

ANNEX B

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN

As Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee I always find writing the report for the Annual Assembly extremely difficult in that I would wish to avoid presenting a long list of figures but equally do not want to repeat the same points that are raised by other committee chairmen. We are the enabling committee, the one that deals with setting of frameworks and managing the finance which ensures that others can do the actual work that is of benefit to the people of Ringwood.

That said the figures are important, the precept for 2007/8 was £320,790 and you need to know where your money was spent and that it was spent wisely. Total expenditure for the year amounted to £455,026 off set by income of £128,101 making a net expenditure of £326,925. The net expenditure was funded by the precept and a transfer from reserves of £6,135. The variance on the revised budget was 1.56%.

Net expenditure broken down to committees was:

Policy & Finance	£ 131,858
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	£ 182,971
Planning, Town & Environment	£ 12,096

One significant change from the original budget was that we have revised the way it which we deal with the funding for the capital project at the Ringwood Junior School in that the payments made from developers contributions will be made directly by the District Council. It is the same amount of money and we will still be in control of the expenditure but there seemed little point in additional and unnecessary administration.

The last set of figures that I will give you are:

Total Bank Balances @ 31/03/07	£ 347,763
Total Bank Balances @ 31/03/08	£ 330,201

These figures show that although we are not a wealthy council we are in a sound financial position. Our accounts are open for inspection for those of you who would wish for more details and the monthly committee papers are published on the Town Council web site.

Moving on, one item of Town Council expenditure I would wish to mention is the Christmas Lights. In recent years the Council's role has changed. We used to provide a grant to the Chamber of Trade who were then responsible for the lights but in recent years the Town Council has taken on this responsibility and the Chamber have donated towards the costs. This change has seen an improvement in the display, particularly noticeable in the Market Place, but this has come at a cost and we are looking for feedback from the people of the town on how this should be taken forward in future years.

Finally I would like to look forward. With the retirement of Lyn Wickens we have taken the opportunity to introduce a new structure within the office - some of the people you will know and some will be new to you:

Terry Simpson	Town Clerk
Jo Stannard	Deputy Town Clerk
Martin Townsend	Finance Manager
Alyson Greenfield	Finance Officer

Christine Smith
Sue Godwin
Claire Perrens
Richard Eldred

Office Manager
PA to Mayor & Town Clerk
Meetings Administrator
Technical Officer

Cllr Jeremy Heron
Chairman