

OPEN SESSION: There was one member of the public present.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 21 May 2008 at 7.00pm

Apologies

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Brian Terry, the Town Mayor.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Chard and Cllr Wiseman declared personal and prejudicial interests in Ringwood Town Football Club (*see minute F/4276 below*).

The Chairman welcomed new Councillor, Barbara Woodfield, who was attending to help inform her decision on which Committees to join.

PRESENT:

Cllr J D Heron (Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr N R G Clarke
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine
Cllr J Urwin

IN ATTENDANCE:

James Fullick, Student Advisor
Rachel Giles, Student Advisor
Claire Perrens, Meetings Administrator
Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Martin Townsend, Finance Manager
Cllr B Wiseman
Cllr A Woodfield

F/4263

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on 16 April and 7 May 2008 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

F/4264

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the list of cheque payments on the Imprest account be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Ford signed the report.
- 2) That the list of Petty Cash payments be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Ford signed the report.
- 3) That the Statement of Town Council Balances be received and noted.
- 4) That the Inter Account Transfer be authorised. Cll Heron and Ford signed the report.
- 5) That the Finance Manager's report and Summary Budget Reports be received and noted.

F/4265

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw (*Annex 'B' attached*).

F/4266 BAD DEBTS

Councillors considered the provision for Bad Debts in the Finance Manager's report and Summary Budget Reports (Appendix 2) (see *Annex A*)

RESOLVED: That the situation with reference to the Bad Debts provision be noted.

The meeting was resumed and members of press and public invited back in.

F4267

STANDING ORDERS - QUESTIONS

Members considered the Town Clerk's written report reviewing Standing Orders as to Meetings with regard to the requirement for written notice of seven working days to be given of questions of the Mayor or Town Clerk. (*Attached as Annex 'C'*)

The Town Clerk emphasised that this Standing Order relates to Council meetings; questions can be put to the Sub-Committees without the notice requirement, and also members of the public are able to attend meetings to ask questions.

RESOLVED: That in order to maintain the effective administration of the Council, no changes be made to the Standing Order at the present time.

F/4268

STUDENT ADVISORS

Members considered the Town Clerk's written report on the role of the Student Advisors from autumn 2007 to date.

The Student Advisers James Fullick and Rachel Giles left the room whilst item 4 below was discussed.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) That the appointment of student advisors on the basis of the Protocol previously adopted by the Town Council be continued on a permanent basis, subject to determination of the issues at recommendations 2. and 3. below;
- 2) That no age limit be introduced for the appointment of student advisors, subject to the school recognising that those nominated should be capable of undertaking the student advisor's full role;
- 3) That it be a requirement that at the time of appointment, at least six student advisors are resident within the town boundary and the remaining two be appointed from any student attending the school irrespective of their place of residence but that non-resident students should only sit on a Committee along with a resident;

and

- 4) That an acknowledgment be given for the contribution of students undertaking the role of student advisors in the form of a Certificate for their Record of Achievement and a small gift - suggestions being a pen, mug or mouse mat - and that all councillors be requested to voice their preference of gift idea to the Town Clerk.

F/4269

GRANT AID

Applications for grant aid were considered from Hampshire Children and Families Forum - Early Years Project, Salterns Playscheme and Vitalise.

RESOLVED:

1) That, under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £ 100 be made to Hampshire Children & Families Forum.

2) That, under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £100 be made to Salterns Playscheme.

3) That, under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £100 be made for Vitalise.

F/4270

NEW FOREST DISTRICT STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT

Members considered whether to recommend any further potentially suitable sites to meet future housing requirements. There were no new recommendation for suitable sites at present.

RECOMMENDED: To the Planning, Town & Environment Committee that the existing recommendations made by the Council of suitable sites to meet future housing requirements continue to be supported.

F/4271

TOURISM GROUP

Members considered the Town's tourism group and what contribution the Council should make.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council wishes to enhance the tourism group for the Town and to be involved

RECOMMENDED: That one or two Councillors be asked to volunteer to represent Town Council on tourism issues and to attend the Tourism Community Action Network (CAN) Meeting on 3 June at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel.

F/4272

TOWN PLAN

Members received an oral report from the Town Clerk on the Official Launch of the Town Plan, to be held on Monday 9 June at 6pm at the Town & Country Museum. Drinks and refreshments will be provided.

RESOLVED: That the Town Plan launch date be noted and that the guest list be amended to include partners of Town Councillors.

F/4273

EXTENSION OF RINGWOOD CEMETERY

Members considered recommendations from the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee on the response from the District Council on the Double Taxation issue (*Minute 08/4993*) and the updated estimated costs in the Feasibility Study. After a full discussion of the issues, and noting that some of the expenditure could be delayed until the new financial year if necessary, it was

RESOLVED:

1) That the Cemetery Extension Feasibility Report and recommendations therein (section 7) be approved;

2) That estimated costings in the above Report be reviewed to ensure best value;

3) That in view of the District Council's refusal to deal with the double taxation issues relating to cemeteries, further efforts be made to encourage the District to make a significant contribution to the capital works.

F/4274

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw (*Annex B attached relating to F/4275 and Annex 'D' relating to F/4276*).

F4275
MOUNT PLEASANT LANE

The Committee received an oral report from the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: That the Council's seal be affixed to any legal documentation necessary relating to access along Mount Pleasant Lane.

F/4276
RINGWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Cllr Chard declared a personal and prejudicial interest as Chairman of the Bisterne United Football Club and made a statement. Cllr Wiseman declared a personal and prejudicial interest as she lives near to the Football Club and made a statement.

Members considered the recommendations of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee (*Minute 08/4999*) held on 14 May on the rent review and condition of premises.

RESOLVED:

1) That the recommendation of the Policy & Finance Committee that action to open negotiation with the Football Club via the Working Party of Councillors Cole, Terry and Urwin to address issues of rent review and pavilion be supported.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting 8.40 pm.