

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

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on 17th March 2010 at 7.00pm

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Martin Townsend, Finance Manager
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Simon Hookins, Student Advisor
Cassie Ware, Student Advisor

F/4546 APOLOGIES

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Urwin.

F/4547 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Heron and Rippon-Swaine declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Planning Application for 73 Christchurch Road – for details see F/4554 below.

F/4548 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

F/4549 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

It was hoped that the final accounts for 2009/10 would be presented to this Committee in May.

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.

ACTION Martin Townsend

F/4550
RINGWOOD FESTIVAL

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

Members were concerned about the need for a mobile bar, particularly as there were many public houses in the town. However, it was agreed that as Ringwood Brewery was a local company and there were only two such establishments in Southampton Road, where the bar was likely to be located, this proposal should be supported.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ringwood Festival Steering Committee held on 15th March 2010, and the proposals therein, be approved.

ACTION Sue Godwin

F/4551
SOUTHSEA TOWN COUNCIL, PORTSMOUTH

Members considered a request for support from Southsea Town Council to support the retention of the Council, which Portsmouth City Council was attempting to shut down (*Annex 'C' attached*).

The Town Clerk suggested that representation be made to Nick Clegg MP and Desmond Swayne MP as the new legislation that allowed unitary authorities to decide on whether or not a town or parish council was required could have a fundamental effect on the future of all town and parish councils.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk be authorised to make representation in support of Southsea Town Council.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4552
SCHEDULE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS – 2010-2011

Members considered the draft Schedule of Meetings for May 2010 to December 2011 (*Annex 'D'*). It was noted that the schedule was normally May to May but had been extended to December 2011 to allow meeting dates to be published on the proposed official Town calendar.

Cllr Rippon-Swaine recommended a review of Committees with the aim of reducing the number of meetings officers had to attend. It was noted that moving to a six weekly cycle had been previously considered but that this would result in longer meetings and would affect the pattern of meetings, which was not supported by some Members at the present time.

RESOLVED: That the draft Schedule of Meetings for May 2010 to December 2011 as shown in *Annex 'D'* be approved.

ACTION Claire Perrens

F/4553
GRIT BINS

Members considered a letter from the Leader of Hampshire County Council offering to provide Grit Bins within the Town for use by the Town Council. It was noted that the Town Council would be responsible for dealing with any third party claims arising from carrying out this function. In addition, it would not be possible to provide a sufficient number of bins to adequately cover all areas of the Town. However, it was felt that there were specific locations that could benefit from the provision of grit bins, such as nursing homes, but agreed that any requests should be dealt with by the County Council. Members agreed that the provision of grit was a County Council function and that it should not be taken on by the Town Council.

RESOLVED: That the offer by Hampshire County Council to provide Grit Bins in the Town for use by the Town Council be not accepted.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4554

PLANNING APPLICATION – 73 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD

Cllrs Heron and Rippon-Swaine declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, as friends of the applicants. They both left the room, taking no part in the debate or decision made.

The Town Mayor took the Chair for this item.

As the Town Council was the neighbouring property owner, Members considered Planning Application number 10/95100 for the demolition of an existing outbuilding at 73 Christchurch Road. A subsequent application had also been received for the same property for the erection of a two-storey dwelling, detached car port and garage (Planning Application number 10/95099). It was noted that both applications would be considered in detail from a planning perspective by the Planning, Town & Environment Committee at its next meeting on 9th April.

RESOLVED: That, as owners of an adjoining property, the Council makes no objection to the proposed demolition of an existing outbuilding and erection of a two-storey dwelling, car port and garage at 73 Christchurch Road.

Cllrs Heron and Rippon-Swaine returned to the Meeting.

Cllr Heron re-took the Chair.

ACTION Jo Stannard

F/4555

STREET LIGHTING MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Members considered renewing the contract with Southern Electric Contracting for maintenance of lighting columns at Carvers Recreation Ground at £220.85 per annum for the next two years.

RESOLVED: That the contract be renewed for a period of two years.

ACTION Jo Stannard

F/4556

FAIRTRADE

The Town Clerk had attended a meeting at Ringwood School and reported that there were 12-14 students who wished to work with councillors to promote Fair Trade, both in the School and the Town. It was noted that four councillors had volunteered to be involved; the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs Terry and Cllr Mrs Wiseman.

The School had organised a Tea Dance, which would take place on 29th March and it was noted that a financial contribution may be required to cover the cost of a mini bus to transport people to the event. A Fashion Show would also be organised later in the year. The Finance Manager confirmed that a budget of £200 was available to support Fair Trade.

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Ford, Terry, Mrs Terry and Mrs Wiseman be appointed to attend meetings with students to promote Fair Trade in the School and town.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4557

JUBILEE LAMP WORKING PARTY

Members considered the notes of the Jubilee Lamp Working Party meeting held on 14th January 2010 attached as *Annex 'E'*.

RESOLVED: That the notes of the Jubilee Lamp Working Party held on 14th January 2010, and the proposals therein, be approved.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4558

RINGWOOD VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Town Mayor reported on the future of the Visitor Information Centre (VIC). It was proposed by the District Council to close the VIC after Easter and to run the service from the Public Offices in Christchurch Road. District Council Members had suggested that the VIC be maintained at least until the end of the year as provision of the service at the Public Offices would not be satisfactory.

Cassie Ware, who works in the VIC on a voluntary basis, reported that several complaints had been received from members of the public about the limited opening hours of the VIC. She said that it provided an essential service in a very good location, including the sale of National Express tickets without booking fee and the distribution of local information. The VIC was always busy when open and some days there were queues outside the door. Even with limited opening hours, some days staff did not turn up to open the VIC as they were required to work in the Lyndhurst VIC.

It was noted that a member of staff at the VIC had created an information leaflet on facilities available within the town as this was not provided by the District Council.

Members agreed that the current location was ideal and the loss of the service would not be acceptable. There were concerns about the validity of the evidence that has been provided by District Council officers as reasons to close the VIC and also about the lack of local consultation.

In addition, Members were concerned that, should the VIC be closed, the building should be immediately demolished so as not to become an eyesore.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Town Council strongly objects to the proposals by the District Council to close the Visitor Information Centre, with no suitable alternative proposed; and
- 2) That the Town Clerk be authorised to make representation to the District Council in this respect.

ACTION Terry Simpson

F/4559

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Members considered the Town Clerk's report (*attached as Annex 'F'*). It was noted that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel would result in a small reduction in Town Councillors' allowances, but that no adjustment would be made until the National Pay Award for staff had been agreed.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) That the recommendation under paragraphs a), b), c) and d) of Annex 'F' be adopted, but that the amount of the Parish Basic Allowance be re-calculated once the National Pay Award for staff has been determined;

- 2) That the level of allowances shown under paragraph 5.7 for travel and subsistence be adopted subject to continuation of the policy of not paying travel and subsistence allowances for any duty undertaken within the Parish;
- 3) That the recommendation i) under paragraph 6.1 be adopted; and
- 4) That appropriate arrangements be made to give publicity to allowances and the reports of the Remuneration Panel.

ACTION Terry Simpson / Jo Stannard

**F/4560
SKATE PARK**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that she had organised a meeting at the Skate Park to discuss the requirement of the users for new equipment, to be funded from existing budget provision and a grant from County Councillor Rippon-Swaine. Three quotations had been received from suppliers and the proposals had been discussed with the young people and a representative of one of the suppliers. As a result of feedback received at the meeting, the supplier would now put together three options for further consideration. Consideration had also been given to future maintenance of the Skate Park and the provision of a graffiti wall, which had been previously agreed by the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee. Several of the young people were willing to work with the Council and PCSO Sam Knight had volunteered to coordinate the graffiti wall. Further meetings would be organised to coordinate these issues.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk be authorised to liaise with the preferred supplier to provide additional equipment in the Skate Park, to be funded from existing budget provision.

ACTION Jo Stannard

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

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

RECEIVED & ADOPTED
31st March 2010

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN