

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 28th October 2020 at 7.00pm

The meeting took place in a virtual environment using “Zoom” video conferencing technology and members of the public and press were given the opportunity to observe or participate in the meeting.

PRESENT: Cllr Tony Ring, Town Mayor
Cllr Philip Day, Deputy Mayor
Cllr Andy Briers
Cllr Gareth Deboos
Cllr Hilary Edge
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Jeremy Heron
Cllr Peter Kelleher (from 7.06pm)
Cllr Darren Loose
Cllr Gloria O’Reilly
Cllr Steve Rippon-Swaine
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Mrs Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk

ABSENT: Cllr Rae Frederick

C/6495 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was one member of the public present for the two items relating to Ringwood Town Football Club.

C/6496 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Frederick.

C/6497 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none declared at this time.

C/6498 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2020, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/6499 STAFFING COMMITTEE

Cllr Haywood presented the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 23rd September 2020.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 23rd September 2020 be received.

C/6500

RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr Briers presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th October 2020.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th October 2020 be received.

C/6501

PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Day presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 2nd October 2020.

Cllr Kelleher joined the meeting at 7.06pm

Cllr Heron apologised for not having attended the meeting to explain the NFDC planning application in more detail (20/10938 – 110 Christchurch Road – change of use for short term residential accommodation). He explained that NFDC was responsible for housing people in an emergency and this proposal would provide temporary short-term accommodation similar to that currently provided in B&Bs and hotels. The proposal would have the advantage of enabling children to remain in accommodation all day and had the flexibility to provide for people with disabilities. He said this was a vital provision for local people.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 2nd October 2020 be received.

C/6502

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Heron presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 21st October 2020.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 21st October 2020, with the exception of F/5840, be received.

C/6503

PLANNING APPLICATION 20/11034 – RINGWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB FLOODLIGHTS

Variation of condition 2 of Planning Permission 99/NFDC/65533 to allow the upgrade of lighting to meet requirements of The Institute of Lighting Professionals

It was noted that the earliest date of decision for this planning application was 30th October 2020, and that the next Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting would be held on 6th November 2020. It had been agreed to consider the application at this meeting in order not to delay NFDC's decision making process, or the installation of the floodlights, if consent was granted.

The application was for a variation of condition 2 of a previously consented scheme (99/NFDC/65533) to allow an upgrade of the flood lights at the Long Lane ground to meet

requirements of the Institute of Lighting Professionals. This upgrade was driven by the Football Association rules for lights to meet mandatory ground grading standards.

The upgrade is required as soon as practically possible as all home games must be played “away” until the lights meet the standards.

Mr Phil King, Chairman of Ringwood Town Football Club explained that it is proposed to use modern LED technology, which as well as being sustainable and energy efficient, reduces the risk of spillage both vertically and of the surrounding area whilst improving the lighting on the pitch.

It was noted that there had been no objections to the application from statutory consultees or members of the public, and that the Environmental Health Officer had raised no concerns.

Members agreed a recommendation of Permission (3) as the proposal was an improvement on the current provision; would enhance the facility; and reduce the impact on the local environment.

RESOLVED: That the Council’s observation of Permission (3) be submitted to New Forest District Council as it is an improvement on the current provision, enhances the facility and reduces the impact on the local environment.

ACTION J Hurd

**C/6504
BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY (TREASURY
MANAGEMENT)**

Members considered a recommendation from Policy & Finance Committee (*F/5840 refers*) that the current banking arrangements and Treasury Management Policy be endorsed (*Annex A*).

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the current Investment Strategy and Policy (Treasury Management Policy) be endorsed (and, specifically, that the possibility of investing in the CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund not be pursued further at this time); and
- 2) That the current banking arrangements be endorsed.

ACTION R Fitzgerald / C Wilkins
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**C/6505
CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS**

The Town Mayor reported that he had been liaising with volunteers from local organisations Mens’ Shed, Rotary and Carnival regarding enhancing the Christmas decorations throughout the town. He had encouraged them to put forward ideas and recommended that the Recreation Leisure & Open Spaces Committee be delegated authority to approve any suitable proposals.

If funds were required to support such decorations, it was recommended that these be taken from the Events Reserve.

RESOLVED: That Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee be delegated authority to allow third party organisations to install Christmas decorations on Town Council

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land and/or assets, and to release funds from the Events Reserve to support such installations.

ACTION C Wilkins

C/6506

GRANT AID AWARDS

Members noted that Grant Aid awards had been made to Poulner Infant School (£750 to enable them to create a virtual school tour for parents of prospective pupils) and Friends of Ringwood Infants School (FORIS) (£2,000 towards new play equipment).

In the past recipients had been invited to attend Full Council for the presentation of grant aid cheques. Whilst this was not possible due to Covid-19, it was proposed that an item be included on the Full Council agenda to publicise the awards.

RESOLVED: That the grant aid awards be noted and that an item be included on future Full Council agendas to promote the awards.

ACTION

C/6507

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AT LONG LANE

Cllr Loose (the Council's representative on the Steering Group) reported that there had been no meeting this month. Architects would share ideas and costs at next month's meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

C/6508

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED

There was no report from The Town Mayor.

C/6509

REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS

Cllr Haywood reported that Ringwood Coronavirus Assistance (RCA) had been moved by the Rashford campaign to help with lunches during half term for children who would normally benefit from free school meals. He thanked the Council for providing this service at Carvers Clubhouse from Tuesday to Saturday.

Cllr Turner was pleased to report that HCC had agreed in principle to install barriers at the Castleman Way end of the footpath across the Castleman estate; they were currently awaiting resources to carry out this work.

Cllr Deboos reported on progress following the creation of the Ringwood Environmental Action Leadership (REAL) Working Party a year ago. He said it was likely that 5000 trees will be planted on Town Council land this year. In addition to the improvement to air quality and benefits to wildlife, these trees should remove 2000 tons of CO2 over a period of 20 years (100 tons per annum). He had calculated the Town Council's carbon "toe-print" in terms of electricity, gas and diesel usage as 32 tons in 2019. Therefore, a proportion of the 100 tons per annum would be offsetting the Council's energy carbon emissions.

He thanked the Council for its efforts in helping to achieve Plastic Free Status, which meant that the community recognised single use plastic is an issue and is taking steps to minimise its use. This status was now very close to being achieved, and it was agreed that the certificate should be presented at a future Town Council meeting.

The Town Mayor and other councillors congratulated the REAL Working Party and members of RACE on this progress.

Cllr O'Reilly reported that part of a wall in Deweys Lane had become dangerous and, although ownership had not been established, NFDC had removed part of the wall and was storing the bricks in the event that it could be reconstructed in future. Cllr Heron stated that the wall was in the ownership of Crown Estates and was likely to be transferred to NFDC at some time in the future, however it was unlikely that there would be a budget to rebuild it, although he hoped that this could be achieved by some other means. Cllr Day added that he had asked the Town Clerk to include this wish on an appropriate project list, although not necessarily to be funded by the Council.

Cllr Day had attended a meeting with Highways England regarding the A31 improvement scheme and reported that it was unlikely the West Street junction with the A31 would be closed until February 2021. Those at the meeting had pressed for advanced signage on the A31 to warn drivers of this closure to avoid unnecessary rat-running and congestion in the town. He also reported that the pedestrian crossings in Christchurch Road (near Lidl roundabout) had now been completed.

It was noted that there would be number of short services on Remembrance Sunday in the Parish Church between 9am and 1pm - advanced booking is essential.

Cllr Edge had attended a Street Meet with Ringwood Police where residents had reported concerns about speeding, drugs and antisocial behaviour. The Police had advised residents to keep reporting, and suggested Crime Stoppers could be used for this purpose as well as 101. She had received positive feedback about the new table tennis table at Carvers.

**C/6510
REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

District Cllr Rippon-Swaine reported on the Draft Waste Strategy that would be considered by Cabinet on 4th November. He said that NFDC is currently achieving 34% recycling, and that in order to achieve the target of 55% by 2025 there was a need to rethink the collection strategy, which would include looking into the use of wheelie bins. Consultation on the Draft Waste Strategy would be held between 12th November and 10th December, details of which would be publicised and included on the NFDC website (www.newforest.gov.uk/wastestrategy). It was agreed that this should be considered by the Planning, Town & Environment Committee at its meeting on 4th December.

District Cllr Heron reported that Cabinet on 4th November would be considering, amongst other things, the Draft Waste Strategy, Private Sector Housing Strategy and the Medium Term Financial Plan.

**C/6511
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 4 th November 2020
Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 6 th November 2020
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 18 th November 2020

Full Council

7.00pm

Wednesday 25th November 2020

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 20.38pm.

APPROVED
25th November 2020

TOWN MAYOR

REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 21st OCTOBER 2020**RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL TREASURY MANAGEMENT****1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Town Council has a treasury management policy which was approved in 2010 and updated in February 2019. The policy governs the way in which Council funds are managed.
- 1.2 The cash balances held by the Council at the end of March 2020 amounted to £518,000 and with the first instalment of the precept later in April, cash balances increased to around £750,000.
- 1.3 A working balance of between £50,000 and £100,000 is maintained in the main imprest account with a further £50,000 held in an interest bearing instant access business account, but the bulk of funds are currently invested with the CCLA.
- 1.4 The Treasury Management policy has been in place for just over 18 months and this report summarises the performance in that time.

2. INVESTMENTS WITH THE CCLA

- 2.1 The CCLA was created in 1987 following the introduction of financial services regulation, although the organisation can trace its origins back to 1958. It is one of the largest UK charity fund managers and manages funds solely for Churches, Charities and Local Authorities. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, the CCLA currently manages funds in excess of £11.3 billion
- 2.2 The Town Council began investing funds with the CCLA at the end of 2018/19. In that year, funds had generated interest payments of £1,508. In the first full year using the CCLA facility, interest receipts of £3,353 were generated.
- 2.3 Interest rates have fallen to historically low levels but nevertheless, the CCLA continues to provide a return on investment at levels that the banks will not match. The yield at September 2020 was 0.1166%. In 2020/21 to date, interest receipts of £754 have been received.
- 2.4 As a fund manager, rather than a bank, the CCLA is a more secure investment option than any single financial organisation. Any funds that are invested through the CCLA in the deposit fund are held on the investor's behalf by the constituent banks and in the unlikely event that anything causes the CCLA to go into liquidation or otherwise cease operating, the investments remain secure.
- 2.5 The 2019 update to the policy included at section 4.2 the statement : "The Council will consider longer term investments only as part of a wider investment strategy designed to enable specific planned future capital projects. Any such investments will require scrutiny and prior approval by the Council". The CCLA have an additional facility, the Local Authority Property Fund, in which funds are invested for growth in the longer term. With the depression in interest rates, the LAPF may offer a higher, if riskier, return on investment.
- 2.6 The LAPF may not be appropriate at this time but is worthy of further consideration in the future and whilst it is outside the parameters of the current treasury management policy, it may be a useful facility in future to help grow funds for a specific purpose.

3. Treasury Management Policy Statement

- 3.1 The current treasury management policy statement which was approved in 2019 is included at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 No further amendments are proposed at this time.

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4. RECOMMENDATION

It is **recommended** that:-

- 4.1 Members endorse the current Treasury Management Policy.
- 4.2 Members consider whether investment in the LAPF should be explored further.

For further information please contact:

Rory Fitzgerald, Finance Manager or

Tel: 01425 484723

roly.fitzgerald@ringwood.gov.uk

For further information please contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk

Tel: 01425 484720

Chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT****1. DEFINITION OF THE APPROVED ACTIVITIES OF THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT OPERATION**

- 1.1 Responsibility for the activities of the treasury management operation has been delegated to the Finance Manager, who is the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 1.2 The activities of the treasury management operation cover the following:
 1. analysing internal and external information, cash flow management and methods of transmitting money, i.e. by cheques, bank transfers, Bank Automated clearing system (BACS), Clearing House Automated Payments System (CHAPS) and Direct Debit.
 2. investing temporary surpluses in approved investments and financing capital expenditure by approved borrowing instruments.
 3. ensuring that the repayment dates for the Council's borrowing are reasonably spread out. i.e. the borrowing profile.
 4. dealing with other financial institutions such as banks and the Public Works Loan Board. (PWLB)
 5. ensuring that effective security and controls are in place and an effective operation is reviewed and adhered to.
 6. ensuring that adequate banking arrangements are made and monitored for the Council.

2. FORMULATION OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Council will formulate a strategy that covers the raising of capital finance, investment of surplus money and managing cash flow. Treasury management activities in the year should be conducted in accordance with the strategy

3. DEFINITION OF APPROVED SOURCES OF BORROWING

- 3.1 The following list specifies which borrowing instruments the Council may use:

PWLB

Money Market Loans - Temporary (loans up to 364 days)

Local temporary borrowing

Bank Overdraft

Council's own internal funds (capital receipts and revenue balances)

Leasing

3.2 No other instrument other than those listed above may be used.

4. APPROVED INSTRUMENTS FOR INVESTMENTS

4.1 The Council will use short-term, i.e. from 1 to 364 days, cash deposits in sterling in approved financial organisations for investments. The Council may use a fund manager such as the CCLA to spread investments across multiple financial organisations so long as the maximum amount that can be invested with any one such financial organisation is £250,000 and all of the organisations satisfy the requirements set out in section 5.1.

4.2 The Council will consider longer term investments only as part of a wider investment strategy designed to enable specific planned future capital projects. Any such investments will require scrutiny and prior approval by the Council.

5. DEFINITION OF APPROVED ORGANISATIONS FOR INVESTMENTS

The following organisations constitute the counterparties with whom temporary investments will be made.

5.1 Banks or building societies which are UK clearing banks or which are incorporated in the UK and which have at least a short term credit rating of F1, according to FITCH the International Rating Agency, will be used for temporary investments

5.2 Other Local Authorities

The Council may invest temporarily with all other local authorities. The maximum each one may borrow is £250,000 for up to 364 days.

5.3 Accidental Breach of Limits

The Council will operate “daylight exposure”. This is a technique that ensures that in no circumstances can limits be exceeded. Normally, in calculating the amount of investment, the Finance Manager is entitled to assume that a sum due back from an organisation will be received on the due date before making a further investment with that organisation. If for some technical reason the repayment does not arrive in the Council’s bank account it is possible that, after a new investment is made with the same organisation, limits will be exceeded.

5.4 In addition, transfers between the Council’s current and deposit accounts shall be permitted up to a maximum of £100,000 per day, to maximise interest earnings on surplus funds that cannot be placed in time deposits (usually for a minimum of one month)

6. POLICY ON DELEGATION

- 6.1 The RFO is authorised by the Council to exercise the investment and borrowing powers of the Council in accordance with Council Policy, The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management, and professional codes of practice.
- 6.2 The RFO may delegate the operations of Treasury Management to the Deputy Town Clerk and the Finance Officer in connection with the approved activities of Treasury Management.
- 6.3 Any changes to delegated powers will be approved by Policy and Finance Committee..

7. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 7.1 The Finance Manager will report to the Policy and Finance Committee on Treasury Management as follows: -
 - FEBRUARY - for the strategy and borrowing limits report for the next financial year.
 - MAY - for the annual report for the previous year.