

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

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on 15th February 2012 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr J D Heron (Chairman)
Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine (Vice Chairman)
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr R Frampton
Cllr B H Terry
Cllr M A Steele
Cllr M H Thierry

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Martin Townsend, Finance Manager
Claire Perrens, Meetings Administrator
Jenny Baldwin, Student Advisor
John Mascall, Executive Director, New Forest District Council
Chris Elliott, Head of Planning, New Forest District Council
Cllr A Wiseman
Liam Aldridge, Student Advisor

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

F/4800 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Ford declared a personal and prejudicial interest in 'British Liver Trust' – *see F/4810*

F/4801 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2012, having been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Chairman welcomed Liam Aldridge, Student Advisor for the Festival Steering Committee. The Ringwood Festival agenda item was brought forward.

F/4802 RINGWOOD FESTIVAL

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Ringwood Festival Steering Committee attached as *Annex 'A'*. Liam Aldridge presented examples of Ringwood School students' poster designs promoting the Festival (referenced on *page 3 of Annex A attached*). Members considered these to be excellent. It was noted that contact details for the Town Council would be added.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ringwood Festival Steering Committee held on 6th February 2012, and the proposals therein, be approved.

ACTION Mandy Oldfield

F/4803
MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Members considered the Monthly Financial Reports attached to these minutes as *Annex B*. The Finance Manager reported some changes to the Inter Account Transfer as sent out with the Agenda; these are shown in italics in *Annex B (d)*. He reported on budgetary control and circulated Summary Budget Reports for the period April to January 2012 - *Annex B (e)*. Members noted that the invoices for fees from Hampshire County Council for the Gateway building had not yet been received; these costs will be reflected in the final accounts for 2011/12. The works to create a new play area at Ash Grove were nearly complete, and payment should be made in March.

Tenders had been received for a survey and plan of the Cemetery; the lowest of which was £2,850. There was £2,000 in the budget for this project, and the Finance Manager suggested that Members consider a virement of £850 to meet the additional cost; the virement could be met from the reported increase in income from the Cemetery.

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 verbal report and Summary Budget Reports be received and noted.

RECOMMENDED: That a virement of £850 be approved from additional income from the Cemetery to supplement the £2,000 budget allocated for a survey and plan of the Cemetery.

ACTION Martin Townsend

As officers from the District Council were in attendance, the Gateway Project agenda item was brought forward. The Chairman welcomed John Mascal, Executive Director, and Chris Elliott, Head of Planning, New Forest District Council.

F/4804
GATEWAY PROJECT

a) Lighting

Mr Elliott reported on lighting for the Gateway 'Square' (piazza); tenders had gone out and a decision would be made by 7th March. The main existing contractor, Osbornes, were submitting a tender, and if successful, would be able to complete the work in a timely fashion as they were already set up on site. Members had previously agreed to consider two cost options for lighting, subject to further details and illustrations; these were now provided. A budget of £20,000 would provide basic column lighting and a power supply unit (for events, Christmas lights etc). A budget of £35,000 would also provide enhanced lighting including a number of uplighters highlighting trees and street furniture. Having viewed the detailed plans shown at the Meeting, Members preferred the enhanced option requiring a budget of £35,000. It was noted that the costs would be met from developers' contributions.

b) Courtyard Gates

Mr Elliott presented two proposals for the six panel infill gates for the Gateway courtyard. As the original design put forward was considered too abstract, it was not now possible for the gates to be constructed in time for the opening of the building. Temporary gates would be put in place. He circulated illustrations showing the original plans, and two new options. Option A was galvanised mild steel with a painted finish with leaf patterns cut out; option B was wrought iron infill panels with leaf, tree or shrub patterns of design. It was noted that to balance the Registrar's wish for privacy for wedding groups and the Town Council's wish that the courtyard be visible, a 50/50 degree of opacity would be specified.

Jenny Baldwin, Student Advisor, said she liked the wrought iron designs, but was concerned that they would provide footholds for climbing. After further discussion about security, most Members were in favour of wrought iron gates, and some particularly liked the 'tree' example. £20,000 was available in the Gateway budget, and although customised wrought iron was expensive, it was possible there would be 'standard' designs which would be within budget. Mr Elliott said that he would obtain quotations from local forges. Members also agreed that the emblems of the three authorities should be attached to the gates.

c) Town Clerk's Update

The Town Clerk reported that the building work was on target still for an opening date of 8th May. Details of internal signage had been agreed, this would be minimal to reduce 'clutter'. The facilities management agreement was progressing. Discussions were progressing with regard to cleaning and caretaking arrangements. It was to be noted that the public conveniences would be managed separately by the District Council (not by the Town Council).

John Mascal, Executive Director, said he was pleased that the project was progressing smoothly; he would continue to 'trouble-shoot' as required. Members commented on how attractive the Gateway building was now looking.

d) ICT

Members considered the update on progress of ICT requirements for Ringwood Gateway as shown in *Annex C attached*.

e) Official Opening and Naming of the Gateway

Members considered the report attached as *Annex D*. It was agreed that thought should be given to the name of the 'square' (being the area currently partly obscured by the old Visitor Information Centre and toilets, which are to be demolished). It had previously been referred to as a 'piazza' but this was perhaps not the best description within an English market town.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That an enhanced lighting scheme with a budget of £35,000 for the Gateway 'Square' be approved, subject to sight of final proposals;
- 2) That preference be given to wrought iron infill gate panels, preferably with 'tree' motifs in the style displayed at the meeting;
- 3) That the three emblems of the three authorities be incorporated in the gate panel designs as 'bolt on' additions;
- 4) That the report on ICT as shown in *Annex C* be noted;
- 5) That the report on the official opening and naming of the Gateway be noted and the proposals therein approved – *Annex D*.

ACTION T Simpson

The Chairman thanked Mr Elliott and Mr Mascall for attending and they then left the Meeting.

F/4805

YOUTH PROVISION WORKING PARTY

Members considered the notes of the Youth Provision Working Party held on 8th February 2012 and the proposals therein – *Annex E*. There was some debate about the proposed composition of the Working Party as there would be more students/young people than Members. However, it was noted there would also be adult officers and professional youth advisors involved.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the notes of the Youth Provision Working Party held on 8th February 2012 and the proposals therein be approved;
- 2) That terms of reference for the Working Party be drawn up for the guidance of those with less experience of such committees; and
- 3) That the Working Party be authorised to co-opt two further members as required.

RECOMMENDED: That the appointment of the three Councillors to the Youth Provision Working Party be made at the Council Meeting on 29th February 2012.

ACTION T Simpson / C Perrens – Agenda

F/4806

HALC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

RESOLVED: That Cllr Steele and one other delegate as required be authorized to attend the Hampshire Association of Local Council's Annual Conference at a cost of £50 per delegate, and that their reasonable travel expenses be reimbursed.

ACTION T Simpson

F/4807

THRIVING ALONGSIDE SUPERMARKETS

It was noted that unfortunately Cllr Woodfield would be unable to attend this session after all; any other Member interested in taking her place should contact the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: That attendance by Cllr Burgess-Kennar and one other delegate as required be authorized to attend a session Thriving Alongside Supermarkets at the Association of Market Towns' Conference on 22nd February, and that their reasonable travel expenses be reimbursed.

ACTION T Simpson

F/4808

GREENWAYS, 71 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD

The Town Clerk reported on progress with the sale of the building plot at 71 Christchurch Road, and the lease of the offices on the ground floor. There had been a strong expression of interest in the lease. The plot was being marketed at a figure of £150,000 (excluding any

developers' contributions which would not be paid by the Town Council). The closing date for informal tenders was 12 noon on 30th March 2012. It was noted the Council was not bound to accept any tenders.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the actions taken to date be approved.

ACTION T Simpson

**F/4809
FAIRTRADE**

Members considered the report on renewal of the Town's fairtrade accreditation, as shown in *Annex F*. Members noted that it was essential for a 'lead' person or organization from the commercial and retail interests in the Town to come forward if this project were to be progressed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the action taken to date and the proposed way forward be approved.

ACTION T Simpson

**F/4810
BRITISH LIVER TRUST**

Cllr Ford declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, due to business interests in vineyards. She left the Meeting and took no part in the debate or decision made.

A request had been received from the Ringwood-based British Liver Trust for support for a national campaign principally for a minimum price of 50p per unit of alcohol with the aim of reduction of premature alcohol related deaths.

Some Members felt that this item should not be on the agenda, especially given the very recent 'Bideford' decision, and that it was a matter for individual Members to support or not support. The Chairman said he did not have the details of the Bideford ruling, and as this was already on the agenda, he would continue with the item. The Town Clerk said he would check the implications of the Bideford ruling with regard to future agenda items, but maintained this was a valid issue relating to the wellbeing of Ringwood residents.

RESOLVED: That the British Liver Trust campaign be not supported.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

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

RECEIVED
29th February 2012

APPROVED
21st March 2012

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN