

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of public present.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday 13th December 2005 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr P Chamber (Chairman)
Cllr N G R Clarke
Cllr D E Cracknell
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr N W Light
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine
Cllr B H Terry

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Martin Townsend, Finance Manager

F/3857 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr N J Chard, Cllr M F J Daly and Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan.

F/3858 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

F/3859 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 16th November 2005, having been previously circulated, be agreed and signed as a correct record.

F/3860 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Members considered the Monthly Financial Reports attached to these minutes as Annex 'A'.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the list of cheque payments on the Imprest account be approved.
- 2) That the list of Petty Cash payments be approved.
- 3) That the Statement of Town Council Balances be received and noted.
- 4) That the Inter Account Transfers be authorised. The report was signed by Cllrs Chambers and Clarke.

F/3861 PROPOSED EXTENSION TO OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AT GREENWAYS

The Town Clerk reported that, although it had been originally understood that it would be possible to convert the loft to offices with access via an external staircase, planning officers were not now happy with this proposal. However, quotations had been received to build a first floor extension above the existing ground floor extension at the rear of the building. As this would involve negotiations with the current first floor tenants and submission of a planning application, the Town Clerk felt that it would not be possible to achieve this in 2006/07. He

therefore recommended that officers look at the proposal during the next year to ascertain whether it was a viable proposition and include the scheme in the capital programme for 2007/08.

RESOLVED: That officers investigate the feasibility of building a first floor extension at Greenways and, if it is found to be viable, the project be included in the 2007/08 capital programme.

F/3862

COMMITTEE BUDGET 2006/07

Members considered Reports with Appendices in respect of:

- (1) Expenditure items included in the Budget for 2005/06,
- (2) Budget Proposals for 2006/07 and
- (3) The Revised Budget 2005/06 and Original Budget 2006/07 Schedules for the Policy & Finance Committee.

The Town Clerk reported that £5,000 had been received from the Chamber of Trade & Commerce towards the Christmas lights and, therefore, the net expenditure this year would be approximately £14,000. However, he assured members that any underspend would be carried forward to the Christmas lights budget for 2006/07.

The Finance Manager explained that the Committee's Holding Accounts showed the total cost of all employees. However, these costs had now been re-allocated to individual committees, based on an estimation of staff time.

Members discussed the proposal to purchase a mobile CCTV camera and agreed not to proceed with this. However, it was suggested that the Council should consider acquiring a fixed camera for Carvers Recreation Ground, which could be linked to the District Council's control room. It was therefore agreed that this acquisition should be investigated and provisionally included in the future capital programme.

It had previously been agreed to underwrite the 2006 Festival for £10,000. However, it was felt that, realistically, there was no need to precept for the full amount as it was hoped that sponsorship could be secured. It was therefore agreed to reduce this budget to £5,000 and, if required, to take up to a further £5,000 from reserves.

Following detailed consideration of the Reports and Schedules, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Expenditure Report in respect of the Budget Provision for 2005/06 be noted.
- (2) That the Committee's prioritised Budget Proposals for 2006/07 (*Annex 'B'*) be approved.
- (3) That the revised Budget 2005/06 and Original Budget 2006/07 for the Policy & Finance Committee (*Annex 'C'*) be approved..

F/3863

COUNCIL BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2006/07

Members considered the Town Clerk's report and Appendices on the Council's budget and precept for 2006/07. It was noted that funds could be taken from reserves in order to keep the increase in the precept at an acceptable level. Members agreed a 5% increase, which

represents an increase of £2.41 for the year for a Band D dwelling. In order to achieve this, £52,511 would be transferred from the Council's general reserve.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) That all proposals marked Priority A and B in *Annex 'B'* for Policy & Finance Committee be accepted and included in the Council's overall budget for 2006/07.
- 2) That the base budget for Policy & Finance Committee, as set out in *Annex 'C'* be approved.
- 3) That the base budget for Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee, as set out in *Annex 'D'* be approved.
- 4) That the proposals marked Priority A in *Annex 'E'* for Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee be accepted and included in the Council's overall budget for 2006/07.
- 5) That the base budget for Planning, Town & Environment Committee, as set out in *Annex 'F'*, be approved.
- 6) That proposals marked A and B in *Annex 'G'* for Planning, Town & Environment Committee be accepted and included in the Council's overall budget for 2006/07.
- 7) That the Council's overall net budget of £321,691 for 2006/07 be approved (*Annex 'H'*)
- 8) That the Council approve a transfer of £52,511 from the general reserve for 2006/07.
- 9) That the Council approve a precept of £269,180 for 2006/07.

F/3864

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – 'SAVE OUR SERVICES'

The Town Clerk reported that a letter had been received from the leader of Hampshire County Council asking for the Town Council's support in pressing the government to make permanent additional grants to reduce council tax rises.

RESOLVED: That a letter be sent to Desmond Swayne MP and the Rt Hon David Miliband MP, Minister of Communities and Local Government, supporting the need for additional grants to reduce council tax rises.

F/3865

DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Members considered revised Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, which had been based on a model provided by NALC.

RECOMMENDED: That the revised Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures as set out in Annex 'I' be approved for consultation with employees.

F/3866

ADVERTISING BANNERS ON RAILINGS OF ROTARY PICNIC AREA

The Town Clerk reported that there were two educational establishments outside of the Town's boundary that wished to erect notices from time to time on the railings of the Rotary picnic area. He reminded members that the Council had previously agreed to remove all signs relating to events not in Ringwood. However, both establishments believed that they were part of the Ringwood community and members agreed that their signs should not be removed in future.

RESOLVED: That advertising signs erected by Moyles Court School and Waldorf School be not removed from the railings of the Rotary picnic area.

F/3867

RINGWOOD FESTIVAL 2006

Members received the Minutes of the Festival Steering Committee (Annex 'J') held on Monday 5th December, together with notes of a meeting held with the Sealed Knot about the proposed re-enactment to take place on 8th and 9th July 2006.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Festival Steering Committee held on Monday 5th December be approved.

F/3868

URGENT BUSINESS

i) Fairtrade

The Town Clerk reported that the Fairtrade Working Party had held its first meeting and had requested a budget of £500 for publicity.

RESOLVED: That the Fairtrade Working Party be given a budget of £500.

ii) War Memorial

The Town Clerk reported that £7000 had been included in the budget to extend the existing footpath in matching blocks and for repair works to the War Memorial. Tenders had now been received and it was noted that the works could be carried out within budget. It was noted that the lowest tenderer had suggested the use of black granite as an alternative to portland stone. However, members agreed that the use of portland stone would be more acceptable.

RESOLVED: That the lowest tenders received for the extension of the footpath and repairs to the War Memorial be accepted.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm.