

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 7.00PM ON TUESDAY 13th NOVEMBER 2012 IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, THORNE.

Present: Cllr. R.S. Durant (Chair)

Cllr's. K. M. Abell, C. Blackham, J. Blackham, A. Brookes, G. Derx, S.J. Durant, A. Farrand, M. Houlbrook and R.J. Powell.

6 members of the public.

2346. APOLOGIES

Apologies were declared as follows:

Cllr. K. Redmile – Work

RESOLVED: That the apologies be accepted.

2347. DECLARATIONS AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllrs C.& J. Blackham declared an interest in the item on DMBC Sites and Policies Development Plan.

2348. MINUTES

Consideration was given to signing the minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday 9th October 2012, pages 4038 – 4047.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be signed.

2349. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

Representatives from the Moorends Allotment Association raised concerns about Moorends Welfare Ground fence, erected by Thorne-Moorends Town Council. The two gates, which had been installed to enable football teams to retrieve stray footballs, had been damaged, and had not been repaired, so chains had been fitted for security. The allotment holders asked if the gates could be welded closed to prevent people accessing the allotments saying that they were prepared to do it themselves, they also asked if the nearby goal posts could be moved to reduce the number of stray footballs landing in the allotments.

Councillors asked that this item would be brought before the next Council meeting, following a site visit.

2350. PLANNING

i) 12/02556/FULFT

Erection of pitched roof conservatory to side of detached bungalow at 68 Grampian Way, Thorne for Mr K. Chadwick.

RESOLVED: No observations

ii) 12/02654/FUL

Erection of ground floor extension (28.75m x 7.45m overall) to rear of shop including installation of external staircase and walkway to form access to first floor flat following demolition of existing single storey extension and installation of new shop front to front elevation (Being resubmission of application refused under ref: 11/01485/FUL) at 21 Finkle Street, Thorne for Heron Foods Ltd.

RESOLVED: That objections be raised to the alterations to the frontage as inappropriate to a historic building in the conservation area.

iii) 12/02786/FULFT

Erection of two storey pitched roof extension to front, two storey pitched roof extension to side and alterations to single storey extension following demolition of existing conservatory of detached house at Broadgate Farm, Broadbend Gate Road, Moorends for Mr S. Colbeck.

RESOLVED: Objection on the ground that this is an inappropriate development in the countryside.

iv) 12/02790/FUL

Change of use and conversion of 3 existing outbuildings to residential garage, dog kennels and horse stables respectively, to be included within the residential cartilage at Broadbend Farm, Broadbent Gate Road, Moorends for Mr S. Colbeck.

RESOLVED: Objection on the ground that this is an inappropriate development in the countryside.

v) 12/02795/FUL

Erection of two storey pitched roof extension to rear of semi-detached house, following demolition of existing conservatory at 4 The Old Nursery Yard, Thorne for Mrs S. Walters.

RESOLVED: No observations

2351. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk updated Councillors on the Council's financial position to the end of month 6 of the current financial year reporting that expenditure remained in budget. He reported that a payment of £13,617.50 for the Rugby Club fencing was a capital project that had been funded through revenue and that if this expenditure was funded through the capital reserve it would reduce the revenue pressures.

The Clerk reported that current cheque signatories are Cllr's. J. Blackham, M. Houlbrook and S. Durant. The previous Mayor was also a signatory, but is no longer a Councillor. To provide additional signing options it was proposed that the current Mayor and Deputy are added to the signing mandate.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Rugby Club fencing expenditure of £13,617.50 be funded through capital reserve.
2. That Councillors R. Durant and G. Derx be added to the Council's signing mandate.

2352. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Consideration was given to the Statement of Accounts Payable to 31st October 2012, Vouchers 204 to 232.

RESOLVED: That the accounts payable be noted.

2353. DISPENSATIONS

The Clerk reported that further advice with regards to dispensations had been received. In particular all Councillors living within the Town Council area may have a Disposable Pecuniary Interest with regard to the precept. In the past there was a specific exemption in legislation, but this has been omitted in the recent changes and there may be a need to request dispensations to allow the precept to be set.

The Clerk explained that Dispensations cover situations where Councillors wish to take part in a debate when they are declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

In the past dispensations needed to be requested through the Monitoring Officer at the Borough Council as part of the Standards regime. The consideration and approval of dispensations is now a matter for the Town Council.

The approved Code of Conduct says that written requests for dispensations must be made to the Council's Proper Officer (Town Clerk) prior to any meeting, but the way that these are dealt with has not yet been agreed. As dispensations may be needed for the precept meeting there is a need to put this in place.

RESOLVED: That:

1. Any requests for dispensations be made to the Town Clerk at least 24 hours before the relevant meeting.
2. The Clerk be given delegated authority to consider requests, taking advice from the DMBC Monitoring Officer as appropriate. These requests should be evaluated in line with the Code of Conduct.
3. Dispensations will only be granted where the appropriate interest is seen to be minimal.
4. An item will be included on future agendas to report any dispensation requests and the decision.

2354. CO-OPTION

At the Policy, Development, Finance and Staffing Committee on 9th October 2012 a process was agreed for the co-option of Councillors to fill the 2 vacancies in the Moorends Ward. Interested candidates were invited to complete Expression of Interest forms with a deadline of 5th November given for their return. Two completed forms had been received from Annie Jones and Robert Porter.

A show of hands was called for the two co-option of the two candidates, with all Councillors voting in favour.

RESOLVED: That Anne Jones and Robert Porter be co-opted onto Thorne-Moorends Town Council as representatives of the Moorends Ward.

2355. STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The review of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations was one of the issues raised in the 2011-12 audit. General advice received via NALC and SLCC was that the Orders and Regulations should be reviewed annually and should be separate documents; also the recent changes through the Localism Act also justified a review.

It was reported that the current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were adopted in 2002 and that whilst they have been reviewed and amendments agreed these have not been consolidated into a single document. A revised document was considered by the Council based on the Model Regulations and Orders produced by NALC, and revised to Thorne Council's circumstances and recent legislative changes. These documents covered the same ground as the current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, with some changes identified. It was proposed that the Committee names be simplified to Policy and Resources, and Planning and Amenities with the only suggested change in duty is moving the Market to Policy and Resources as it fits better with consideration of the economic health of the Town.

The Clerk reported that the Regulations/Orders removed the need for Tenders to be opened at a Council meeting – this is replaced by two Councillors. The tenders would then be reported to the next meeting. They propose changes to thresholds, with new thresholds being as follows:

Over £60k – full tender process

£60k - £5 – minimum of 3 quotations (this removes the need for formal opening)

£1k - £5k – minimum of 3 estimates, or evidence of best value

£1k or less – best value

This does not prevent the use of lower thresholds if this is felt sensible for individual projects.

All capital expenditure and all revenue expenditure in excess of £5k must be expressly agreed by council regardless of budgetary provision (this was previously £2.5k). This is a limit on the delegation to the Clerk.

In future the Orders/Regulations should be reviewed at the Annual Council meeting.

RESOLVED: That the revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be adopted.

2356. INSURANCE

The Clerk reported that Market Testing had been carried out prior to renewing the Council's insurance policy this year. Zurich Municipal, the Council's insurance provider for a number of years, proved extremely competitive – being around 50% cheaper than one alternative provider. The current year's premium is £38,311, which is lower than previous years and they have also agreed to cover the Jubilee event, and the new demountable buildings at no additional cost.

In discussions with the insurers it was found that they are prepared to offer discounts if the Council is prepared to enter a long term agreement – 5% per year over 3 years, and 10% per year over 5 years. If an agreement is taken out the premiums would only vary in line with any changes to the insured items and inflation. The Clerk reported that a benefit of this approach would be a significant increase in cost certainly for what is a major budget item, together with a budget saving. It would then not be possible to market test again for some years, but considered that this possible downside to be less of an issue as Zurich Municipal had demonstrated value for money this year and that the 5 year agreement offered a larger saving.

RESOLVED: That a 5 year Insurance Agreement with Zurich Municipal be agreed.

2357. DMBC SITES AND POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN – SECOND ROUND OF CONSULTATION

It was proposed that this item be deferred to a special meeting

Resolved that this item be discussed at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council, to be held on Monday 19th November 2012, at 7.00pm with a representative from Doncaster MBC being invited to address the Council.

2358. DONCASTER HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Clerk reported that he had received consultation from Doncaster MBC regarding their Housing Allocations Policy with the deadline for any comments being 26th November 2012. There are 18 separate proposals, the majority which seemed to be a refinement of existing policies rather than fundamental change. The Clerk reported that proposals to be noted were the local connection criteria, changes relating to the armed forces, and changes aimed at reducing the numbers on the housing register.

RESOLVED that:

1. No objections were raised to the proposed criteria.
2. Jane Davies from Doncaster MBC be invited to attend a future Council meeting to give an update St Leger Homes.

2359. PARKING AND SPEED LIMITS NEAR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Clerk reported that a number of concerns had been raised by residents regarding traffic and parking in the vicinity of Thorne Brooke Primary School at around school opening and closing times.

A letter had also been received from Caroline Flint MP with regard to speed limits near school. It was noted that problems with traffic and parking near schools is widespread, though action could be taken to improve the situation through new measures and enforcement.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk sends a letter to Caroline Flint MP, and contact Doncaster MBC and the Schools with regard to parking and speed limits near to schools.

2360. HORNETS AND STINGERS

Consideration of this item was deferred at the last meeting for additional information. The Clerk reported that a further meeting had been held with a representative from the Hornets and Stingers in order to clarify their financial situation. The Club had provided a copy of their recent accounts which show a small annual loss, though this should be higher as it excludes rent that is owed, and there had been a significant drop in subscription income.

The Clerk outlined possible implications which may arise from the reduction in rent saying that the 2012-13 budget for income from the Coulman Pavilion was £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 reduction will result in an income shortfall. The Clerk reported that he was satisfied that the current level of rent could not be met by the Club, and if maintained 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, and whilst there is no arrangement for clawback it would have an impact on any future funding application by the Council. The Clerk was of the opinion that should the club fold, other users would be attracted to the facilities but it seemed unlikely that they would operate to the scale of the current activity, and doubtful that they could meet the rent. To this end, and the positive impact of the sports club, the Clerk felt that it would be sensible to negotiate a revised rent to ensure the long-term viability of the activity at Coulman.

RESOLVED: That:

1. A revised rent of £2880 be agreed for the Hornets and Stingers for 2012-13, with arrears of £1170 written off.
2. The rent be adjusted on an annual basis on 1st April using the Retail Price Index for the previous September.
3. The rent is reviewed every 2 years to take account of changes to activity, with the first review prior to 1st April 2014.
4. Any use by the club of the pavilion for events/awards etc. to be charged at the normal Council rates.
5. The full use of the building comes back to the Council, all pitches to be booked in as for other clubs and all keys or the building to be returned to the Council.

2361. WINNING POST CARETAKERS FLAT

It was reported that 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 (now repaired) but other problems were identified. The key areas which were identified for action included:

- a. Collapsed ceiling following roof leak.
- b. Black mould in bathroom.
- c. Ill fitting/missing interior doors.
- d. Metal exterior door offering no insulation.
- e. Waterlogged cellar causing other damp problems.

- f. Redundant oil tank in cellar.
- g. Exterior walls requiring re-pointing.
- h. Broken exterior overflows.

All these can be Health and Safety issues that impact on the tenant. Items e, f, g and h will also benefit other parts of the building.

Quotations for the works were received at the last meeting:

Dudgeon Builders	£47,624.50
MMS Maintenance	£10,895.00
Close Building Services	£21,072.00

The Clerk reported that further analysis of the quotations identified that the lowest prices contractor had missed out the costs of some specialist damp-proofing works, so the quotation should have been £14,901.

The Clerk reported that he had discussed these terms with the Architect, who said that the Council could request new quotations, but felt that this would be unlikely to achieve a more competitive return. The Clerk reported that he had worked with the Architect to consider solutions that could be achieved at a lower cost. This principally involves less work in the cellar which provides a slightly poorer solution, but is considerably cheaper. This reduces the overall cost to £9,951.70.

The Clerk reported that in his opinion these are essential Health & Safety works that the Council needs to progress, as they deal with damp issues that are affecting the integrity of the building and the removal of an oil tank which could be a safety issue.

RESOLVED: That the revised quotation from MMS Maintenance of £9951.70 be approved but was subject to a site visit by interested Councillors.

2362. MOORENDS WELFARE PRIORITIES

It was reported that the current repair and maintenance issues at the Moorends Pavilion were:

- a. Unusable shower room – one of the shower rooms is unusable due to the tiles falling off when there was a roof leak. This room would now be better converted to an additional changing room which would increase the number of changing rooms to 6, allowing 3 matches at the same time – estimated cost c£5K.
- b. Showers – complaints continue to be received about shower pressure – there is a proposal to fix, at a cost of £4790, on the basis of 2 shower rooms. This includes some new piping and shower pumps.
- c. Other shower rooms – inspection of the other shower rooms has identified similar problems to the one where the tiles have fallen off the wall – i.e. the tiles have not been fixed properly in the first place. Refurbishment of the other 2 shower rooms would cost c£8K.
- d. Fencing – an order has been issued for the repair of the palisade fencing to the rear of the site, though this has not yet been carried out. The cost is £2790.
- e. Rugby Club cable – the cable supplying the floodlights and cabin at the Rugby Club is inadequate. They have a qualified electrician in the club who has quoted £675.36 for the supply of cable/fitting etc. and have asked the Town Council to fund this.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Contractor be pressed to proceed with the works to the fencing immediately.
2. The installation of the Shower Pumps as a cost of £4790 be authorised.

3. Quotations be sought for works to the shower rooms/changing room conversion with a view to funding from the 2013-14 budget.
4. The Council pay for the materials for the additional cabling and that the Rugby Club arrange the installation.

End of meeting