

RIPON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2015 AT 7PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE TOWN HALL, RIPON

PRESENT: Cllr P Pearson – Chairman
Cllr Chambers.
Cllr P Horton – as a substitute for Cllr Williams.
Cllr S Jones
Cllr S Martin
Cllr A I Morgan
Cllr C E Powell
Cllr P McHardy – The Right Worshipful The Mayor (ex-officio)

Acting Clerk
The Mayor's Chaplain
Serjeant at Mace
Councillors Barnes, Powell, Stanley and Waiting (at 7.28pm).
City Development Manager
District Councillor Zoe Metcalfe
Member of the press.
4 members of the public.
5 additional members of the public at 7.28pm.

72/15 To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Bate and Hawke due to other commitments.

73/15 Disclosures of interest in relation to any matter under consideration at this meeting (financial or otherwise) & consideration of written requests for dispensation.

Councillor Pearson declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 88/15b due to a family connection to the Ripon Allotment Society.

Councillor McHardy declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 88/15b as she rents an allotment.

Councillor Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 84/15 and noted that he has been involved with the organisation of some of the Christmas events covered in the City Development Manager's report.

74/15 Representations on agenda items from members of the public.

There were no representations in respect of items on this agenda, however members of the public were advised that they could put forward items for consideration at future meetings by contacting the Clerk.

75/15 To approve the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 5th October 2015.

Proposed – Cllr Jones

Seconded – Cllr Morgan

“That the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 5th October 2015 be approved.”

RESOLVED

76/15 To approve the list of payments for the period 1st September to 30th September 2015.

The following points were noted:

- A separate set of accounts should be prepared for transactions associated with the Alderman TF Spence charity.
- A proportion of staff costs are attributable to the Hugh Ripley Hall cost centre.
- Income from the precept is higher than in the approved budget. This was because of a variance in the amount of Council Tax Support Grant received.

Proposed – Cllr Powell

Seconded – Cllr Horton

“That the list of payments covering the period 1st September to 30th September 2015 be approved.”

RESOLVED

77/15 To approve the monthly income & expenditure report to 30th September 2015.

Proposed – Cllr Martin

Seconded - Chambers

“That the monthly income & expenditure report to 30th September 2015 be approved.”

RESOLVED

78/15 To approve the list of payments for the period 1st October to 31st October 2015.

Proposed – Cllr Chambers

Seconded - Martin

“That the list of payments covering the period 1st October to 31st October 2015 be approved.”

RESOLVED

79/15 To approve the monthly income & expenditure report to 31st October 2015.

It was noted that the staffing costs attributable to employing the Hornblowers are recovered from Harrogate Borough Council.

Proposed – Cllr Chambers

Seconded – Cllr Jones

“That the monthly income & expenditure report to 31st October 2015 be approved.”

RESOLVED

80/15 2016/17 Budget

Members noted the requirement to set a budget and agree the precept requirement for this period by 12th January 2016.

Councillor McHardy commented that this was an opportunity to set a realistic budget to meet the needs of the Council.

Councillor Pearson commented on the number of funding requests which have been received by the Council, but which have not been able to be accommodated due to budgetary constraints.

Councillor Martin commented on the need to set a realistic, but balanced budget.

81/15 Business Plan

a. Report and supporting documents prepared by City Development Manager.

Members considered the contents of the report and commented on the financial implications likely to arise from the proposal to develop a business plan.

Proposed – Cllr Martin

Seconded – Cllr Horton

“That the contents of the City Development Manager’s report be noted and the proposed strategic framework be approved.”

RESOLVED

b. Progression of business plan.

Proposed – Cllr Chambers

Seconded – Cllr Jones

“That the Council proceeds to progress the preparation of a business plan, through the Business Plan and Budget Setting Working Group proposed at item 82/15.”

RESOLVED

82/15 Working Group

Proposals were considered for the appointment of a Business Plan and Budget Setting Working Group. It was noted that this would be an informal Working Group and not a committee of the Council.

It is proposed that 5 Councillors from this committee should serve on the Working Group and that the Acting Clerk and City Development Manager should also be members, but in an advisory capacity.

The purpose of the Group shall be to collate information from relevant stakeholders, consider the Council’s policy for giving grant funding to local organisations and draw up proposals for the Council’s 2016/17 budget and 2015-2020 business plan.

Proposed – Cllr Powell

Seconded – Cllr Horton

“That a Business Plan and Budget Setting Working Group be established in accordance with the terms of reference as proposed.”

RESOLVED

83/15 Christmas Lighting

a. Report by City Development Manager.

Members considered the City Development Manager's report, including the points as detailed below.

b. Christmas Lighting – Funding Framework.

It was noted that this framework has been adopted by Harrogate Borough Council in an attempt to standardise arrangements for the funding and provision of Christmas lighting across the District.

The main implication is that Ripon City Council will become responsible for the costs of testing, putting up, taking down and storage of the Christmas Lights in Ripon for 2015/16 – 2017/18.

c. Funding agreement template.

Members' attention was drawn to this template which sets out the monetary contributions to lights in Ripon to be made by both Harrogate Borough and Ripon City Councils.

Over the lifetime of this agreement (2015/16 – 2017/18) Ripon City will be required to contribute up to a total £19,500 in order to draw down £19,500 of Harrogate Borough Council funding.

In addition, £9,000 will be provided and Harrogate Borough Council will pay £400 in energy costs. This creates a potential annual budget of £16,000.

d. To agree to use the earmarked reserves as match funding in 2015/16 to enable the Harrogate Borough Council additional funding to be drawn down.

It was noted that the Council currently has £13,668 of its reserves earmarked for expenditure on Christmas Lights.

It is proposed that Ripon City Council approves the use of £6,500 as match funding during the current financial year.

e. Improvements to Christmas lighting in 2015.

It is proposed that improvements to mounting systems of existing lights be carried out as these are essential and additional lighting items be purchased.

f. Longer-term approach to providing match funding from the earmarked reserves for Christmas 2016 and 2017.

Realising the short timescales for implementation of the new agreement, Harrogate Borough Council have agreed that any unused match-funding can be carried forward from the 2015/16 financial year.

The City Development Manager is proposing to work with local businesses and the community to support efforts to raise additional match funding.

It is suggested that the City Council agrees to make a further financial commitment of £3,250 over the period of the agreement (2015/16 – 2017/18) so as to provide a total of £9,750 of match funding of 50% of that required and works with the businesses of the City Centre and community support efforts to raise the additional £9,750 in match funding over the period.

Proposed – Cllr Martin

Seconded – Cllr Chambers

“That the contents of the City Development Manager’s report be noted and that the Council’s reserves which have been earmarked for this purpose be used to purchase additional lights and to fulfil the requirements of Harrogate Borough Council’s Funding Framework.

In addition that the City Development Manager be asked to do everything in his power to facilitate the purchase and erection of additional lights in Ripon.”

RESOLVED

84/15 Christmas Marketing, Promotions and Events.

Members noted the contents of the City Development Manager’s report, including the City Development Team’s approach to the promotion, support and / or organisation of the following events:

- Discover Ripon’s production of a Christmas Events Guide.
- Christmas Lights Switch On – 21st November.
- Kirkgate Christmas Pantomime Market – 28th November.
- Coca Cola Christmas Truck Tour – 11th December.
- Rotary Club Carols Around the Christmas Tree - 19th December
- Watchnight Service and Torchlight Procession (Civic Service) – 31st December.

85/15 Temporary Vehicle Activated Sign Initiative

Members considered costing information in relation to this scheme, which total £3,500 + VAT for one sign for four years. This guarantees that a sign would be in Ripon for 18 weeks per year for four years.

Additional sockets (so that the sign can be used in different locations in the City) can be installed at a cost of £500 per socket.

The Council could have a maximum of two signs, but as many sockets as it wishes.

Proposed – Cllr Chambers

Seconded – Cllr Martin

“That Ripon City Council expresses an interest in participating in this scheme subject to budgetary constraints which should be investigated by the Business Plan and Budget Setting Working Group.”

RESOLVED

86/15 Cabman’s Shelter

The Clerk reported that the recent resurfacing works have had a detrimental impact on the stability of the Cabman’s Shelter located on the Market Square.

A number of contractors have been approached with a view to recommending and quoting for required works.

The constraints of this being a Listed Building were noted.

87/15 Proposed Bus Subsidy Reductions

- a. Update on proposals to reduce North Yorkshire County Council’s bus subsidies.

Members noted the contents of the City Development Manager’s report.

b. Proposed amendments to proposals in relation to services affecting Ripon.

56/56R Harrogate-Knaresborough-Ripon and vice-versa.

The County Council is in discussions with the current provider to retain the existing service levels at a lower price. It is aimed to make further savings by increasing passengers and revenue over the next 12 months at which time a further review will take place.

142/143 Ripon-Boroughbridge-York and vice-versa.

Agreement has been reached with the current operator to retain the existing service and a saving to be achieved over two years through increased passenger numbers.

88/15 Correspondence to consider.

a. North Yorkshire County Council – proposed sponsorship of highways.

It was noted that the County Council has been considering sponsorship of highways and is now undertaking an exercise to determine whether there are any existing agreements in place.

Members commented as to whether any of the roundabouts on the by-pass would be covered by historic agreements.

b. Ripon City Allotment Society.

A letter has been received outlining preliminary proposals to erect a new building on the Kirkby Road allotments and seeking the City Council's permission to do this. It is proposed that the new shop would be larger and lighter than the existing one and would become a members' shop, workshop and meeting room.

Proposed – Cllr Powell

Seconded – Cllr Martin

“That the City Council advises Ripon City Allotment Society that it has no objection to the principle of constructing a new building at the Kirkby Road site, subject to being consulted on the detailed design and any necessary consents being obtained.”

RESOLVED

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

CHAIRMAN

ACKNOWLEDGED AT FULL COUNCIL MEETING FOR INFORMATION ONLY

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE
MAYOR