

Malmesbury Town Council

Minutes of the Town Hall and Facilities Committee held in the Town Hall, Malmesbury, on Wednesday 4th November 2015

Present: Councillors C C Doody, LG Grant, J Exton (Chair), V L Penfold, A C R Woodcock, F Vandelli and K Wright

Apologies: Councillor W R Jones,

Public Question Time: There were no public questions

Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest

1. Minutes.

Matters arising:

- 1) Metal Gate for St Aldhelms Mead toilets has been ordered
- 2) Reinstatement of timer locks held back until gate has been fitted

The minutes of the Town Hall Management meeting held on Tuesday 2nd September 2015 were approved and adopted.

Proposed Cllr. Grant seconded Cllr Woodcock

2. To receive a report on Income and Expenditure Report.

The Town Clerk presented the income and expenditure report for the period April to August 2015 which was noted by the committee.

3. Proposed Budget – 2015 -16

The Town Clerk produced a report with the draft budget for 2015-16 for committee consideration.

Pressures:

- Reduction in council grant
- Reduction in car parking charges
- Impact of Late Night Shopping costs
- Salary costs up
- Utilities and services costs up

The Town Clerk outlined the rationale behind the increase in code 4123 Service Agreements from £21K to £30K.

Cllr. Penfold suggested that “Bundled Services” might reduce prices. PR confirmed that this is currently being negotiated for a range of services.

The Town Clerk is to remove code 1011, gallery sales, to C&TP

Cllr. Gavin suggested that P&R be sounded to ensure they are comfortable with respective budget areas and proposed that the draft budget be accepted. Seconded by Cllr. Penfold.

4. Parking Bollards – Town Hall report No. 3

The committee considered the report of the Town Clerk requesting installation of bollards at the northern edge of land adjacent to the town hall, to prevent unauthorised use.

Cllr. Woodcock asked if there was any potential for renting out the area as a parking space. The Town Clerk to consider viability.

Proposed Cllr. Woodcock, seconded Cllr. Penfold that the Town Clerk proceed with the purchase and installation of bollards.

5. Town Hall Fees and Charges – Report No. 4

The committee considered the report of the Town Clerk which advised about the financial implications and anomalies associated with the current charging regime for the use of the town hall. Comments included:

- Original concept was to offer facilities at a rate for “Community Based” groups and activities
- Recent aspirations were to restrict these groups to the Hub, subject to insurance agreement, which, it transpired, was not favourable
- Aim is to facilitate Community Group usage of the Hub, but for it to be commensurate with the cost of the building if extended to other rooms
- Current rate has proved popular – previously too high. Before decision taken to raise charges, further information should be provided, to support it
- Non users of the facilities may consider they are subsidising the lower rate
- Rates elsewhere are significantly higher with poorer facilities
- Balance needed on value to community against viability
- Administration is not onerous if process is adhered to and not bypassed by lobbying
- If lower rate is to continue, then must only apply to community groups and not to private individuals, (parties or social events), or commercial hire, (ie meetings, training)

Town Clerk advised that the recent stonework had depleted reserves and any unforeseen additional “emergency” works would further erode resources, so a decision on raising hire rates could be critical

Proposed by Cllr Grant:

- 1) Maintain community rate, but redefine criterion so it is restricted to groups that benefit the community and not purely because, for example, they have charity status.
- 2) Form small working group to examine costs and to determine hire categories for private hirers and commercial hirers etc.

Seconded by Cllr Penfold.

Cllrs. Grant, Vandelli, Budgen and Penfold volunteered to sit on the working party

6. Highway Land at Horsefair – Report No. 5

The Town Clerk invited the committee to consider the merits or otherwise of entering in to a section 96 agreement with Wiltshire Council in respect of an area of land in the Horsefair.

There are 3 areas in the vicinity; it is highway owned land. The Rose area and plot near Foundry Rd are currently tended by residents, without licence. 3rd plot is overgrown and untidy.

An offer from the Hobbes and Civic Trust to look after plot 3 has been received. The Town Clerk outlined section 96 responsibilities and how that would impact on the council and advised that should Hobbes & Civic Trust cease to maintain the land, it would become the council's responsibility.

Proposed by Cllr Grant:

That a section 96 is not applied for, but that the council negotiate the transfer of the land to the town hall, without cost. In the meantime a "community issue" be raised for the drains to be repaired and the area tidied up.

Seconded by Cllr Penfold

7. Use of the Hub & Office – Report No. 6

The Town Clerk outlined the request from the Community Engagement Officer regarding hall hire for the Youth service. The request falls in to three areas:

1. Hire of the hub during term time
2. Use of the office between 12 noon and 7pm, Monday to Thursday
3. Availability of storage space

Proposed by Cllr Grant

1. That subject to receipt of relevant information and completion of the appropriate booking form and application of the appropriate hire charge, that due consideration be given to the application regarding hire of the Hub
2. That officers enter in to negotiation with the Youth Team over the use of the office space, ensuring that a viable rate is charged and that potential conflict with other users is not an issue
3. To advise the Youth Service that storage is not available

.8. Use of Gallery for Local Exhibitions – Report No. 7

Report by Cllr Cox was considered by the committee and, while considered an admirable aspiration, the consensus was that as cancellations in the Gallery were infrequent and unpredictable and the administration involved in supporting the idea, somewhat onerous, the proposal was not viable at this time. Officers were instructed to monitor future bookings and should an appropriate slot become available, give consideration to the possibility of holding an "open" exhibition.

9. Remedial Works to Central Heating System – Report No. 8

A report regarding remedial works to the heating system was presented to the committee.

It was agreed that the quote submitted by the incumbent contractor be accepted and that officers should arrange for the works to be completed.

10. Niebull Room Verbal Report from Cllr. Doody

Agreed that a list of exhibition items be prepared by Cllr Woodcock and with photographic assistance from Cllr Exton that a virtual catalogue be made available for councillors to view, to enable them to determine whether items so listed are to be retained or disposed of

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Next meeting is: Wednesday 6th January 2015