

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

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 16th March 2005 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr P Chambers (Chairman)
Cllr N G R Clarke
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr N W Light
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine
Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan
Cllr B H Terry
Cllr M H Thierry

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Cllr D E Cracknell

F/3743 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr N J Chard.

F/3744 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All members declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the grant application from Bisterne United Sports Club due to Cllr Chard's involvement with the Club.
Cllr Light declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the grant application from the Ringwood Parochial Church Council as he is a member of Bisterne Church, which is a sister church of the Ringwood Parish Church.

F/3745 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th February 2005, having been previously circulated, be agreed and signed as a correct record.

F/3746 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Members discussed 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 Light.
- 6) That the Summary Budget Reports be received and noted.

**F/3747
GRANT AID**

i) Vitalise (formerly Winged Fellowship Trust)

Vitalise had applied for a grant of £100 towards the cost of providing two care break weeks for disabled people from Ringwood.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £50 be awarded to Vitalise.

ii) Turn Up The Fun Play Project

Turn Up The Fun Play Project had applied for a grant towards the delivery of free community play projects throughout the summer holidays. With the permission of the Chairman, Cllr Cracknell spoke in support of this application. He said that the scheme had been running very successfully for several years and operated in areas of Ringwood that had been classed as poor.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £200 be awarded to Turn Up The Fun Play Project.

iii) New Forest & Romsey Victim Support

New Forest & Romsey Victim Support had applied for a grant of £350 to assist with the costs of supervision, training and travel expenses for new volunteers. Members noted that the organisation had responded to 136 crime referrals in Ringwood during the past year. However, the information provided did not categorise the referrals and there was no indication as to how much time had been given to each victim. Cllr Ford spoke in support of the application and said that all referrals had to come from the Police, who were very supportive of the organisation.

RESOLVED: That the application for grant aid from New Forest & Romsey Victim Support be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee to allow for further information to be made available in order to make a more realistic judgement.

iv) Bisterne United Football Club

Bisterne United Football Club had applied for a grant towards the purchase of new grass cutting machinery at a cost of over £3,000. With the permission of the Chairman, Cllr Cracknell spoke in support of this application, which would benefit five youth football teams. He said that if these young people could not play at Bisterne, they would not be playing at all. It was noted that the Club's income was in the region of £4,000 per annum and there was some concern that, if the Council awarded a grant, the Club may have difficulty finding the remainder of the money required to purchase the mower. However, it was believed that there were other benefactors who would assist the Club.

RESOLVED: That, in view of the facilities provided for youth football, the application be treated as an exceptional case, and a grant of £750 be awarded to Bisterne United Football Club.

Members agreed to consider an additional application that had been received since the publication of the agenda.

v) Ringwood Parochial Church Council

Ringwood Parochial Church Council had applied for a grant of £250 to assist in the mounting of a Flower Festival from 18th May to 21st May 2005. It was noted that these festivals had

proved to be popular in the past and had attracted many visitors to the town from outlying areas. It was therefore believed that this event would be of benefit to the town.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £250 be awarded to Ringwood Parochial Church Council.

It was further **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That grants awarded to Vitalise, Turn Up the Fun Play Project and Ringwood Parochial Church Council be classified as s137 grants.
- 2) That any underspend in this year's grants budget be transferred to the grants budget for 2005/06.

F/3748

ELECTION / CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS

The Town Clerk reported that there had only been one candidate for the North Ward and therefore Mr Don Cole would be formally elected to the Council on 31st March 2005. There had been no request for an election for the East Ward and therefore it would be necessary to co-opt .

RESOLVED: That the procedure for co-option should be as follows:

- i) The co-option to be advertised in the next edition of the Ringwood & Fordingbridge News, advising candidates that they may make a written statement.
- ii) All candidates be invited to attend the April meeting of the Full Council and be given the opportunity to make a presentation.
- iii) Following these presentations, Full Council to make a decision.

F/3749

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Town Clerk reported that, in the past, there had not been proper arrangements in place to connect Christmas lights to the electric supply. It was therefore necessary to erect boxes on several buildings in the town centre and the Council would need to enter into Wayleave agreements for these.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk be authorised to enter into Wayleave agreements for Christmas light fixings.

F/3750

KEY WORKER ACCOMMODATION

The Town Clerk informed members that there was a key worker accommodation scheme for employees of New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council, and suggested that this should also apply to employees of Town and Parish Councils.

RESOLVED: That New Forest District Council be requested to include Town and Parish Council staff in the key worker scheme, if they complied with the selection criteria.

F/3751

TOWN PLAN AND MARKET TOWN HEALTH CHECK

The Town Clerk reminded members that budget provision had been made in 2005/06 to move forward with the Town Plan and Market Town Health Check and that some of this money had been allocated to the Tourism Group to complete part of the Health Check. He suggested that the Council employ a post-graduate student from either Southampton or Bournemouth University to do the research and preparation work required. He also reported that he had

been invited to become a member of a District Council focus group looking at its Statement of Community Involvement as part of the Local Development Framework, and he hoped that this would be of benefit to the Council for work on the Town Plan.

Cllr Thierry said that the biggest issue currently affecting residents of the Town was car parking and he was concerned that no action had yet been taken to relieve the problem. The Town Clerk said that he had met with Chris Malyon at the District Council to say that taking no action until 2006 was not acceptable, and he was hoping to set up a meeting with him and the Portfolio Holder to see how the Councils could work together to address the issue.

Cllr Light said that the Council had asked the District Council in September 2004 to remark the lorry parking area for cars, but this had not yet happened. Cllr Thierry said it was the responsibility of the Portfolio Holder, Cllr Heron.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Town Clerk be authorised to investigate employing a post-graduate student to work on the Town Plan and Market Town Health Check.
- 2) That the Town Clerk write to Chris Malyon to ask why suggestions made in September 2004 by the Town Council had not be followed up.
- 3) That Cllr Heron be invited to attend the next meeting of the Full Council to explain the delay in remarking the lorry park.

F/3752

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

It was noted that Hampshire County Council would be undertaking a full review of the Mobile Library Service during 2005, and that the Town Council had been asked for its views on the service. Cllr Mrs Sullivan stated that residents had to have a special mobile library card to use the service and could not use those cards issued by the main library.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That details of the Mobile Library Service be publicised on the Council's website.
- 2) That it be suggested that residents should only have to have one library card that could be used both at the main library and on the mobile units.

F/3753

TERRY WATERIDGE SOCCER ACADEMY

The Town Clerk reported that the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee had previously authorised Ringwood Football Club to allow the Terry Wateridge Soccer Academy to play one game a month between February and May 2005. However, this information had not been passed on to the Academy in time for the games to be scheduled. It was now suggested that they be allowed to play four games under lights on any Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday between now and the end of May.

RESOLVED: That Ringwood Football Club be authorised to allow the Terry Wateridge Soccer Academy to play four games under lights on any Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday between now and the end of May.

F/3754

URGENT BUSINESS

i) Martin Townsend

The Town Clerk asked for approval for Mr Townsend to attend a conference to assist him in sourcing grants available to the Town Council.

RESOLVED: That approval be given for Mr Townsend to attend a conference relating to the sourcing of grants.

ii) New Forest Association of Local Councils (NFALC)

Cllr Clarke reported that he had attended a meeting of NFALC when the redrafted constitution had been discussed. He said that this group could be a useful third tier liaison mechanism but that, under its existing constitution, it served little or no useful purpose and was unable to deliver the effectiveness it warrants. He had therefore offered the service of the Town Clerk to assist in re-writing part of the constitution.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk be authorised to assist in the re-writing of the NFALC constitution.

iii) Gazebo

Cllr Thierry suggested the Council should purchase a gazebo for use at special events, such as the forthcoming launch of Toad Corner, and for use at funerals at the Cemetery during inclement weather. Cllr Light replied that this had been included in the wish list for the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee's budget but had been taken out as it was felt there was insufficient need.

RESOLVED: That the number of funerals during inclement weather be monitored during the year, with a view to re-considering the purchase of a gazebo when setting the budget for 2006/07.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25pm.