

OPEN SESSION: There were two members of the public present. See F/4566 below.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on 21st April 2010 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr J D Heron (Chairman)
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine (Vice Chairman)
Cllr N R G Clarke
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr B Woodfield

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Alyson Greenfield, Finance Officer
Claire Perrens, Meetings Administrator
Simon Hookins, Student Advisor
Cassie Ware, Student Advisor

F/4561 APOLOGIES

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Chard, Cllr Terry and Cllr Urwin.

F/4562 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

F/4563 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2010, having been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

F/4564 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

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; and
- 5) That the Finance Manager's report and Budgetary Control Reports on the Probable Actuals for the period April 2009 to March 2010 be noted.

ACTION Martin Townsend

F/4565
RINGWOOD FESTIVAL

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Ringwood Festival Steering Committee attached as *Annex 'B'*.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ringwood Festival Steering Committee held on 12th April 2010, and the proposals therein, be approved.

ACTION Sue Godwin

F/4566
GRANT AID

Members considered applications for Grant Aid (*Annex 'C'*) and noted that a regular award of £186 was due in May for the Mobile Police Van.

PC Waller attended the Meeting in order to support his application for building a police car pedal car, complete with siren and blue lights, for this year's Pedal Car Grand Prix. He was working with Ringwood School students, who would build the bodywork as part of their GCSE course. Simon Hookins, Student Advisor, commented that this was a good project, especially as it would enable funds to be raised for the jubilee fund for building a new sports hall.

Simon had also attended two concerts by one of the applicants, Avon Valley Concerts, using subsidised tickets for students, and felt this was beneficial to all ages.

Members agreed that it was not possible, given the small grants budget to support the application for £4,000 for Greyfriars' Pre-school for a new artificial lawn surface, especially as unusually large grants of £5,000 in total over two years had been awarded for Greyfriars' Ebenezer Hall. However, the Pre-school should be advised that an application for equipment for the playgroup would be welcome and given further advice into other sources of funding.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That no grant be awarded to Hampshire County Youth Band Association or Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group; although they were worthy causes Members did not feel there was enough local benefit to Ringwood;
- 2) That, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £50 be awarded to Vitalise for respite care breaks for Ringwood residents who are disabled or carers;
- 3) That, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £200 be awarded to Ringwood Police and Ringwood School for the police car pedal car project;
- 4) That, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant of £150 be awarded to Ringwood & Burley Band; and
- 5) That, no grant be awarded to Greyfriars Pre-school, as major grants had recently been made to Greyfriars for a capital project.

ACTION Alyson Greenfield

F/4567
NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NFALC)

The Chairman reported on the outcome of the meeting held on 25th March to discuss liaison arrangements with New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park Authority. At

the meeting NFALC made a presentation, but this was unconvincing and it was clear that membership of NFALC would not provide good value for money for parish and town councils. There had been no real opportunity to present an alternative to NFALC at the meeting, although the Town Clerk had put forward a revised constitution.

The Town Clerk had been in discussion with the clerks of four other larger local councils in the area (Hythe, Totton, New Milton and Lymington) and felt that there was interest in a new association. He had worked with the Clerk of Hythe & Dibden Parish Council on the format for a new 'Association of Local Councils in the New Forest District', which would be very different from NFALC. It would be 'issue-led' with focus groups created to respond to specific topics. The lead council would cover the costs of administration for a particular focus group. There would be no executive committee; the only costs would be for the quarterly meetings of the whole Association. It was hoped that the District Council and the National Park Authority would offer financial assistance and/or meeting rooms. Cllr Clarke commented that it was critical that an enthusiastic chairman be appointed. The Chairman advised that smaller parishes should be consulted early on and made to feel of equal importance to the larger town councils.

Cllr Steele had suggested to the Town Clerk that the alternative Association be presented to NFDC/NFNPA at the next meeting. Cllr Rippon-Swaine felt that whilst Ringwood Town Council should take the lead initially, if there was a lack of involvement and enthusiasm from other local councils, the scheme should be dropped.

RESOLVED: That the dissolution of NFALC and its replacement with a new issues-led 'Association of Local Councils in the New Forest District' be proposed.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4568

THE MOUNT, POULNER

Photographs were projected of the Mount, an area of Town Council public open space, with panoramic views. Members considered Recommendation OS/5202 of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee: *"That the District Council be asked to release a sum of £5,000 from developers' contributions for a feasibility study into improvements to The Mount, Poulner"*. The Town Clerk commented that this area was currently not used to its full potential, but there was scope to improve access via Narrow Lane and possibly to create a tourist attraction as well as to improve the area for residents. The Feasibility Study would provide a number of different proposals for further consideration. Members were concerned about a number of issues and the Chairman felt that it should be considered at Full Council.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) That Members consider whether to ask the District Council to release a sum of £5,000 from developers' contributions for a feasibility study into improvements to The Mount, Poulner; and
- 2) That all Members be encouraged to visit The Mount prior to the Meeting on 28th April.

ACTION Cllr Heron / Claire Perrens

F/4569
VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Town Mayor reported that the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) would remain open 'for the foreseeable future'. Cllr Rippon-Swaine said that this was the result of Ringwood District Councillors working together. It was expected that the VIC would be open for a few months at least and that a longer term solution would be considered at the June Cabinet Meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ACTION District Cllrs

F/4570
TOURISM INITIATIVES

Members considered tourism potential in Ringwood (*Annex 'D' attached*).

RESOLVED: That the Town Council facilitate the formation of a Ringwood Tourism Group by promoting one or two public meetings to try to stimulate public interest and involvement, with the aim of creating an independently run group.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4571
TOURISM CAN (COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK)

The Committee was asked to appoint one member to attend Tourism CAN meetings.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Woodfield be appointed as the representative for Tourism CAN.

ACTION Claire Perrens

F/4572
BLASHFORD LAKES FORUM

The Town Mayor reported that there were various groups involved in the Blashford Lakes area, including the District Council, Wessex Water, users of the area, landowners and local councils. However, the groups did not interact very well. A meeting scheduled for 25th May included an Agenda item at which a list of key principles from the original Blashford Lakes Management Strategy and Plan would be considered and possibly deleted. The two Councillors representing the Parish Council of Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley on the Blashford Lakes Forum were very concerned at the lack of progress in implementing important parts of the Management Plan for the area and proposals to delete some items. They had asked for the support of Ringwood Town Council in proposing that a focus group be created to look at these issues, instead of them being decided at the meeting on 25th May.

RESOLVED: That the Town Mayor, as the Town Council representative, support the proposal of the Parish Council of Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley regarding the creation of a focus group to reconsider the aims of Blashford Lakes Management Plan.

ACTION Cllr Ford

**F/4573
YOUTH CAFÉ**

The Chairman reported on meetings between himself, the Town Clerk and students on the subject of a youth cafe. The meeting held at the Sixth Form Common Room of Ringwood School had not been particularly well attended. The idea was positively received by those present. There was some interest in the Cricket Pavilion as a venue, should sports fields be moved to Long Lane. However, there was a lack of focus on what would be most popular – large area for bands/dancing or a smaller coffee lounge/internet access area.

Cassie Ware, Student Advisor, commented that there was more enthusiasm for the idea than it might seem. The meeting referred to had not been well publicised, hence the poor attendance. She questioned the age range targeted. The Chairman envisaged that teenagers, between 13-16 years, were the most likely to use such a facility, and have a need for the space. She also felt that bands could play in small spaces, so the venue could double as both 'coffee lounge' and gig area.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ACTION Terry Simpson / Cllr Heron / Student Advisors

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

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

RECEIVED & ADOPTED
28th April 2010

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN