funded by an annual budget, which precluded grants being allocated for subsequent years.

Attention was drawn to the applicant's plans to arrange for a 28-day Restricted Service Licence (RSL) on-air radio operation in Yeovil during the weeks leading up to Christmas 2015, which would help to demonstrate whether the venture was viable and was supported by the local community.

It was noted that the applicant was awaiting a decision by all of the organisations that had been approached for funding towards the initiative, and that a £2,000 training grant had been secured from Somerset County Council.

RESOLVED

- (1) that approval, in principle, be given to a grant of £1,000 towards the setting-up and running costs of the proposed community radio station in Yeovil subject to sufficient additional funding being secured to enable the venture to operate and broadcast from their town centre premises (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence); and
- (2) that further consideration be given to the remainder of the funding sought in the grant application following the completion of the planned feasibility and impact study (including its outcomes and conclusions) and the planned 28-day RSL on-air radio operation later this year, thereby enabling the future viability of the venture and its support by the local community to be evaluated.

(It was noted that the unallocated balance remaining in the 2014/15 Grants Budget amounted to £15,291 and it was suggested that the merits of carrying this forward to 2015/16 be discussed later in the meeting under Agenda Item 10 (Carry Forward Requests).

8/323 **YEOVIL SHOPMOBILITY**

(John Hann, 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).

During the ensuing discussion, reference was 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.

RESOLVED

that the developments set out in the above report be noted and a further report to the next meeting be awaited.

8/324 **NEW INITIATIVES**

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

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to a number of practical problems that it was felt would be encountered in safely operating the proposed buggy in the Town Centre, and the significant costs of providing a long-term service.

Attention was drawn to the narrow sections of the pedestrian precincts in Middle Street and the existing loading/unloading and disabled parking bays at its junction with Bond Street, which it was felt would hinder access during busy periods. It was also pointed out that the operation of the weekly markets and monthly Farmers' Market would limit the use of the proposed buggy on the suggested route.

Reference was also made to the difficulties that users of mobility scooters already faced in accessing certain parts of the Town Centre that had been included in the proposed route, and it was felt that in view of all of these considerations, the bid was not viable and could not be supported.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the bid be noted; and
- (2) that the Town Council be advised of this Committee's view that, given the practical problems which it was felt would be encountered in safely operating the proposed buggy in the Town Centre, and the significant costs of providing a long-term service, no further action be taken regarding this bid.

8/325 **NEW WARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the proposals set out in the above report be noted and supported; and
- (2) that the Town Council be requested to approve their adoption.

8/326 CAPITAL FUND

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

RESOLVED

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

8/327 CARRY FORWARD REQUESTS

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

RESOLVED that approval be given to carrying forward the following unallocated budgets into the Financial Year 2015/16:

Committee	Purpose	Budget	Amount
Grounds and General Maintenance Committee	Contribution towards the upgrade of Kingston View play area (Minute 8/301 refers)	Corporate Allotment Maintenance Materials and Equipment Fence Repairs Labour Water Mains Refurbishment* (*saving in contract price)	£1,106 £100 £1,768 £2,160 <u>£2,366</u> £7,500
Grounds and General Maintenance Committee	Outdoor Gym in Milford Park (in principle)	<i>New Initiatives</i>	<i>£10,000 carried forward from 2013/14</i>
Planning and Licensing Committee	Interactive Screen in Reception	New Initiatives	£3,000
Buildings and Civic Matters Committee	Future Town Centre Environmental Improvements	<i>Town Centre Environmental Improvements</i>	<i>£8,000 carried forward from 2012/13</i>
Buildings and Civic Matters Committee	Future Town Centre Environmental Improvements	<i>Town Centre Environmental Improvements</i>	<i>£8,000 carried forward from 2013/14</i>
Promotions and Activities Committee	Help promote the Town	Customised Souvenirs	£351
Buildings and Civic Matters	Enhancement of Yeovil CCTV	<i>Community Safety</i>	<i>£4,830 carried forward from 2013/14</i>

Committee			
Buildings and Civic Matters Committee	Enhancement of Yeovil CCTV	Community Safety	£4,930
Buildings and Civic Matters Committee	Provision of Bus Shelters	Transport Support	£4,380
Policy, Resources and Finance Committee	Grants Provision (Minute 8/322 refers)	Grants	£15,291

8/328 **MEMBERS' TRAINING**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the proposals set out in the above report be supported.

8/329 **RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – 2015/16**

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

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted;
- (2) that the draft revised risk management strategy for 2015/16 be adopted; and
- (3) that the Committee is satisfied that the internal audit arrangements that are in place are effective and meet the Council's legal obligations.

8/330 **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – DECEMBER 2014/JANUARY 2015**

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

RESOLVED

that the Financial Statements and payments therein for the above months be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no further comments from members of the public.