

**REPORT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, THORNE ON TUESDAY 26<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2016 AT 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Cllr. R.Walker (Chair)

Cllrs. C.Blackham, J.Blackham, A.Brookes, S.J.Durant, M.Hennessey, M.Houlbrook, A.Jones, J.Parker, J.Phillips, R.Porter, R.Turner and M.Williams.

**2838. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from:

Cllr. D.Barton– Personal

Cllr. K. Redmile – Holiday

**Resolved: That the apologies be accepted.**

**2839. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr S.Durant declared a non-pecuniary interest in all planning items (2482) as she is on the planning committee at Doncaster MBC.

Cllr Walker declared an interest in item 2846 relating to Cemetery charges

**2840. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to signing the minutes of the Policy & Resources meeting held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015, pages 4260–4264. It was noted that Cllr Durant (seconded by Cllr Houlbrook) moved the motion considered under item 2826 (proposing to rescind of the decision to sell the Winning Post), and that Cllr Hennessey had raised an objection on Health and Safety grounds due to the number of people in the room.

**RESOLVED: That subject to the above amendments the minutes be signed**

**2841. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC**

A query/ complaint was raised about the material that had been deposited on the mound at the Recreation Ground. The Clerk advised that this was being considered on the agenda.

A concern was raised about comments made on Facebook with regard to the allotments. It was agreed that a letter that had been sent to the Clerk regarding this issue be circulated to all Councillors.

The Allotments Association had requested a meeting with the Council. It was agreed that all Councillors be invited to this meeting.

A request was made that the Mayor take action to ensure Councillors behave appropriately

**2842. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**i) 15/000031/FUL**

Erection of single storey pitched roof extension to side and single storey pitched roof extension to rear of semi-detached house, following demolition of existing conservatory (being resubmission of application refused under ref: 13/00762/FULFT on 25.06.2013). (Being Removal of Condition 3 of application granted under ref: 13/01566/FUFT on 04.09.13 – Garage Door) at 7A Henry Court, Thorne for Mr G. Cawkwell.

This item had been considered by Council at an earlier meeting

**ii) 15/02797/FUL**

Two storey extension to the rear to form four flats at 89 King Edward Road, Thorne for Investment Room.

**RESOLVED: That an objection be raised on grounds of overdevelopment and inadequate parking**

**iii) 15/02933/FUL**

Siting of two storey modular building to provide additional office/changing/canteen space at Unit 3 Capitol Park, Alpha Court, Thorne for Clyde Process Ltd.

**RESOLVED: That no observations be made**

**iv) 15/03001/FUL**

Erection of 4 semi-detached houses at The Harlequin, King Edward Road, Thorne for Belle Vue Properties.

**RESOLVED: That an objection be raised with regard to a cramped layout and dominant parking provision**

**v) 15/03006/FULM**

Erection of two retail units (Class A1) and two drive-thru restaurants (Class A3/A5) with associated landscaping and car parking at Capitol Park, Omega Boulevard, Thorne for Quora Development (Thorne) Ltd.

**RESOLVED: The proposal be supported, but that comments be raised with regard to the need for an appropriate S106 agreement (similar to the existing supermarket approval) and for measures to be taken to prevent off site litter from the fast food outlets**

**vi) 16/00076/FUL**

Erection of concrete sectional garage and formation of new driveway and dropped kerb following removal of existing garage at 184 Grampian Way, Thorne for Mr R. Ruhmann.

**RESOLVED: That no observations be made**

The following planning application was deferred from the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

**vii) 15/02252/OUTM**

Outline application for proposed employment development consisting of warehousing, distribution and light manufacturing units and associated service roads, parking areas, landscaping and pedestrian and cycle ways on approx. 74 ha of land (Approval being sought for access) on Land on the North East Side of Selby Road, Thorne for Mr D. Parkinson

**RESOLVED: That an objection be raised on access grounds in view of the proposed location of the roundabout, and the need for a secondary access. A requirement should be included to ensure that suitable and adequate mitigation measures are included within a full application to ensure that flooding and drainage issues are addressed.**

**2843. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

Consideration was given to the Accounts Payable to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

**RESOLVED: That the accounts payable be noted**

**2844. FINANCE**

Consideration was given to the financial report to the end of Month 8.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted**  
**2845. BUDGET AND PRECEPT**

Doncaster MBC have requested the Councils precept figure for 2016-17 by 4th February 2016. The Clerk had prepared 2 budget options. Option 1 shows an increase of c 2% (£1.79 for a Band D taxpayer), and for Option 2 the precept would be virtually unchanged

The following was considered:

- a. The DMBC grant is being reduced by £8,206, to £65,644. If expenditure, income and tax base were unchanged this would require a precept increase of 2.4%. It is reasonable to assume that this grant will continue to fall in future years, and at some point will cease completely.
- b. The tax base has increased by 2.23% which helps offset the loss of grant
- c. Reserves - are below the level recommended (25% of net revenue expenditure) so it would be sensible to budget for an annual surplus
- d. Staffing – a national pay offer has been made which includes a minimum 1% increase for scp18 and above, and a higher increase for lower grades.
- e. Pension – there may be some increased pension costs due to auto enrolment if staff who are not currently in the pension choose not to opt out.
- f. Loan – there would be an option to pay this off should the sale of the land rear of King Street proceed but this is not guaranteed at this stage.
- g. Repairs and Maintenance –one of the hardest areas to predict. There is a need to continue to invest in Council assets. With the decision having been taken to retain the Winning Post there is justification to deal with some of the issues in the building to build upon the interest that has been generated recently
- h. Moorends Welfare – the £10K contribution to the refurbishment will need to be met from revenue funding unless a Capital receipt is secured
- i. Election Expenses – the election expenses from the 2015 elections will be £6,639. There is currently the potential of a Parish Poll which would cost in the region of £10,000. It is sensible to leave an allowance in the budget for a by election (third of the cost as it can be paid through a budget plan).
- j. Income – additional income would help address budget pressures.
- k. Capital - there is currently no capital funds, with the exception of earmarked grants. Any “project” type expenditure will need to be funded through revenue using the Repairs and Maintenance budgets.

The main difference between the budgets is:

- a. Additional funding for the Welfare Ground due to the pressures indicated above
- b. The income forecasts
- c. Contributions to reserves

There were comments made about the need to increase the Precept this year. Conversely comments were made about the cost pressures and levels of reserves.

It was moved that Budget Option 2 be agreed with a precept of £350,478 (plus DMBC grant of £65,644). This motion was rejected. (FOR: Cllrs Brookes, Hennessey, Turner, Walker, Williams; AGAINST: Cllrs C Blackham, J Blackham, Durant, Houlbrook, Jones, Phillips, Parker, Porter)

It was moved that that Budget Option 1 be agreed with a precept of £357,355 (plus DMBC grant of £65,644). This motion was carried. (FOR: Cllrs C Blackham, J Blackham, Durant, Houlbrook, Jones, Phillips, Parker, Porter; AGAINST: Cllrs Brookes, Hennessey, Turner, Walker, Williams)

It was moved that these votes be recorded, which was carried. The voting is included above.

**RESOLVED: that a precept of £357,355 (plus DMBC grant of £65,644) be agreed for 2016-17**

**2846. CHARGES 2016-17**

The Clerk presented a report on charges for 2016-17. Charges are reviewed on an annual basis and have been adjusted in recent years to take account of inflation. However over the last 12 months the inflation figure has been 0.3% making a general increase difficult to justify

**PREMISES HIRE**

Proposals were presented suggesting changes to the “Community Rate” and some changes to definitions of users for other rates. Further information was requested as to the full cost recovery of the rentable space to allow consideration of the level of subsidy, and it was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.

**SPORTS PITCHES**

It was recommended that Sports pitch charges remain unchanged, but the discount for the poor state of the Welfare Ground Pavilion should be removed once the refurbishment is complete. It was proposed that this take place from next season for Football and Rugby, i.e. from 1st July 2016.

**BURIAL CHARGES**

A number of Parishes are charging much higher rates for non-residents. It was agreed that the rates should be reviewed in the light of this and a further report brought back to the next meeting.

**LEASES**

No changes were recommended to the current rates other than through individual reviews. It should be noted that the leases on the bungalow and café have helped increase income from this source.

Reports on the Youth Club and Delves/ Fishing Rights will be considered at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED: that:**

- 1. The revised charges for premises hire be deferred for more information regarding the rental subsidies.**
- 2. The Welfare Ground Pavilion discount be withdrawn from 1st July 2016, following the refurbishment of the building, with other pitch hire charges being un-changed**
- 3. A further report be prepared on Burial Charges including consideration of charges in nearby Cemeteries**
- 4. Lease charges remain unchanged except where subject to individual review**

**2847. CHANGES TO EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS**

Changes to the External Audit arrangements were introduced by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 following the decision to abolish the Audit Commission. The current arrangements will cease after the 2015-16 Audit. The Act is relevant to ‘smaller authorities’ and for the purpose of the requirements the definition of this is a council or parish meeting that has income or expenditure less than £6.5 million per annum.

The Audit Commission ceased to exist on the 1 April 2015 and a new company called Smaller Authorities’ Audit Appointments Ltd, has been created very recently to take over the appointment of external auditors and to deal with the setting of audit fees for smaller authorities from 2017. This company has been established on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) and is known as a “Sector Led Body”. Every Council now needs to make a decision on whether it will remain automatically opted in or to opt out of the new Sector Led Body audit regime and this decision needs to be made by 31 March 2016. If the decision is to remain opted-in there is no need for the Council to do anything more at this stage.

The board of the new company had its first meeting very recently and agreed that for authorities requiring an audit, ie those with an annual turnover over £25,000, the intention is that fees will not exceed those charged for external audit in the 2014/15 financial year.

These changes do allow Councils to appoint their own External Auditors. To do this the Council would have to undertake its own procurement exercise which would be time consuming and costly. The arrangements proposed by the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd will be very similar to current arrangements, so will provide continuity, and costs are anticipated to be similar.

**RESOLVED: that the Council allows the opt-in to the Sector Led Body to take place for future External Audits**

#### **2848. MOORENDS WELFARE GROUND**

The Clerk presented a report on a number of issues with regard to the Moorends Welfare Ground.

Tenders have been requested for the refurbishment of the Pavilion building. The scheme has also been advertised locally and on the government's Contract Finder site. The results of the tender exercise will be reported back to Council on 8th March. This would allow works to start in April. They are expected to last around 6 weeks, during which time at least 2 changing rooms and a shower room will be available for use. The scheme includes a £10,000 Council contribution which will need to be met through revenue unless a capital receipt is received.

There have been intermittent problems with security at the Welfare Ground which has been a mixture of vandalism and more organised theft. Meetings have been held with Safer Neighbourhood Team to consider how the situation could be improved. Currently the site is fenced off, and 3 club sites (Thorne Colliery, Moorends Marauders, and the Bowls Club) have separate fenced compounds within the site. Any equipment is stored within metal containers within the club compounds. Notwithstanding the above, thieves have accessed the containers by damaging the doors. Options discussed to improve the situation have included the provision of a security service, but this would be prohibitively expensive.

Thorne Colliery FC who have advised that they would be prepared to respond to emergency call outs if an alarm system was installed. This could cover the buildings on the site, which would improve security for equipment etc. A security firm have prepared a design and indicative budget for an alarm system. They have advised that a single system is not possible due to the distance between the various buildings. They have therefore recommended 4 independent alarms with a GSM text dialler to cover 2 sets of buildings/ containers at Thorne Colliery FC, the Pavilion and the buildings/ containers at Moorends Marauders FC. The total cost of this system would be £5,412 plus VAT. There would also be some additional costs for ducts and electrics. This proposal includes the optional provision of 4 "Master Blasters" which are siren type alarms which would be additional to a bell box. If these were excluded the cost would be £4,362 plus VAT. Once the system was installed there would be a revenue cost for the GSM lines, and for annual maintenance. These are likely to be modest. It was commented that the Bowls Club should also be included in any scheme, and that details of the proposal had not been provided.

At Planning and Amenities Committee on 11th June 2013 it was agreed that the redundant floodlights round the former tennis courts could be relocated to the Thorne Colliery FC site to create an all year training site and junior pitch. To date funding has not been identified for this scheme. There would also be a security benefit if a PIR was included on one of the lights. Further discussions have been held with Thorne Colliery FC quotations sought to assess the cost of these works. The best quote received is £4230 +VAT. This scheme would be suitable for Capital funding, so could be considered further should the anticipated Capital Receipt be realised in the summer, which would allow the facility to be in place for next season.

Thorne Colliery Cricket Club formally confirmed that they had disbanded last year. In the light of this Yorkshire Cricket have been contacted to make them aware of the availability of the facility. They

agreed to promote this amongst their members. It was noted that the Cricket outfield is being used for junior football.

At the Council meeting on 8th December 2015 a report was requested on the works carried out on the lane between the Welfare Ground fence and the rear of the properties in Barnsley Road. The lane was fenced off at either end some years ago to prevent access by vehicles and motorbikes. It has become overgrown and I had received complaints about its condition. Arrangements were made for part of the site to be cleared – there are large trees in part of the lane which makes total clearance impractical. Any waste materials were added to the existing mound within the Welfare Ground. The barrier at the Park road end was not been replaced but the barrier will be retained at the other end.

Further information was requested regarding consultation, Councillor involvement and options for the lane and mound.

**RESOLVED: that:**

1. **The alarm system be deferred to the next meeting to allow consideration of the detail of the scheme, and the inclusion of the Bowls Club.**
2. **The floodlight relocation be considered as a future capital scheme**
3. **A further report be prepared o the works to the rear of Barnsley road to include consultation, Councillor involvement and options for the lane and mound**

**2849. WINNING POST**

Following the decision taken at the last meeting to retain the Winning Post there are a number of issues that need considering by the Council. Some of these have arisen due to the publicity that was generated with regard to the building.

A number of approaches have been received to assist the Council with the running and marketing of the building and its facilities. These include:

- a. Work to assist the refurbishment of the building.
- b. Fundraising
- c. Assistance with promotion

With the long term future of the building being assured there is a need to consider what works need undertaking to improve the standard of the facilities. This would provide a framework for future investment, funding applications and as potential involvement of the community.

An approach has been received from a business with regard to taking a lease on the Front Room. There is alternative provision of a Community Room at Moorends Community Centre. The proposal would provide additional income.

It appears likely that the Youth Club premises will be required for the foreseeable future, and that the service will continue on a similar basis to present. This area would benefit from refurbishment, and the Youth Club have indicated that they may be able to assist with this. At the moment Doncaster MBC pay £5,008 pa for the lease of the Youth Club space. They have also informally used the main hall when unoccupied which is beneficial to their activities. This arrangement need review and a more formal arrangement drawn up which includes a revised rental.

The 3 office spaces at the front have not been used since the radio left the building. They have generated no revenue since the Health Authority left in 2011. There have been very few enquiries with regard to these spaces during this period. The bingo club have requested use one of these spaces for storage for £20 pw. Whilst this would generate some income it would not be very efficient use of the space, though would be sensible to consider in the short term. There is a lack of storage space for the community users in the building so it would be more sensible long term measure to create some small storage spaces. This was done in the Community Centre a couple of years ago, and they have been well used.

For the remainder of the spaces the possibility of commercial let should be considered in view of the low demand for community activity. If achieved it would help reduce the building deficit.

**RESOLVED: that:**

1. **Further reports be prepared regarding building maintenance and the Youth Club**
2. **The principle of leasing the Front Room be agreed**
3. **The offer of £20 per week for use of one of the office spaces for storage be accepted on a short term basis.**
4. **A scheme be drawn up to convert part of the office space into permanent storage for community groups**
5. **The remaining office spaces be marketed as commercial space**

**2850. THORNE ALLOTMENTS**

At Planning and Amenities Committee on 8th December 2015 a report was requested regarding the skip currently located in the allotments for Cemetery and Allotment waste.

Prior to 2014 the Allotments were managed in house by the Council. Following the establishment of an Allotments Association, the Council on 12th November 2013 approved a self-management arrangement initially for 2 years. The Council agreed to extend this agreement to 10 years on 19th March 2014 to help the Association apply for funding for improvements to the site, including the recently installed fencing (most funders will not approve grants of this nature without security of tenure).

The association have recently written to the Council advising that they would be happy for the skip to be removed from the Allotment site. The skip is mainly provided for Cemetery waste, though is also used by Allotment tenants. In addition there is evidence that the facility has been misused. Up to 2013 waste in the Cemetery was removed using DMBC trade waste bins that were located around the Cemetery. The large industrial sized trade waste bins were not an attractive feature in the Cemetery, and were replaced by domestic sized bins with an off-site skip. There is no suitable site within the Cemetery for a skip, so the allotment site car park was used.

It was expected that the change would be cost neutral. In 2014-15 the cost of skips was £6,518. If the Council reverted to trade waste bins the annual cost would be approximately £3,500 on the basis of 4 bins per week. Trade bins are clearly a more economical option, though would be an unattractive facility in the Cemetery. If it is decided to revert to the previous arrangement there would be a need to construct some enclosures to hide them.

Prior to the establishment of the Allotments Association the only building on site was a wooden former clubhouse building which was in extremely poor condition, and was virtually disused. This was demolished by Association members, and replaced by a de-mountable building in November 2012 that was part funded by a £2,500 grant obtained by the Allotments Association. This building was supplemented by a further container in 2013 that was relocated from the Welfare Ground. These 2 buildings are formally included in the current agreement. They are used as a clubhouse and for storage.

In early 2015 following a discussion with the Association, the opportunity was taken to relocate a demountable unit from Toll Bar to form a shop on the allotment site. This unit had been acquired in 2010 as a changing room. It was no longer being used by the Canal Tavern who was the only sports user on the site. It was being heavily vandalised, and the only option for the unit would have been disposal (which would have been a cost to the Council) or relocation. As there was a viable use for the unit in the allotments I decided to relocate it, and provide materials to repair the damage and convert the building. The work was undertaken by the Association. This building is not included in the lease. This would clarify that responsibility for future maintenance would lie with the Association.

**RESOLVED: that:**

1. **The skip in the allotments be withdrawn with trade bins being reinstated in the Cemetery**
2. **The additional demountable building be added to the lease.**

#### **2851. WYKE GATE PARK**

The Council have been approached by Doncaster MBC with regard to the use of S106 to enhance play facilities at Wyke Gate Park. £47,000 S106 funding is available. Wyke Gate Park is owned by Doncaster MBC but is currently leased to the Town Council up to 2024 at a cost of £825pa. The proposal by Doncaster MBC is for the Town Council to deliver an identified scheme. A draft scheme has been prepared by DMBC Landscape Architects including improved access and additional play equipment.

There are issues that need considering prior to any scheme being finalised including arrangements for future maintenance, and the current lease. Doncaster MBC have advised that they are still considering these issues and had asked for this item to be deferred.

**RESOLVED: That this item be deferred for a further report to include consideration of the lease**

*Cllrs C Blackham and A Jones left the meeting*

#### **2852. MEETING DATES 2016-17**

A proposed schedule of meetings for 2016-17 was circulated as follows:

10th May 2016 – Annual Council  
 17th May 2016 – Annual electors meeting  
 14th June 2016 – Policy and Resources  
 12th July 2016 – Planning and Amenities  
 13th September 2016 - Council  
 11th October 2016 - Planning and Amenities  
 8th November 2016 - Council  
 13th December 2016 - Policy and Resources  
 24th January 2017 (Precept) – Council  
 14th March 2017 - Planning and Amenities  
 11th April 2017 - Policy and Resources  
 9th May 2017 – Annual Council  
 16th May 2017 – Annual electors meeting

A suggestion had been made to change the times of the meetings.

**RESOLVED: that:**

1. **The Schedule of dates for 2016-17 be agreed**
2. **Meeting start times remain at 7:00pm**

#### **2853. STANDING ORDER 1C – ADMISSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Consideration was given to the implementation of Standing Order 1C (exclusion of press and Public) in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

**RESOLVED: That Standing Order 1C be invoked due to consideration of a confidential matter.**

*Cllr Williams left the meeting*

#### **2854. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING ISSUES**

A report was considered regarding an outstanding debt. Further information was requested regarding the circumstances of this case.

A request had been received from a voluntary sector organisation to reduce the room hire charge for a booking in 2015. The booking had been charged at the rates that had been agreed by Council, though this represented an increase from previous years due to changes to categories. The 2015-16



charges have been applied consistently so it was considered that there was no case for agreeing a reduction for a single organisation.

The Council have been approached by Discovery Surveys for the lease of the Front Room at the Winning Post. A rent of £6,975 is proposed which is considered by the District Valuer to be a reasonable rate. The principle of leasing the space was agreed in minute 2849.

There are 2 fixed payments to staff that have not been reviewed for some time despite inflation. These are:

- a. Market - £15 per week, payable to all staff erecting the Market. This was agreed in the light of the early start required.
- b. Gates - £23.45 per week, payable to the staff member allocated for the week. This is routine but out of normal hours and covers the Cemetery, Peel Hill Motte and Toilets.

It was proposed that these rates are increased on a one off basis to recognise the lack of adjustment in recent years, and then reviewed on an annual basis.

**RESOLVED: that:**

1. **A further report be prepared regarding the outstanding debt**
2. **No reduction be made to the room hire charge for the voluntary sector organisation**
3. **The Council agree a 3 year lease of the Front Room at the Winning Post to Discovery Surveys at a rent of £6,975 pa**
4. **The Market payment be increased to £20 pw, and the gates payment increased to £30 pw from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, to be reviewed on an annual basis in future**

**End of the meeting**