

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

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on 18th February 2009 at 7.00pm

Apologies

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Clarke and Cllr Ford.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Terry declared a personal interest in F/4357 as a close relative works for the company 'NUMED' which is listed as the supplier for equipment included in the Grant Aid request by Friends of Ringwood Medical Centre.

PRESENT: Cllr J D Heron (Chairman)
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine (Vice Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr B H Terry
Cllr M J Urwin
Cllr B Woodifield

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Martin Townsend, Finance Manager
Claire Perrens, Meetings Administrator
James Fullick, Student Advisor

F/4353

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2009, having been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

F/4354

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Members considered the Monthly Financial Reports attached to these minutes as *Annex 'A'*. The Finance Manager provided details of items of expenditure in excess of £1,000.

It was noted that the £50,000 to be re-invested would not be covered by the Government's guarantee as this only applies to private individuals. Cllr Heron suggested the Council should consider whether it would be more profitable, given the low interest rates of investments, to put some of the reserve funds into property to let, while prices are falling. Cllr Woodifield commented that property could bring a return of 5%-6%.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the list of cheque payments on the Imprest account be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Rippon-Swaine signed the report.
- 2) That the list of Petty Cash payments be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Rippon-Swaine signed the report.
- 3) That the Statement of Town Council Balances be received and noted.
- 4) That the Inter Account Transfer be authorised. Cllrs Heron and Rippon-Swaine signed the report.

- 5) That the Finance Manager's report and Summary Budget Reports be received and noted.
- 6) That the Town Clerk and Finance Manager investigate alternative options for investment of reserve funds and report back to the Committee.

ACTION Martin Townsend / Terry Simpson

F/4355

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2007/08 RECOMMENDATIONS: PROGRESS

The Internal Audit Report for 2007/08 had been received and considered by Members at the meeting of this Committee on 18th June 2008 (*Minute F/4281*). Members considered a progress report on the auditor's recommendations - *Annex 'B' attached*. Item 4 and Item 10 had now been actioned.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the actions taken in response to the recommendations of The Internal Audit Report for 2007/08 (*Annex 'B'*) be noted; and
- 2) Item 15) of Annex 'B' relating to off-site back up security be reassessed; and
- 3) That the target dates for the outstanding items be approved.

ACTION Martin Townsend / Terry Simpson

F/4356

RINGWOOD FESTIVAL

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Ringwood Festival Steering Committee attached as *Annex 'C'*. It was noted that Pete Alvis is struggling to raise funds for Ringwood Rocks in the current economic conditions. Cllr Heron felt that, in the event of a shortfall, the Committee might consider increasing its pledged funding of £3,000.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the minutes of the Ringwood Festival Steering Committee held on 9th February 2009, and the proposals therein, be approved; and
- 2) That, in the event of there being a shortfall in sponsorship funds raised from local businesses for Ringwood Rocks, the Committee be consulted as to whether further Town Council funding might be available.

ACTION Sue Godwin / Pete Alvis

F/4357

GRANT AID

Cllr Terry declared a personal interest in F/4357 as a close relative works for the company 'NUMED' which is listed as the supplier for equipment included in the Grant Aid request by Friends of Ringwood Medical Centre.

Members considered applications for grant aid. Members noted that the total grants now requested exceeded the unallocated balance on this budget.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £750 be awarded to New Forest North Citizens Advice Bureau; and

- 2) That no grant be awarded to Hampshire County Youth Band Association, which had not demonstrated any benefit to Ringwood residents; and
- 3) That, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £215 be awarded to Friends of Ringwood Medical Centre.

ACTION Alyson Greenfield

F/4358

DATA PROTECTION

In order to comply with its obligations under Data Protection legislation, the Council must ensure that Contractors also comply with that legislation. The Committee considered the form of the notification (*Annex 'D' attached*) to be served on Contractors for this purpose. At present, only the Payroll Contractor deals with data covered by the legislation.

RESOLVED: That the form of notification relating to Data Protection to be served on Contractors as shown in *Annex 'D'* be approved.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4359

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK – ZONING WORKING GROUP

Members considered appointing a Member to join a new NFNPA Zoning Working Group on the draft National Park plan. Cllr Woodfield expressed interest but would also like more details of what is involved.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That further details about times and dates of meetings be obtained; and
- 2) That Cllr Woodfield be appointed; and
- 3) That Cllr Terry be appointed if the time commitment proves too great for Cllr Woodfield.

ACTION Terry Simpson / Cllr Woodfield / Cllr Terry

F/4360

GRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

The Town Clerk reported on progress on implementation of the GIS Project Partnership with New Forest District Council. A large number of Town and Parish Councils have indicated a wish to join the scheme, which will provide an excellent and cost-effective detailed mapping resource. £10,000 has been raised to date, with Ringwood Town Council contributing £2,000. Town Councillors will be provided with their own passwords and will be able to access the GIS from their own computers.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk's report be noted.

ACTION Terry Simpson

**F/4361
EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS**

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 'E' attached*).

**F/4362
GROUNDS EQUIPMENT**

Members considered tenders and financial arrangements for acquisition of a new tractor. It was noted that delivery would take four weeks.

RESOLVED: That a T4030 78 hp 32 x 16 HiLo Power Shuttle New Holland tractor be purchased.

ACTION Christine Smith / Martin Townsend

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

RECEIVED & ADOPTED
25th February 2009

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN