

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the FINANCE COMMITTEE held in the Town Council Office, Denmark Road, Cowes on Tuesday, 11th January, 2011 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Birch (Chairman)
Councillors Banks, Jones, McGregor, Sanderson, Walters and Wells.

In attendance: (non voting) Councillors Ellis, Matthews, Robinson and Thwaites.

346 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peacey-Wilcox and Wilcox.

347 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th November, 2010 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

348 COWES CARNIVAL

An application for financial assistance had been received from Cowes Carnival.

Councillor Ellis declared a personal and prejudicial interest as he had submitted the application

but he made a short statement regarding the growth of the carnival events programme over recent years prior to leaving the meeting; he stated that the programme now required in the region of £10k per year to organise and this year would include a 'Picnic in the Park' during May.

Members praised the hard work that was required to run the carnival events and they were generally supportive; however, issues of concern that had been raised following the previous grant application from the Carnival Committee had still not been addressed and it was agreed that these matters must be directly dealt with before any further funding could be considered.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk would write to the Carnival Committee requesting clarification of points previously raised and of the recently submitted accounts, and to again offer Councillor Birch's assistance in producing the accounts and paperwork in a form that would be acceptable to the Town Council.

349 NORTHWOOD HOUSE

A copy of a letter from the Northwood House Charitable Trust requesting funding for specific service areas within the Northwood House Estate together with details of the likely associated costs was circulated to all members as follows:

- Dog and Litter bin - emptying £3,468
- Community Hall – cleaning £1,301
- Playground area – maintenance checks, insurance,
Replacement of equipment/maintenance £1,470
- Toilets (Park) – open 28 weeks year £5,060
- Toilets (Car park) – open all year £7,860

The Board of Trustees were prepared in principle to formally transfer by means of a seven year lease the Park Road toilets and the children's play area in order that the Town Council provide the services as opposed to funding the Trustees to provide them.

Members considered each of the areas separately.

In respect of the toilets in the Park which were opened for the summer period, it was not felt that they were sufficiently used by the public and therefore it was unlikely that the Town Council would offer financial support.

The toilets in the car park were primarily used by those using the car park and should therefore be financed by income from the car park if they were considered necessary.

Equally, it was considered that cleaning the Community Hall was a necessary function that should be covered by part of the hire charges for the hall.

In respect of the playground area, members were concerned that the Trustees appeared only to be willing to offer a 7 year lease of the area which they did not consider to be a sufficiently long enough period for them to obtain possible grant funding and they wondered whether the Trustees would be prepared to pass ownership of that area to the Town Council.

In respect of the dog and litter bin emptying, members did not consider that they had sufficient information to enable them to make a decision and it was agreed that the Town Clerk should write to request a copy of the Trusts latest accounts.

Councillor Thwaites declared a personal and prejudicial interest and left the room for this item only

350 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2011/12

The Town Mayor reported that the IW Council had agreed a wide range of proposals setting out the future shape and direction for the authority; they were holding a follow up meeting with Town and Parish Councils that evening to clarify the situation and to provide information should Town and Parish Councils consider there to be a need/demand to re-provide some of the services at a local level.

The Assistant Town Clerk had attended that meeting.

It was agreed that the Town Council should defer any decision and hold a further Finance Committee to set a Budget/Precept for 2011/12 prior to the January meeting of the Town Council.

(The proceedings terminated at 7.32p.m.)

CHAIRMAN