

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of the public present.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 19th May 2004 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr N J Chard (Chairman)
Cllr P Chambers
Cllr N G R Clarke
Cllr D E Cracknell
Cllr N W Light
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine
Cllr B H Terry

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk

F/3622 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr M H Thierry and Cllr S C Wright.

F/3623 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Chard declared an interest in F/3625 as the owner of a property in Hurn Road. He left the room during the discussion.

F/3624 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st April 2004, having been previously circulated, be agreed and signed as a correct record.

F/3625 TRANSIT AND TEMPORARY STOPPING SITE FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

Cllr Chard declared an interest in this item and left the room. Cllr Chambers took the chair.

The Town Clerk explained that this issue had been previously considered by the Planning, Town and Environment Committee and an objection had been lodged on behalf of the Town Council (P/4057 refers) in order to meet the consultation deadline. He asked members to consider whether they wished to reaffirm this objection or withdraw it.

The Chairman introduced Mr Dave Ayre from Dorset County Council, who spoke to members about the County Council's Policy on Stopping Sites for Gypsies and Travellers. He said that unauthorised camping by gypsies and travellers was becoming increasingly controversial and the County Council would like to do more to better manage the situation. There had been 15 unauthorised encampments in East Dorset in the last year and these had caused much damage to people's livelihoods. The Government has given Police extra powers to deal with travellers. However, the additional powers are only available if local authorities are able to provide official temporary sites. In addition, there are 100% grants available from the Government to provide these sites. The County Council decided that it would like to achieve these powers and therefore initiated a site search, focussing on its own land first. They looked at 19 locations in Dorset, identified 15 sites suitable for inclusion in a consultation process and finally consulted on 10 sites. A needs assessment was carried out based on known travelling patterns and this showed that a maximum of 26 sites were required in the County. In East

Dorset, there is a need for 2 transit sites and 1 site for new travellers. There were many objections to the Hurn Road site and these have been reported to the Council's Panel, which will be making recommendations to the Environment Committee on 16th June. Some consultees have suggested alternative locations, particularly along the A31, and the Council will be looking into these over time. It was noted that Hampshire County Council is currently going through same process with a target to identify one site for each district in the county, and has set up a series of panels of county and district councillors to take the project forward.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the objection previously submitted, as agreed at the Planning, Town & Environment Committee on 7th May 2004, be re-affirmed.
- 2) That Dorset County Council be requested to keep the Town Council advised of any further sites identified in the A31 corridor or that might affect Ringwood.

F/3626

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS (Annex 'A')

a) Schedule of Monthly Payments – April 2004

- i) No. 1 Account

RESOLVED: That the Schedule be AGREED.

- ii) Imprest Account

RESOLVED: That the Schedule be AGREED.

b) Cheques for signature

Cllrs Chard and Cracknell signed the following cheques:

Cheque No.	Payee	Amount	Item/Service
2075	Avoncrop	£1385.58	Fertiliser

c) Petty Cash Statement

RESOLVED: That the Petty Cash Statement be AGREED.

d) Inter-Account Transfers

Members received a Statement of Inter-Account Transfers for May 2004.

RESOLVED: That the transfers be AGREED. Cllrs Chard and Cracknell duly signed the report.

e) Statement of Town Council Balances

RESOLVED: That the Statement be RECEIVED and NOTED.

F/3627

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NJC PAY SETTLEMENT 2004

The Town Clerk advised members that pay negotiations were ongoing and asked for authority to allow him to pay the salary increase when agreed by the National Joint Council. It was noted that the employers were resisting the Union's pay claim on affordability grounds and had offered an increase of 7% spread over 3 years, which equates to an annual increase of

2.3%, whilst the District Council was at the same time commending a 4.6% rise on members' allowances.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Town Clerk be authorised to pay salary increases when the NJC Pay Settlement has been agreed; and
- 2) That a letter be sent to the District Council commenting on the apparent discrepancy being applied to affordability in relation to increases in employees' salaries and members' allowances, and asking for a more consistent approach in the future.

F/3628

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

It was noted that the Independent Remuneration Panel had recommended an increase of 4.6% in the annual basic members' allowance from £558 to £584.

RECOMMENDATION: That the annual basic members allowance be increased to £584 with effect from 18th May 2004.

F/3629

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

It was noted that arrangements concerning the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure had been amended. This meant that the Council must appoint a "specified person" to be responsible for giving a First Stage decision in response to an application by an aggrieved member of the Pension Scheme.

RESOLVED: That the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee be appointed as the Council's "specified person" to deal with the First Stage of the Local Government Pension Scheme's Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure.

F/3630

MILLENNIUM CLOCK

The Town Clerk reported that the Millennium Clock was in need of repainting and that a quotation of £240 had been received for the work. However, there was no allocation in the budget for this work to be carried out.

RESOLVED: That the quotation of £240 to repaint the Millennium Clock be accepted.

F/3631

NFDC LIAISON MEETING

The Town Clerk reported that the District Council had arranged a special Liaison Meeting with Parish and Town Councils for 7.30pm on Thursday 27th May. The meeting had been called to discuss planning issues generally and proposals from the District Council for closer working relationships.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Clarke and the Town Clerk attend the Liaison Meeting with the District Council on 27th May 2004.

F/3632

URGENT BUSINESS

- i) Quomp

It was noted that County Cllr John Waddington had organised a meeting to discuss the issues in the Quomp with residents on Monday 14th June at 2.30pm.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Clarke be nominated to attend.

There was a second item of urgent business that the Town Clerk wished to raise after the exclusion of public and press.

F/3633

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: That, under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and the press be excluded from the meeting of the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information.
(*Confidential Annex 'B'*).

F/3634

MILLSTREAM FISHING RIGHTS

The Town Clerk reported that 2 offers had been received for the Millstream Fishing Rights. However, both offers were considerably lower than the guide price. He therefore asked for authority to respond to Woolley & Wallis to say that the offers were unacceptable.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk inform Woolley & Wallis that the 2 offers received for the fishing rights were unacceptable.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.05pm.