

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
MONDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2014**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 8.35 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), Roger Bailey, Mike Bell, Mark Canniford, Peter Fox, Michal Kus, Michael Lyall Robert Payne, Sonia Russé, Richard Tucker and Roz Willis.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Cyril King , Malcolm L Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Responsible Financial Officer) Helen Morton (Finance Officer), Samantha Middlemiss (Committee Officer), Derek Kraft, Councillor Dawn Payne (North Somerset Council) and Beth Evans(Weston & Somerset Mercury).

410.	<p>To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tony Probert who arranged to be substituted by Councillor Tim Taylor.</p>
411.	<p>To receive Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest received.</p>
412.	<p>To approve Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting held on 16th December 2013</p> <p>The Minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That subject to the amendment of ‘Mark’ to replace ‘Make’ – minute number 317 on age 3, the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p><i>Councillor Cyril King joined the meeting at 7.04 p.m.</i></p>
413.	<p>To note the minutes of the Working Party to review Expenditure & Governance 27th January 2014</p> <p>The Minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda and it was noted that they were draft until approved.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the YMCA refurbishment was well under way and that they had agreed to match fund the Town Council’s allocation of £12,500 towards the project and to include improving the furniture.</p> <p>He further advised that eight dog bins had been removed and that the current request list would be brought to the next meeting of the Expenditure & Governance meeting for discussion.</p>

	<p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted</p>
415.	<p>Monthly Financial Reports:-</p> <p>The financial reports had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>a) For Approval Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure for November, December 2013 and January 2014</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Fox SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the reports be approved.</p> <p>b) For Noting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Bank Reconciliations November 2013 ii) Budgetary Control Report for November 2013 iii) Schedule of Receipted Income for November 2013 iv) Bank Interest Report for November 2013 v) Bank Reconciliations December 2013 vi) Budgetary Control Report for December 2013 vii) Schedule of Receipted Income for December 2013 viii) Bank Interest Report for December 2013 ix) Bank Reconciliations January 2014 xx) Budgetary Control Report for January 2014 xi) Schedule of Receipted Income for January 2014 xii) Bank Interest Report for January 2014 xiii) Income Analysis 2013/2014 <p>c) Overspend report for November, December 2013 and January 2014</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the reports be noted.</p>
416.	<p>North Somerset Council grant confirmation 2014/2015</p> <p>The Responsible Financial Officer's report had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p>

	<p>The Chairman advised that the adjustments notified by North Somerset Council result in a £2.58 increase on a band D property and proposed that efficiency savings from expenditure be found throughout the forthcoming year to meet the shortfall.</p> <p>The Responsible Financial Officer informed that the Finance team would aim to find efficiency / revenue savings throughout the forthcoming year and would do so by monitoring spending closely throughout the year and providing reports back to the Policy & Finance Committee indicating from where the shortfall had been recovered.</p> <p>The Chairman informed that Weston-super-Mare Town Council had one of the lowest precept increases in North Somerset at 4.5%.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the changes to the North Somerset Grant Support in relation to the Budget and Precept requirement previously reported to the Town Council on 20th January 2014. 2. To aim to find efficiency/revenue savings throughout the forthcoming year to meet the shortfall of £6,270.
417.	<p>To approve the charges for 2014/2015</p> <p>The Responsible Financial Officer's report and proposed charges for 2014/15 had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Responsible Financial Officer informed that a change needed to be made on page 2 under the cremated remains section to reflect child 5-16 years, adult 16 years plus.</p> <p>A further change was highlighted to reflect that the Water Park charge was £1.50.</p> <p>Debate ensued regarding the Memorial bench charge and it was suggested that the charge should be the same for both in parish and out of parish.</p> <p>It was also discussed that the Town Council should encourage the planting of Memorial Trees.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the charges for 2014/2015 (attached as an Appendix to these minutes) be approved subject to the following amendments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Cemetery cremated remains 5-18 years be changed to child 5-16 years. 2. That the Memorial Bench charge be set at £752.00 for both in parish and out of parish. 3. That the concept of Memorial Tree planting be delegated to the Expenditure & Governance Working Party.

418.	<p>Milton Cemetery Walls</p> <p>416.1 Recommendation from the Estates and Premises Committee Meeting on 7th January 2014</p> <p>Both the Responsible Financial Officer's and SJ Surveyors' tender report had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was queried whether the responsibility of the wall was definitely that of the Town Council's and the Town Clerk advised that the deeds were silent and that after seeking a second opinion from the Town Council's Solicitors it was confirmed as the responsibility of the Town Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the tender report undertaken by SJ Surveyors with the recommendation that the work required is phased and that the revenue provision £18,000 for the paths & boundaries be used in the first instance in order to address the Health & Safety issues as a priority. Further phases required will need to come from EMR.</p> <p>418.2 To receive the report of the Surveyor concerning the big wall</p> <p>Both the Responsible Financial Officer's report and the Structural Survey had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Responsible Financial Officer advised that the actual cost for the work was unknown at this stage.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That a full tender exercise for the reduction of height to the wall as per structural survey's recommendation, the EMR PPM balance to be used to undertake this work. 2. That the Town Clerk undertake communication with Earfield Lodge in relation to the trees on their land being removed/reduced. <p>418.3 To receive the report of the Amenities Officer on charging and speed policy for the Children's Area</p> <p>The Amenities Officer's report and the Cemetery Regulations for Memorial Garden Plots had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Responsible Financial Officer informed that there were three decisions required in the report regarding Vehicles, Memorial Garden and Charges.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That appropriate signage be erected to enforce that vehicles must drive very slowly through the Cemetery.
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	<p>2. That the Cemetery Regulations for Memorial Garden Plots be Approved.</p> <p>3. To note the age change for charges to 5-16 years.</p>
419.	<p>Grove Park Bandstand The Town Clerk's report had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk had previously circulated the Conservation Architect's report via email to all Councillors which gave a total cost of the repairs as £101,000. He understood that the Civic Trust may be interested in donating £10k. He suggested that that the Town Council may want to look at Grove Park in a wider context, considering Town Council management of Grove House, Grove Lodge, the play area, toilets and flower beds. Grove House is the headquarters for the Town Council and historic Mayor's Parlour.</p> <p>The Chairman informed that the Town Council paid £5k per year for the lease at Grove Lodge and a short peppercorn Lease for Grove House and suggested that if both buildings were transferred to the Town Council then a donation of £20k could be offered.</p> <p>Debate ensued regarding how disappointing it was that North Somerset Council were neglecting this historic landmark and how frustrating the situation was. The Town Council should see this as an opportunity to play 'hardball' with North Somerset Council and negotiate long 99 year peppercorn leases for both Grove House and Grove Lodge and the transfer of Grove Park.</p> <p>Caution was expressed that if the Town Council took over Grove Park then they could foot the bill for the whole of the bandstand repairs rather than being asked to make a contribution.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that North Somerset had originally planned £50k towards the repairs.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Town Council contribute 20% of the repair bill capped at £20,000 subject to repairs taking place within a timescale of 12 months and peppercorn long term leases being granted for Grove House and Grove Lodge.</p> <p><i>Councillor Cyril King left the meeting at 7.35 p.m.</i></p>
420.	<p>Recommendation from the IT Working Party Meeting on 6th February 2014</p> <p>The recommendation had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew</p>

	<p>SECONDED BY: Councillor Michal Kus</p> <p>The Chairman informed of the IT Working Party's unanimous decision to recommend that Plum Communications be selected as the supplier for the new Town Council's website.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Plum Communications be selected as the supplier for the new Town Council's website.</p>
421.	<p>Tourism Bus Acceptance of tender</p> <p>The Town Clerk's report had been previously circulated with the agenda and a further report was circulated at the meeting.</p> <p>Debate ensued. It was stated that any agreement with Crossville needed to be tightly tied up to avoid loss of service during school run times.</p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that it would be a one year agreement only. It would be an experimental initiative which would give the opportunity to link retail with tourism.</p> <p><i>Councillor Cyril King re-joined the meeting at 8 p.m.</i></p> <p>Further work on the bus route was requested to include Grove Village and Grove Park and it was suggested that the arrangement be extended until the end of September and for seven days a week.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the bus route had already been determined by the Tourism & Leisure Committee and that this was the route used for the tender process, subject to approval by North Somerset Council.</p> <p>The ticket price was queried and the Chairman informed that it would be £1.50 single fare, £2.50 child and £3.50 adult rover fare.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Tender from Crosville be accepted.</p>
422.	<p>Consultation on extensions to Pay and Display Parking</p> <p>The Notice of Intent had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk said that public notice of the new proposals had been given and invited the Committee to make representations. This was a matter for elected Members so no recommendations were made, however the Committee's attention was drawn to the representations which had been made at the inception of the scheme in 2012.</p> <p>Debate ensued. Members noted that North Somerset Council had stated the purpose of the on street pay and display scheme is "to increase footfall for local business". Yet Knightstone Road and Lower Church Road are residential streets not business streets with very few retailers. Extending the</p>

	<p>scheme to these streets will clearly not assist businesses but cause difficulties to the residents and is irrational and unfair. Funerals and weddings at St. John's Church would also be adversely affected.</p> <p>Disappointment was expressed that North Somerset had not taken sufficient notice of the effect on residents in the town centre or the knock on effect of residents further up the hill. The Town Council's request in 2012 to introduce residents parking zones in the residential streets currently covered by the pay and display scheme including the Palmer Street/Hopkins Street and Alfred Street areas had been ignored.</p> <p>As the proposals include Beach Road and Knightstone Road it was also considered appropriate to comment on sea front parking. Concern was expressed that car parking charges were damaging the night economy.</p> <p>It was therefore:</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town Council OBJECTS to the extension of On Street Pay and Display Parking to residential roads, particularly Knightstone Road and Lower Church Road. 2. The Town Council is disappointed that its comments made in the past for example expressing concern for the effect on Town Centre residents appear to have been ignored by North Somerset Council. 3. The continued evening sea front charging is damaging the town centre evening and night economy. The charges for sea front parking should be removed and parking should be free after 6pm. 4. The Town Council is concerned about the knock on effect of extending the scheme on nearby residential streets further up the hill. 5. The Town Council is disappointed that pay and display schemes have not been introduced in appropriate areas of the rest of North Somerset. <p><i>Councillor Cyril King left the meeting at 8.20 p.m.</i></p> <p><i>Resolved: under the Public Bodies (Admissions of Meeting) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for the following items by reasons of the confidential nature of the business.</i></p>
423.	<p>Barcode Lease</p> <p>Both the reports of the Town Clerk's and the Responsible Financial Officer were circulated at the meeting.</p> <p>The Town Clerk's report outlined the background and current position of Barcode's lease with options and a recommendation of how to proceed. A further report of the Responsible Financial Officer indicated the estimated Barcode lease surrender costs supported and recommended by the Town Council's Surveyor.</p>

	<p>The Town Clerk informed that the refurbishment project at the YMCA was on schedule and should be completed by April/May 2014.</p> <p>Debate ensued on what could be done with the premises and lease until the lease end and it was suggested that a time limit be applied to the Town Council's offer to avoid the landlord stalling on the arrangement. The Town Clerk was advised to look into a fair wear and tear clause when negotiating the lease.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>RESOLVED: To seek to negotiate an early termination of the lease by offering a sum to the landlord from the revenue budget and reserves and to set up a sub committee consisting of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Councillor Mark Canniford to approve the terms of early termination.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35 p.m.</p>

Signed.....
 Chairman

Dated.....