

OPEN SESSION: There was one member of public present.

## **MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005 at 7.05pm

PRESENT: Cllr P Chambers (Chairman)  
Cllr N J Chard  
Cllr N G R Clarke  
Cllr D E Cracknell  
Cllr M F J Daly  
Cllr L C Ford  
Cllr N W Light  
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine  
Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan  
Cllr B H Terry

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

### **F/3790 APOLOGIES**

All members were present.

### **F/3791 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

### **F/3792 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May 2005, having been previously circulated, be agreed and signed as a correct record.

*With the agreement of the Committee, item 14 was taken next.*

### **F/3793 FAIRTRADE TOWNS**

The Town Clerk reported that he had had an approach from Ringwood School asking if the Council would consider supporting the principle of Ringwood becoming a Fairtrade town. This would require the Council to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee and a range of Fairtrade products must be available in local shops and businesses. It was suggested that students could take part in a preparatory audit of establishments in the town using and/or selling Fairtrade products. It was noted that the Council would want to involve students in the Market Town Healthcheck and members felt that this was an ideal opportunity to establish a link with the School.

Cllr Mrs Sullivan was concerned that, if members were to work more closely with school children, they may be required to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau check and other

paperwork required under new legislation. The Town Clerk replied that this would not be necessary if students attended Council meetings.

**RESOLVED:** That a delegation of students from Ringwood School be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to present an argument for Ringwood to become a Fairtrade town.

**F/3794**  
**MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Members considered the Monthly Financial Reports (*Annex 'A'*).

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the list of cheque payments on the No. 1 account be approved.
- 2) That the list of cheque payments on the Imprest account be approved.
- 3) That the list of Petty Cash payments be approved.
- 4) That the Statement of Town Council Balances be received and noted.
- 5) That the Inter Account Transfers be authorised. The report was signed by Cllrs Chambers and Chard.

**F/3795**  
**DRAFT FINAL ACCOUNTS 2004/05**

The Finance Manager presented his report on the Draft Final Accounts for 2004/05 (*Annex 'B'*). This detailed the actual expenditure and income for 2004/05 and made recommendations on unspent budgets to be carried forward and transfers to provisions and the general reserve.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the draft actual income and expenditure for 2004/05 as shown in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.
- 2) That the underspend for 2004/05 totalling £13,765 be carried forward to 2005/06.
- 3) That a transfer of £68,454.58 to the General Reserve be approved.
- 4) That a transfer of £8,148.65 to provisions be approved.

**F/3796**  
**APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID**

**i) Avon Valley Concerts**

Avon Valley Concerts had applied for a grant of £200 towards a series of five classical music concerts to be held in 2005/06.

**RESOLVED:** That a grant of £200 be awarded to Avon Valley Concerts towards the cost of staging classical music concerts in 2005/06.

**ii) Salterns Playscheme**

Salterns Playscheme had applied for a grant up to £250 towards a summer playscheme for children with special needs. It was noted that at least 5 children from the Ringwood area would benefit from this playscheme in 2005.

**RESOLVED:** That a grant of £50 be awarded to Salterns Playscheme towards the cost of the summer playscheme.

**iii) Ringwood & District Community Association**

*Cllr Rippon-Swaine declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in this item, as the applicant was well known to him.*

Ringwood & District Community Association had applied for a grant towards the cost of a new minibus for the service operated by the Association for the elderly and disabled residents of the town and surrounding area.

**RESOLVED:** That a grant of £1,000 be awarded to Ringwood & District Community Association towards the cost of a new minibus.

**iv) Ringwood Disabled Sports Club**

Ringwood Disabled Sports Club had applied for a grant of £200 towards the cost of running the Club, which offers its members therapy through swimming. It was noted that membership of the Club had fallen by 50% as a result of the closure of the swimming pool for over four months at the beginning of the year.

**RESOLVED:** That a grant of £100 be awarded to Ringwood Disabled Sports Club towards the cost of running the Club.

**F/3797**

**PROPOSED CLOSURE OF AMBULANCE STATIONS ACROSS HAMPSHIRE**

Members noted that ambulance chiefs had proposed the closure of 16 ambulance stations across Hampshire, including Ringwood. Of the 19 existing stations, only 3 would remain in Southampton, Basingstoke and Portsmouth. The Town Clerk informed members that when the government changed the structure of district and county councils, it provided specifically for those authorities to scrutinise the services of other authorities, such as the health service. He therefore recommended that the Council should ask Hampshire County Council to formally scrutinise these proposals. Cllr Clarke reported that the County Council had not yet been consulted on the proposals and had therefore written to the ambulance service in this respect. He said that the proposal was cost and estates driven and that it needed to focus more on clinical effectiveness and service, as residents needed to be assured that the proposals were in their best interest.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That Hampshire County Council be asked to formally scrutinise the ambulance service's proposal to close 16 ambulance stations across the county, in the wider interest of the whole district and its residents.
- 2) That New Forest District Council be asked to support this request.
- 3) That the Town Clerk's action to bring this matter to the attention of other large town and parish councils in the district be approved.

**F/3798**

**GREENWAYS BUILDING WORKS**

The Town Clerk reported that he had received a quotation of £80 to expose the lintels above the bay windows in order to investigate any structural damage and provide a quotation for

repair. He had also been advised that the porch was in very bad condition and needed to be replaced at a cost of £1,600.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the quotation of £80 to expose the lintels above the bay windows at Greenways be accepted.
- 2) That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to order repair works, provided the cost fell within the approved budget.
- 3) That the quotation of £1,600 to replace the front porch be accepted, and that this amount be taken from the General Reserve.

**F/3799**

**LICENCE TO REPRODUCE THE TOWN CREST**

The Town Clerk reported that the Council currently issues licences to reproduce the Town Crest on stationery, products, mementoes etc., as specified by the organisation/trader applying. In 1982 the Town Council set the charge for a Licence at £10.00, but over the past few years this charge has not been levied as it was felt that it discouraged people from applying for a Licence. He felt that use of the crest should be encouraged and recommended that the fee be withdrawn.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Town Clerk be given delegated powers to deal with the issuing of Licences to reproduce the Town Crest, on completion of the appropriate application form.
- 2) That the policy of charging £10 for the issuing of a Licence be withdrawn and future Licences issued free of charge.

**F/3800**

**RINGWOOD FESTIVAL**

**i) Festival 2006**

Cllr Cracknell reported that he had met with members of the Civil War Society about the possibility of staging a battle re-enactment as part of the 2006 Festival. This would involve 1000 re-enactors and would require a large area of land for the battle and encampment. Land at Nouale Lane had been identified as an appropriate site and an initial conversation with the farmer had been positive. In order to stage the event, it was estimated that a budget of up to £15,000 could be required. This amount could be offset by a Lottery grant, sale of franchises for beer tent, ice cream, food etc., charges for car parking and sale of programmes. However, it would be necessary for the Council to underwrite the total cost of the event.

**RESOLVED:** That a provisional budget of £15,000 be included in the Council's budget for 2006/07 for a battle re-enactment as part of the 2006 Festival.

**ii) New Milton Pedal Car Grand Prix**

Cllr Cracknell reported that the Council had been given a pedal car and it was hoped to enter a team into the New Milton Pedal Car Grand Prix on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2005, for which the entry fee would be £40.

**RESOLVED:** That the entry fee of £40 for the New Milton Pedal Car Grand Prix be approved.

**F/3801**  
**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

The Town Clerk reported that the Working Party had now met with three companies that had quoted for the Town's Christmas Lights and had considered an analysis of these quotations.

The Working Party had agreed that Gala was offering the best value package and recommended that the Council enter into a three-year agreement with the company. It was further agreed that the proposal to erect a statement display across Mansfield Road was no longer feasible due to the width involved and was suggested that this be moved to another location, possibly Meeting House Lane or the High Street. It was noted that the Working Party would look to put a structure on the town roundabout in 2006, which could be used for Christmas lights, and possibly to advertise other events in the town throughout the year.

The quotations to erect plastic trees and lights on individual businesses had been in the region of £150 each. The Chamber of Trade & Commerce believed that it could offer a package to include a real tree, lights and installation for between £30 and £40.

The Town Clerk reported that he was still investigating the costs involved with the electricity supply, but warned members that, if a new supply was required from the ground, the cost of the infrastructure could double. It was hoped that the funds carried forward from 2004/05, together with the £2,500 from the Chamber of Trade & Commerce, would be sufficient to cover these costs and that the current year's budget would be sufficient to meet the cost of the festoon lighting. However, the Working Party had recommended that a further £10,000 be allocated from reserves in the event that the cost of the infrastructure increased and the Chamber of Trade was unable to recover the cost of trees from all businesses.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That Gala and its installation company be appointed to provide Christmas lights on a three-year contract.
- 2) That the statement display, originally planned for Mansfield Road, be moved to an alternative location to be determined.
- 3) That real trees be used for display on individual businesses and that the lights be obtained independently.
- 4) That white lights be erected on the deciduous tree in the Market Place.
- 5) That an additional £10,000 be allocated from the General Reserve to meet additional costs.
- 6) That members be supplied with a revised financial statement, including recurring annual costs.

**F/3802**  
**GROUNDS MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT**

Members considered a recommendation from the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee that the Council purchase a front mounted rotary mower and meet the cost through the existing budget provision, income from the sale of the John Deere Fairway mower and £2,500 from Reserves.

**RESOLVED:** That £2,500 be allocated from the General Reserve towards the cost of a front mounted rotary mower.

**F/3803**

**8<sup>TH</sup> HEALTH FOR ALL IN THE NEW FOREST CONFERENCE**

The Town Clerk reported that an invitation had been received for members to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> Health for All in the New Forest Conference in October, which would be themed on obesity.

**RESOLVED:** That no members wished to attend this conference.

**F/3804**

**URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.27pm.