

REPORT ON A MEETING OF THE POLICY, DEVELOPMENT, FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD AT 7.00PM ON TUESDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2012 IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, THORNE.

Present: Cllr. M. Houlbrook (Chair)

Cllrs. K Abell, C. Blackham, J. Blackham, G Derx, R S Durant, S J Durant, A Farrand, M. Williams.

There were four members of the public present.

2332. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Cllr. A Brookes – personal.

Cllr. R Powell - holiday.

Cllr. K Redmile – work commitment.

Cllr. R Walker – work commitment.

Resolved: That the apologies be accepted.

2333. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2334. MINUTES

2334.1 Planning, Environmental, Amenities and Leisure

Consideration was given to signing the minutes of the Environmental, Amenities and Leisure Committee meeting held on Tuesday 28th August 2012, pages 4021–4024. It was noted that Minute 2311 should read full-time apprentice for the Cemetery.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be signed.

2334.2 Council

Consideration was given to signing the minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday 11th September 2012, pages 4025-4037.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be signed.

2335. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

None.

2336. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

i) 12/01048/FUL

Retrospective application for change of use of vacant retail unit (Class A1) to cafe

(Class A3) at 4 Wembley Road, Moorends for Miss R. Elliott.

RESOLVED: No observations.

ii) 12/02183/FUL

Erection of pitched roof extension to rear of detached bungalow including formation of loft conversion and erection of pitched roof detached double garage to rear following demolition of existing garage (being resubmission of application withdrawn under ref: 12/01972/FULFT on 23.08.12) at 71 King Edward Road, Thorne for Mrs N. Phillipson.

RESOLVED: No observations.

iii) 12/02222/FUL

Erection of two storey pitched roof extension to side of detached house following demolition of existing attached garage and erection of pitched roof/detached garage/store at 24 Low Hill, Selby Road, Thorne for Mr D. Dnull.

RESOLVED: No observations.

iv) 12/02257/FUL

Erection of first floor extension to side of detached house and conversion of existing garage to living accommodation at 24A Lock Lane, Thorne for Mr G. Russell.

RESOLVED: No observations.

v) 12/02360/FUL

Erection of pitched roof conservatory to side of semi-detached dwelling at 25 Peel Castle Road, Thorne for Mr C. Whitton.

RESOLVED: No observations.

vi) 12/02433/WCC

Change of use of former pigpens to lock-up storage units (without compliance with condition 2 of planning application 05/01771/WCC on 07/10/05 and without compliance with condition 1 of planning application 06/02707/COU, granted on 18/12/06 – use as storage units on a permanent basis) at Causeway Farm, Moor Edges Road, Thorne for Mr H. Burtwistle and Son.

RESOLVED: No observations.

vii) 12/02467/FUL

Erection of detached garage to rear of detached house at 8 Swanland Court, Thorne for Mr M. Shaw.

RESOLVED: No observations.

viii) 12/02188/FUL

Erection of detached garage to side of detached dwelling at 9 Park View, Thorne for Mr G.D. Bailey.

RESOLVED: No observations.

ix) 12/02308/FUL

Installation of water pumping station including control kiosk (0.75m x 0.40m x 1.00m high) and erection of 1.8m high walls and gates to form new accesses at Railway Cottages, North Eastern Road, Thorne for Mr D. Beighton.

RESOLVED: No observations.

2335. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

A number of members of the public spoke in support of a skate park in Moorends and stated that they had handed in a petition to the Deputy Chair of Planning, Environmental, Amenities and Leisure but it was not handed in to the Council through the Chair at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the petition be considered by the Council when officially received and that the proposed skate park be discussed at the next meeting.

2336. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Consideration was given to the Accounts Payable to the Accounts Payable to 31st October 2012, Vouchers 42 to 97.

It was noted that papers for the new signatories were nearly complete.

RESOLVED: That the accounts payable be approved.

2337. FINANCIAL REPORT

Consideration was given to the financial report to the end of month 5. The Clerk reported that a number of additional costs were excluded:

- a. Elections – Doncaster MBC have advised that the cost of the 2 by elections is £11,095. The Clerk reported that he had queried this figure due to the administrative problems that occurred with the 2nd by election. Doncaster MBC normally accepts payment at the start of the next financial year to allow Councils to make budget provision.
- b. Tree work at a cost of up to £4,080 (discussed later in the meeting).
- c. Winning Post Caretaker's Flat – estimated at £10,000, quotations were considered later during the meeting.
- d. Moorends Shower Rooms – improvements to showers, and repairs were needed following water damage. Costs were not yet available.
- e. Cemetery paths – repairs to paths following tree work. Costs were not yet available.

The Clerk reported that it was likely that some of the above costs could be accommodated through existing budgets, but that the Council should be cautious until further budget reviews are undertaken. On the assumption that Doncaster MBC is able to defer payment of the election expenses items b and c can be accommodated.

Annual return and Audit

The Clerk reported that the Annual Return had been signed off by the external Auditor and that a number of points had been raised:

Risk assessment– the Council have not minuted its review of effectiveness of internal control including arrangements for the management of risks during the year ending 31st March 2012 – this is being prepared and will be reported to a Council meeting

Asset Register – the Council's asset register does not contain some or all of the following for each asset held – date acquired, purchase cost and location held. Acquisition date is missing for 4 items that were purchased some time ago.

Restatement of Fixed Assets – Annual Return does not agree with last year's figure due to restatement. Minor adjustment due to a correction. Change accepted by Auditor and raised as an information item for future audits.

Financial regulations and standing orders need updating. This will be reported to a future meeting.

Fidelity Guarantee – the Council have reviewed the level of fidelity cover, however this still appears to be insufficient in the light of bank balances held on 31st March 2012. The Council is currently covered for £300K. The Bank balances exceed this amount for a short period after payment of the precept. Fidelity cover is for fraud by Staff and Members, and other checks and balances would prevent a fraud on this scale.

Capital expenditure

1. The Capital Reserve available at the start of 2012-13 was £87,135. The current situation with Capital spending is as follows, based on anticipated outturns and grant income:

Initial Capital reserve	£87,135		
Peel Hill Motte	£6,000	£6,000	S106 grant
Cemetery Access		£25,340	
Moorends Spectator Fencing		£11,100	
Bowls Club toilets		£2,700	
Balance	£47,995		
Items on this agenda			
Allotments building	£2,500	£4,000	Community First Grant
Community Centre Stage	£10,000	£11,000	Awards for All grant
Church Clock		£2,698	
Balance	£42,797		

2. This figure excludes the £1,500 capital receipt that is anticipated from the sale of the small areas of land next to the Assembly Rooms.

Recommended that the revised budget be approved

2338. CODE OF CONDUCT

At the Council meeting on 24th July 2012 it was agreed in principle to adopt the NALC model Code of Conduct, with the final decision deferred to a future meeting.

Councillors considered the final version of the Code of Conduct. The Clerk advised that an amendment to the Standing Orders was also needed to cover Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

RESOLVED that:

1. The adoption of the NALC model Code of Conduct be confirmed
2. Standing Orders be amended to include the following:

“Any Member must to withdraw from a meeting (including from the public gallery) where he/she has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as defined in Annex 2 of the Code of Conduct”

2339. CO-OPTION

There are 2 current vacancies on the Town Council, both in Moorends Ward. These have been advertised and the elections officer at DMBC has not received any requests for an election within the designated timescale. The Council is therefore free to co-opt additional Councillors.

The Clerk reported that the process of co-option is not subject to any legislation, but it is at the discretion of each individual Council and recommended a formal process as follows:

- a. The vacancies are advertised by public notices posted in the Ward.
- b. An application form is used for completion by interested parties.
- c. Submissions are requested by 5th November.
- d. Submissions are considered by Council on 13th November.

Councillors suggested that the form should include a request for details of roles played and/or relevant experience.

RESOLVED that the above process for Co-option be agreed.

2340. MOORENDS COMMUNITY CENTRE – GRANT APPLICATION

The Clerk reported that he had explored the submission of an “Awards for All” application to secure funding some for the Community Centre to improve its facilities for performances and presentations. Grants of up to £10,000 are available through this fund.

In consultation with the Chair of Planning, Environment, Leisure and Amenities Committee the following options had been identified:

- a. Sound system and lighting
- b. New stage curtains

- c. Safe stage access
- d. Additional storage
- e. Conversion of toilet to changing room.
- f. Improvements to ladies and gents toilets.

The Clerk reported that the priority at this point is the stage area. Quotations/ estimates had been received and an application had been submitted to cover the following:

New lighting system	£2,838.50
Speakers and Sound System	£2,912.95
Stage Curtains	£3,200.00
Improved stepped access	£1,550.00
New stage surface	£495.00
TOTAL	£10,996.45

The application has been submitted for a £10,000 grant, with the balance of £996.45 needing to be met by the Town Council.

The Clerk pointed out that assuming that the grant is approved, to progress the scheme the Council will need to authorise the expenditure of up to £11,000 capital funding.

RESOLVED: That subject to the approval of the £10,000 grant for "Awards for All" the scheme to improve the stage area at the Community Centre be delivered. Further that there be flexibility in the expenditure at the Clerk's discretion.

2341. WINNING POST CARETAKERS FLAT

Following a recent inspection of the Caretaker's Flat at the Winning Post a number of problems were identified that required action in the Council's role as a landlord. The inspection followed a report of a roof leak (that has now been fixed), but other problems were identified. The key areas which needed action include:

- Collapsed ceiling following roof leak
- Black mould in bathroom
- Ill-fitting/ missing interior doors
- Metal exterior door offering no insulation
- Waterlogged cellar causing other damp problems
- Redundant oil tank in cellar
- Exterior walls requiring repointing
- Broken exterior overflows

All these can be Health and Safety issues that impact on the tenant. Some will also benefit other parts of the building.

Some cosmetic issues had also been identified, for example the kitchen and bathroom fittings, whilst serviceable, would benefit from modernisation. However, this is not seen as an immediate problem. In addition decoration/floor coverings etc are the responsibility of the tenant.

Some problems were also identified with the electric system and required immediate attention.

A works specification had been drawn up to cover the essential works identified and quotations sought.

The following quotations had been submitted and were opened by the Committee:

Dudgeon Builders Ltd.	£47,624.50
MMS Mtce. Ltd.	£10,895.00
Close Building Services	£21,072.00

Council decided that more quotations would need to be sought as there was a vast difference in the quotations received. Further that a meeting of the Winning Post Sub-Group needed to be held as a matter of urgency and it was agreed that it would be held on Wednesday 17th October at 7.00pm in the Front Room of the Winning Post.

RESOLVED: That item be brought back to the Council following the sub-group meeting and obtaining further quotations.

2342. TREE WORK – CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL PARK

At the Policy, Finance, Development and Staffing Committee on 10th July 2012 a report was considered on proposed tree work at the Cemetery and Memorial Park recommended by the Council's tree consultant.

The Consultant recommended felling some trees which were dead, dying, or dangerous, and pruning others to remove dead branches etc.. In addition the option of removing additional trees along the Glebe Road and Southfield Road frontages to the Cemetery was raised, as these were creating root damage to the footpaths and to some graves.

The Clerk reported that he had consulted on the options with neighbours and users of the sites and had received comments from two people, one in favour and one against the felling of the trees. The Clerk reported that three quotations had been received for the recommended works plus the option raised above:

Contractor	Memorial Park	Cemetery Option 1	Cemetery Option 2
Taparell	£1,580	£850	£2,500
Lewis	£2,322	£1,257	£5,497
Wold Trees		£7,200*	£12,000*

*inclusive of Memorial Park.

The cheapest quotation is £2,430 on the basis of option 1, and £4,080 on the basis of option 2.

The Clerk reported that he had discussed the wide differential between the quotations with the consultant and had been advised that he had used Taparells in the past and that he was of the opinion that they produce good quality work. The Clerk advised Councillors that the Park is a conservation area and may need to get permission before felling any trees.

The Clerk reported that he was about to commission further tree survey work on other Council sites, i.e. Toll Bar, Buntings Wood, Coulman Road and the Welfare Ground.

RESOLVED: That the quotation for tree works from Taparell be accepted on the basis of Option 2 (£4,080).

2343. HORNETS AND STINGERS

The Hornets and Stingers are a junior football club who operate out of the Coulman Recreation Ground and Pavilion, currently operating 10 teams with a variety of age groups. There are currently about 165 young people registered with the teams, supported by around 40 coaches and volunteers and at present are the only football team using the pitches on a regular basis. There are other users of the pavilion, some of whom make limited use of the recreation ground.

The Clerk reported that the club had fallen into arrears and he had requested a meeting to discuss this further before taking any action. They have admitted financial problems, and have asked for the rent to be reviewed.

Current Rental Arrangement

The Hornets and Stingers were a key partner in the development of the Coulman Pavilion providing assistance in the attraction of external finance. At that time they signed an agreement which included the following:

The Moorends Hornets and Stingers are considered primary users of the facilities

The club will make a contribution towards the maintenance and running costs of the foot balling facilities of £3000 rising by £500 per annum for the first year rising annually by £500 to £5000 in the fifth year. Thereafter the annual club contribution will be increased in line with the RPI.

The organisation of sports facilities are the responsibility of the club. Non-sports community bookings and any non-Hornets and Stingers Sports bookings are administered by the Council.

All rents are subject to VAT. The current rent is £5,400 (£4,500 plus VAT). It would rise to £6,000 (£5000 plus VAT) in 2013.

Hornets and Stingers Financial Situation

The Hornets and Stingers had provided recent accounts to allow the Clerk to understand their financial situation. The club generate their income through subscriptions and fund raising events. The ramped nature of the rent in the original agreement seems to have been on the basis that they would be able to expand their activities, but in the recent financial climate this has proved difficult. They have tried to promote girls football, but to date this has not proved successful.

The most recent accounts show a small annual loss, though this should be higher as it excludes rent that is owed. There was a significant drop in subscription income.

The Clerk said that he understood that at the time that the original agreement was signed they had not appreciated that this was subject to VAT.

Issues arising from rent reduction request.

The 2012-13 budget for income from Coulman Pavilion is £10,000, which was made up from the Hornets and Stingers use, plus hire of the hall. On the basis of the current agreement this target would have been realistic. Any rent reduction will result in an income shortfall.

The Clerk reported that he had queried some of the figures included in the budgets to help assess the current position and commented as follows:

- The unpaid rent is not included in the accounts.
- I have been advised that some of the subscription income is paid directly to pay for match officials/ match balls etc, and is not included in the accounts. This is bad practice, and makes it difficult to assess the current position.
- I have concerns that payment of rent is seen as the least important priority.
- Notwithstanding the above I am satisfied that the current level of rent cannot be met by the club, and if maintained they would cease to operate. The loss of activity would also result in a loss of outputs to the Football Foundation who continue to monitor the project. Whilst there is no arrangement for claw back it would have an impact on any future funding application by the Town Council.
- It is likely that, should the club fold, that other users would be attracted to the facilities. It seems highly unlikely that these would operate to the scale of the current activity, and highly unlikely that they could meet the rent.
- In the light of the above, and the positive impact of the sports club I feel it is sensible to negotiate a revised rent, to ensure the long term viability of the activity at Coulman.

Council discussed the Hornets and Stingers issues and agreed that the Council should work with the club to improve their accounting procedures to allow a proper assessment of the long-term viability. Also that the Club be asked to demonstrate a commitment to reducing the rent arrears.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk contact the Club requesting that they start paying off their arrears and suggest that the Council work with the club to improve their accounting procedures to allow a proper assessment of the long-term viability.

2344. PARISH CHURCH CLOCK

At present the Council has a budget of £900 to pay for the annual maintenance of the Church Clocks in both Thorne and Moorends.

The Clerk reported that this arrangement had existed for a significant number of years, though he had been unable to find a formal agreement or minute. It appeared to be linked with the Council ceasing to provide a public clock at some time in the past.

The most recent inspection of the St Nicholas Parish Church Clock identified an ongoing fault with the chime unit that required repairs. The faulty unit had been taken to the contractor's workshop for inspection and that they had recommended the installation of a replacement unit at a cost of £2,698 plus VAT. The quotation had been sent on the basis that the costs will be covered by the Town Council. As there was no budget to cover this, formal consideration by the Council was needed. Under the Parish Councils Act 1957, the Council has the power to undertake these works, but it is not a duty for the Council. A need to clarify the extent of the Council's future responsibility was identified.

RESOLVED: That the Council hold discussions with the Churches in order to resolve this issue and to agree future arrangements.

2345. GLEBE ROAD ALLOTMENTS

It was reported that the Council had been working with the new allotments association to improve the facilities at the allotments in Glebe Road, Thorne.

It was reported that the dilapidated building at the entrance to the site needed replacing and that the association would like a building to use as a club room, storage, toilet, and limited produce sale. The group successfully applied for a grant for £2,500 through Community First for a demountable building and have asked the Council to acquire the building using this grant.

The group have identified a suitable building that is currently available, but at a cost of £3,700 and have asked if the Council can fund the balance. The Council recently provided funding for a similar building at the Bowls club. In the light of the grant received it was recommended that the Council fund the balance which could be found through the capital programme.

The Clerk recommended the approval of £1,500 capital to supplement the £2,500 grant to allow for the connection of the building to services etc.

RESOLVED: That £4,000 capital funding (£2,500 grant) be allocated for the erection of a demountable building at Glebe Road allotments for the allotments society.

End of meeting