

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the **POLICY, RESOURCES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on **Tuesday 27 January 2015**

(7.00pm – 7.45pm)

Present:

Tony Lock - Chairman	Andrew Kendall
Martin Bailey	Mike Lock
Philip Chandler	Wes Read
Bridget Dollard	Darren Shutler
David Dollard	Alan Smith
John Hann	

Also Present:

Alan Tawse Town Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

8/308 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 November 2014, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8/309 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Fife and Peter Gubbins.

8/310 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

John Hann declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5 (Applications for Grant Aid – Yeovil Shopmobility) by virtue of his appointment as a trustee serving on the Management Committee of the Organisation.

Alan Smith declared a personal interest in the same item by virtue of his appointment to represent the Town Council on the Management Committee.

8/311 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

8/312 **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID**

Yeovil Shopmobility

(John Hann, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, left the room during its consideration and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon)

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the application having regard to the services that Yeovil Shopmobility provided; its reserves and the options available to the Organisation to raise additional revenue from a variety of sources - including membership fees and hire charges.

It was noted that should the Committee be minded to support the application, it would be necessary for a Service Level Agreement to be drawn up.

Attention was drawn to a number of matters in the application on which clarification needed to be sought, and it was noted that despite an increase in the registered membership of the Organisation over the past year, the overall level of contributions had gone down.

Reference was made to the need for Yeovil Shopmobility to review its business plan with a view to taking a more sustainable approach to its future funding arrangements, and it was felt that the introduction of appropriate changes could form the basis of a Service Level Agreement.

RESOLVED that the application be deferred pending the outcome of a meeting between the Chairman, the Town Clerk and representatives of Yeovil Shopmobility to explore ways of helping the Organisation to achieve a more sustainable approach to its future funding arrangements.

8/313 **CAPITAL FUND**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 6 refers).

Members noted that, as reported to the last Town Council meeting, the total estimated cost of the upgrade of the Kingston View Play Area had recently risen to £20,000.

Confirmation had now been received of the District Council's increased contribution of £10,000 towards the project and it was proposed that the Town Council's contribution be similarly increased and met partly from the 2015/16 budget (£2,500) with the balance of £7,500 being met from savings identified by the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee.

Members supported this approach and agreed that the necessary adjustments be made in the 2015/16 budget.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the position concerning the Capital Fund and the General Reserve be noted;
- (2) that the current position regarding the rolling programme of play area improvements be noted; and

- (3) that the Town Council's contribution towards the Kingston View Play Area project be increased to £10,000 to be met partly from the 2015/16 budget (£2,500) with the balance of £7,500 being met from savings identified by the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee.

8/314 **ESTIMATES 2015/16**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 7 refers).

During the ensuing discussion, Members expressed their concern at the impact on all town and parish councils of the ongoing changes that the Government had introduced in relation to the future payment of council tax benefits.

It was noted that as a direct result of these changes, the Town Council's share of the council tax precept had effectively been reduced by £122,324. Whilst this year's allocated grant of £94,180 had helped to partly offset this decrease, the effect of the new arrangements was that the Council's overall net income had been reduced by £28,144.

Members expressed their support for the proposals set out in the report and the need to continue to take a sustainable approach to the setting of the precept taking into consideration the impact that the new funding arrangements would have on the Town Council's finances, which had put considerable pressure on the ability of town and parish councils to maintain local services without increasing their share of the council tax.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- (1) that the developments outlined in the above report be noted;
- (2) that the 2015/16 draft revenue estimates for the various Service Committees of the Council summarised below be supported and recommended to the forthcoming Town Council meeting for adoption, it being noted that with the addition of the Town Council's contribution of £80,420 towards the operation of Yeovil Cemetery and the additional provision of £2,500 towards the upgrade of the Kingston View Play area, this would result in no increase in the Town Council's share of the household precept, which would remain at £95.57 for a Band D property (equivalent to £1.84 per week)

Committee	Revenue Estimate
Planning and Licensing	£5,628
Grounds and General Maintenance	£246,452
Promotions and Activities	£71,047
Buildings and Civic Matters	£128,174
Policy, Resources and Finance	£397,147
Total	£848,448

- (3) that it be noted that the Government had yet to confirm whether it would be applying the council tax referendum rules to town and parish councils; and
- (4) that the Town Council be recommended to endorse these proposals and to fix the Town's precept for 2015/16 at its forthcoming meeting.

8/315 RECORDING COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 8 refers).

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that approval be given to the adoption of the draft policy.

8/316 LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 9 refers).

RESOLVED

- (1) that the developments be noted;
- (2) that the Town Council applies for free Foundation level accreditation by the impending deadline; and
- (3) that further details of the new Award Scheme and the application process be awaited.

8/317 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2014

The Committee considered the report of the Finance Administrator (Agenda item 10 refers).

RESOLVED

that the Financial Statements and payments therein for the above months be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

Chairman