

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Finance and General Purposes Committee** held on **Monday, 1st March, 2004** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at **7.30pm**

PRESENT

Councillor D. L. Parker		Chairman
Councillor W. B. Cavill		Town Mayor
Councillor G. Francis		Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor S. R. Dobson		
Councillor Mrs. H. A. Cripps		
Councillor Mrs. E. M. Hannaford		
Councillor N. Fogg		
Councillor M. Gray		
Councillor Mrs. C. Jackson		
Councillor G. Worby		
Councillor B. Castle)	
Councillor Mrs. P. Dow)	
Councillor M. Curtis)	Observers
Councillor R. Allen)	
Councillor P. Cossey)	
Mr. N. Kerton		Press
Graham Gittins		Town Clerk
Rosemary E. Johnston		Minute Secretary
Gordon Heath		Health and Safety Officer

477/03 APOLOGIES:

There were no apologies for absence.

478/03 DECLARATION(S) OF INTEREST:

Item 10 – Councillor G. Francis – Director of the Trust Riverbank Theatre/Cinema

Item 10 – Councillor N. Fogg – Member of the Trust – Riverbank Theatre/Cinema

Item 10 – Councillor Mrs. E. M. Hannaford – Member of the Trust/Riverbank Theatre/Cinema

Item 11 – Councillor Mrs. E. M. Hannaford – Personal Interest

479/03 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 19th January, 2004 be taken as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

It was agreed that the Agenda be taken in the following order -

480/03

2004 COMMITTEE:

- (a) The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 12th February 2004 were received.
- (b) **To discuss the projected expenditure and income**

The Chairman asked Councillor G. Francis, the Chairman of the 2004 Committee to speak on this item.

Councillor Francis produced a Financial Statement although the figures are already out of date; he commended Brian Ashley and Ian Philpot on their efforts in this connection.

Proposed by Councillor G. Francis, seconded by Councillor G. Worby and RECOMMENDED by 9 votes with 1 abstention that the funding underwritten by the Town Council in the sum of £15,000.00 to the 2004 Committee be allocated under the heading of Tourism. Councillor Francis said a list of sponsors would be available in April.

With regard to Road Closures, he said that he had met with Officers at Kennet District Council and the Police and it had been agreed that the High Street would remain closed on the night following the Royal Visit and left closed for the next day – thus saving money.

On the second Saturday, the road would be left open all day and closed at 5pm so that the Town Play can take place.

On the Sunday, 29th June the road would be open on Sunday morning, with the same provision as on 11th November when the Police will man the traffic to enable the Mayors' procession to proceed.

As a result of these arrangements the sum for Road Closures is now £8,700.00.

The 2004 Committee's Financial Projection is filed in the Minute File kept in the Council Offices.

Discussion followed and it was agreed that any excess of funds would be shown as income to the Council as the sub-group is responsible for, and acting on behalf of the Town Council.

Councillor Francis said that he is making representations to T. H. White and will be asking the Town Council for parking to take place on The Common and he is also talking to a representative of the Wiggley Bus regarding a park and ride system.

- (c) **Transfer of Mayor-Making costs to Civic Hospitality – 2004**

Councillor Francis said because of the expenses incurred in 2004 he thought it would be prudent to cancel the reception at Mayor-Making and transfer the sum to Civic Hospitality.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs. E. M. Hannaford, seconded by Councillor G. Worby and unanimously RECOMMENDED that the Mayor-Making Reception be cancelled for this year only and the Mayor-Making expenses be transferred to Civic Hospitality

(d) Road Closures

It was unanimously agreed that the Town Clerk be given Delegated Powers to write to the Chief Executive at Kennet District Council asking for dispensation of these charges.

‘Light’ Horses parading in the High Street

Mr. G. Heath, Health and Safety Officer was asked what the Health and Safety Regulations are regarding horses. He said the regulations do not cover horses, experts on horses should be approached; he would investigate further and report back he also agreed that his telephone number could be given so that he could talk directly to the people concerned.

481/03

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE WORKING PARTY:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group held on the 17th February, 2004 were Received.

The Chairman, Councillor Francis said they that have met consistently to find a way forward for the resurrection of the Town’s Tourist Information Centre and reported that three options had been considered –

- a) the lease of the original Tourist Information Centre in George Lane Car Park, the District Council had given an emphatic ‘no’ to this suggestion
- b) a retail outlet, this had failed to come to fruition
- c) the Town Hall – to see if it is practical to convert the existing toilet to an office and T.I.C., in this respect, a local architect had been invited to do a preliminary drawing to see how things would fit in. A copy of this drawing was circulated to Members at the meeting. Councillor Francis said that his committee thought it would be worthwhile looking at it in more detail, he had no idea of what the true cost would be for this conversion.

Discussion followed on the suitability, the cost of the conversion and the loss of Toilets, and whether the District Council and the Library have investigated further the use of the Library for the Tourist Information. It was agreed that further investigations should be undertaken.

Councillor D. L. Parker produced his thoughts on a Risk Management Assessment as follows -

- 1. the quotations will be far higher than the estimate
- 2. the running and management costs will be higher than anticipated
- 3. there could be public resentment over the loss of the toilets
- 4. renting out the present offices will bring in less than is expected

5. there could be a problem with providing an acceptable working environment which could affect staff morale and recruitment
6. there would be a high level of traffic noise
7. space will be found to be restrictive, particularly with the loss of the Committee Room and storage requirements.

He asked Councillors to give some thought to this.

Proposed by Councillor N. Fogg, seconded by Councillor G. Worby and unanimously RECOMMENDED that as a result of the discussion tonight, the sub-committee takes the opportunity to discuss and include a Risk Assessment and proceed on the basis of the discussions of this evening and will report back to the Finance and General Purposes Committee when these issues have been discussed.

482/03 HEALTH AND SAFETY ASBESTOS SURVEY:

The Chairman invited Mr. Heath to speak, he referred to the Council's Asbestos Policy and said that new Asbestos Regulations come into force in May, 2004 and it is up to this Council to make sure that we have this Policy up and running. He said that he has created an Asbestos Register of Corporate Property and it is up to this Council to prove that there is no asbestos in any of them. Mr. Heath recommended that we have an asbestos survey carried out on all Corporate Property.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs. E. M. Hannaford, seconded by Councillor G. Francis and unanimously RECOMMENDED that the Council have an Asbestos Survey carried out on all Corporate Property subject to the necessary three quotations.

483/03 AMBULANCE SERVICE:

The Chairman invited The Mayor to speak on this subject. He referred to a report, that in order to meet Government Targets it is intended to move the ambulance from Marlborough on occasions to Swindon, with the result that the coverage in Marlborough will be considerably reduced.

Proposed by Councillor D. L. Parker, seconded by Councillor Mrs. H. A. Cripps and unanimously RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk should write to the Ambulance Service deploring the part-time loss of an ambulance service to Marlborough, the surrounding villages, the two large schools and also pointing out the extra housing that is being built in and around Marlborough.

484/03 TOWN HALL PROMOTIONS WORKING GROUP:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Hall Promotions Working Party held on the 26th February, 2004 were Received. The Chairman said that the provision of a leaflet and a brochure is being considered and they will continue to meet and report back to the committee.

485/03 BUDGETS – MONTH 10:

RECOMMENDED: To receive the Budget Report for Month 10.

486/03 RIVERBANK THEATRE/CINEMA – MINUTE 351/03:

8.52pm Councillors G. Francis, Mrs. E. M. Hannaford and N. Fogg Declared Interest and left the Room.

The Chairman referred to a request received from Riverbank for a donation to assist with the Riverbank Project – this request had been deferred from a previous meeting.

Proposed by Councillor S. R. Dobson seconded by Councillor G. Worby and unanimously RECOMMENDED that a donation of £500.00 under the heading of Arts and Culture be awarded to the Riverbank Project.

8.57pm Councillors G. Francis and N. Fogg returned to the room

487/03 RABLEY WOOD SKATEBOARD RAMP – MINUTE 462/03:

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs. H. A. Cripps to speak and she said that her committee would like to Recommend that we pay for an Environmental Study in this area. She said the residents are continuing to raise money for the project and deserve some encouragement.

Discussion followed on the £3,00.00 such a survey would cost and it was proposed by Councillor J. Fogg, seconded by Councillor G. Francis and RECOMMENDED with 1 abstention that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee so that a breakdown of the costings could be obtained. This Council also confirms that we endorse the work of the Rabley Wood Resident's Association in principle.

9.05pm Councillor Mrs. E. M. Hannaford returned to the Room

488/03 MEMBERS' EXPENSES:

The Chairman referred to a letter received from Kennet District Council together with the Recommended Scheme of Travelling and Subsistence Allowances for Parish Councils. It was agreed that the position of Members' Expenses for this Council remains at status quo.

489/03 POSTAL DELIVERIES – MINUTE 445/03:

After discussion on the reduction in postal services, it was proposed by Councillor N. Fogg, seconded by Councillor Mrs. H. A. Cripps and unanimously RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk write a letter to the Royal Mail deploring the reduction of postal services.

490/03 MOP FAIR:

The Chairman invited Councillor J. Fogg to report on discussions with Kennet District Council and the Showmen's Guild regarding the Mop Fair Agreement for 2004 – 2009 he said that the Showmen's Guild are taking the findings back to their own committee for consideration and will report back, but that they would insist in a five-year contract.

491/03 DIGITAL CAMERA:

It was agreed that the Council purchase a Digital Camera and the software in the sum of £250.00, this would improve the quality of the photographs in The Greyhound and for use within the new website.

492/03 SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS – JANUARY 2004:

The Schedule of Accounts for **January 2004** in the sum of **£20,163.95** including Reimbursement to the No. 2 Account in the sum of **£6,169.13** was **RECOMMENDED** and approved and signed by the Chairman.

493/03 TOWN COUNCIL BALANCES:

The Town Clerk reported on the Town Council Balances as at 31st January 2004.

PART 2

Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by The Mayor and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that under the Local Government Act 1972 the Public and Press be asked to leave the meeting, due to the fact that legal and confidential Matters were to be discussed.

494/03 CORPORATE PROPERTY:

It was proposed by Councillor D. L. Parker, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and **RECOMMENDED** by 7 votes for and Councillor Mrs. E. M. Hannaford abstained, that the Corporate Property Review – April, 2004 be approved.

The meeting ended at 9.18pm